

# CARIBBEAN LEADERS ARE MAKING AN IMPORTANT DECISION ABOUT OUR FOOD

ALL CARIBBEAN PEOPLE, INCLUDING CHILDREN HAVE THE RIGHT TO HEALTHY AND NUTRITIOUS FOODS

Right now, across the Caribbean until May 31st, key stakeholders are voting on whether or not Caribbean consumers will benefit from the introduction of octagonal shaped nutrition warning labels on the front of packaged foods. These labels have the potential to change supermarket shelves making it easier for Caribbean people to identify unhealthy foods and make healthier choices.

## What’s the connection between Front of Package Warning Labels (FOPWL) and your health?

### FOPWL ENABLES ACTION

FOPWL is part of a package of healthy food policies. FOPWL makes it easy to identify unhealthy foods and restrict their sale and marketing in schools and workplaces. FOPWL also makes it easier for governments to make healthy foods more affordable and accessible to vulnerable populations.

#### CARICOM member states have a duty to:

- ✓ Implement policies which protect the health of Caribbean people
- ✓ Ensure children are protected from unhealthy food environments that affect their right to healthy food and adequate nutrition
- ✓ Implement FOPWL as one key step to tackle obesity and NCDs
- ✓ Ensure that FOPWL follows the best available evidence, free from conflicts of interest
- ✓ Regulate activities of the food & beverage industry and their undue influence on government decisions

#### NCDs are responsible for



**8** out of every **10** deaths and **40%** of premature adult deaths

**1 in 3**

Caribbean Children is overweight or obese

**65 Million USD**

spent on conditions related to overweight and obesity in the Caribbean in 2019



### URGENT ACTION NEEDED ON OBESITY AND NCDs

The Caribbean has some of the highest rates of Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), and adult and childhood obesity and overweight in the world.

Obesity and NCDs have a significant human and economic toll on our societies.

## CARIBBEAN PEOPLE ARE EATING TOO MANY ULTRA-PROCESSED FOODS, THIS IS MAKING US SICK

Unhealthy diets dominated by ultra-processed foods (UPF) are the major causes of obesity and NCDs.

UPFs, or junk foods like soft drinks, cookies, breakfast cereals, canned meats and candy, are high in sugar, sodium, and fats, and are manufactured using many artificial ingredients.



## CARIBBEAN PEOPLE HAVE A RIGHT TO KNOW WHAT IS IN THEIR FOOD



Caribbean people need better labelling to make better choices.

Food labels are often confusing and misleading. You shouldn't have to be a nutritionist to understand the information on food packages.

Regional Health Authorities, The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) both recommend octagonal front of package warning labels.

## CARIBBEAN RESEARCH SHOWS THAT OCTAGONAL FRONT OF PACKAGE WARNING LABELS ARE THE BEST LABELS

Caribbean people deserve the best labels determined by scientific evidence free from conflict of interest.

Growing scientific evidence shows that octagonal warning labels are the best labels to help consumers easily, quickly, and correctly identify unhealthy foods.

A study in Jamaica comparing different labels found that octagonal warning labels performed best in improving the capacity of consumers to make healthier food decisions.



**Chile** - sales of sweetened beverages decreased by

**23.7%**



**Mexico** - in 5 years projected to reduce obesity by

**14.7%**

**Jamaica**

**91%**

of consumers were more likely to correctly identify products high in sugar, sodium & fats



## OCTAGONAL FRONT OF PACKAGE WARNING LABELS MAKE IT EASIER FOR CARIBBEAN PEOPLE TO MAKE HEALTHIER CHOICES

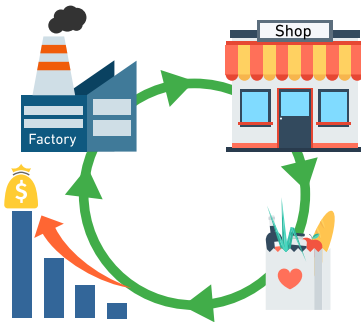
With the octagonal front of packaging warning labels, all Caribbean people, regardless of age, literacy level, socioeconomic background, and native language will have the information they need to make the best choices about the food they eat.

## OCTAGONAL FRONT OF PACKAGE WARNING LABELS ARE NOT HARMFUL FOR BUSINESS

Use of warning labels presents an opportunity for the regional food and beverage industry to reformulate and to develop and expand healthy product options to meet increasing consumer demand and contribute to healthier food environments.

Costs to food and beverage manufacturers will be limited to short-term, one-time investments of changing printing plates. These will be cancelled out by the long-term positive health impact and resulting cost-savings. Research shows warning labels have no negative impact on wages and employment.

FOPWL is non-discriminatory and applies to all domestic and international operators. Caribbean manufacturers who meet nutrition labeling standards of the importing countries will still be able to trade their products. Under the World Trade Organization's Article 2 of the Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement, warning labels on the front of packaged foods are permitted as independent evidence has shown they represent a necessary public health measure.



All Caribbean people - adults and children - have a right to know what's in our food. Warning labels will help us make healthier choices.

Voice your support @ [www.healthycaribbean.org](http://www.healthycaribbean.org) and Say YES to octagonal front of package warning labels!

Better Labels = Better Choices = Better Health.

