



**Kraft Foods**

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Division of Dockets Management  
(HFA-305)  
Food and Drug Administration  
5630 Fishers Lane, rm. 1061  
Rockville, Maryland 20852

**Re: Docket No. 2004N-0463  
Food Labeling; Prominence of Calories  
Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking  
70 Fed. Reg. 17008 (April 4, 2005)**

Dear Sir or Madam:

Kraft Foods Global, Inc. (Kraft) is a \$32 billion global company, the largest food manufacturer in North America, and the second largest worldwide. For over 100 years, Americans have trusted the well-known brands Kraft sells. Today, Kraft brands are found in more than 99% of all U.S. households and over 150 countries around the world. Accordingly, Kraft has a substantial interest in the development of effective labeling regulations that provide meaningful information to help consumers achieve dietary goals.

Kraft applauds the agency's decision to initiate rulemaking implementing the recommendations of the Obesity Working Group (OWG). In this Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) asks whether changes in the way calories are declared on food labels would help consumers prevent weight gain and reduce obesity. We are pleased that FDA recognizes the importance of basing modifications to the current calorie declaration rules on sound evidence and look forward to working with the agency and other stakeholders to see that appropriate consumer research is available for thoughtful decision making.

## **Prominence of Calories – Effect on Consumer Awareness and Consumption Choices**

FDA asks whether and how making the declaration of calories per serving on the food label more prominent would affect consumer awareness and behavior. Kraft has extensive experience developing and marketing food products to consumers. We work hard to understand how consumers perceive our products and how they believe those products fit into their daily diet. We strive to communicate clear and consistent product messages and, consequently, continually analyze the impact of our labels (and the information those labels contain) on consumer comprehension and behavior.

While Kraft has learned a great deal about the impact of packaging on consumer behavior, we also recognize that package research is less developed than other areas of research. Some general good practices can be applied to developing strong package communications, but Kraft has come to recognize that what we might consider small changes to package graphics can have a significant impact on consumer behavior. We have also observed that on-package communications are more likely to influence choices that consumers make at the shelf versus those made in the home, such as how much to consume.

In considering the various options available for enhancing the prominence of the calorie declaration, several observations seem particularly relevant:

- **Research indicates that consumers already know where they can find calorie information on the food label when they are looking for it.** In a recent Kraft study, 93% of primary grocery shoppers recalled that the number of calories is provided on the package; 97% said it was easy to find that information. (*Synovate E-Nation for Kraft, May '05*). Although minor graphic enhancements to the declaration of calories in the nutrition facts box might help consumers identify calorie content more readily, it is uncertain whether those enhancements would have a meaningful impact on consumer behavior.
- **While consumers know where to find calorie information, evidently not all consumers are looking for it when making purchase decisions.** Only 55% of consumers claim to always/sometimes look at the nutrition information when deciding to purchase or eat a packaged food and of those 61% claim to be seeking calorie information. (*The 2004 Gallup Study of Nutrient Knowledge and Consumption*). This indicates that there may be opportunity to enhance calorie prominence and perhaps to influence more purchase decisions at the shelf.

- **“Consumers spend only 5-10 seconds comparing brands at the store shelf before making a purchase decision.”** (*Perception Research Services, Inc.*). Thus, increasing the prominence of calorie information by placing it on the principal display panel (PDP) where it will more readily be seen could be an effective way to influence purchase behavior.

Kraft and other industry leaders have created lower-calorie versions of products in those food categories in which calories seem particularly relevant to consumers (e.g., single serving frozen meals, salad dressings, dairy products, desserts, beverages, and snacks). Prominent display of calories on the PDP typically is a key part of the positioning for these products. Good examples include our new *South Beach Diet*™ line of foods and *Nabisco* 100 Calorie Packs. In short, for companies trying to reach consumers interested in controlling calories, prominent packaging communication of calorie content is a critical part of the marketing strategy. Whether the same approach could be made effective for initially uninterested consumers is not now known.

Over time, if calorie controlled products continue to be successful in the marketplace, competitive pressures likely will motivate manufacturers to offer more product options focused on calorie content with prominent front label calorie declarations. The popularity of these products will provide important evidence addressing the question whether required front label calorie declarations are likely to result in positive dietary changes among consumers in general.

We caution, however, that although front label declaration of calories seems to hold some promise, additional research is necessary to ensure that such an approach actually would deliver the benefits desired (e.g., enhanced consumer awareness of calorie content; individual consumption choices aligned with appropriate calorie expenditure). It is possible that research will show significant front label emphasis on total calories distracts consumers from focusing on the full nutrition facts, leaving them uninformed about nutrient density and other nutrition attributes, such as fiber, that are essential to healthful diets. Additionally, the costs of label redesign and printing are not insignificant, so wide-spread confidence that new label rules will be an improvement is important.

Kraft recognizes that predicting consumer response to enhancements in the declaration of calories on food labels is a significant challenge. Only carefully designed consumer research that isolates the impact of various contemplated changes will allow FDA to understand the potential downsides and costs, weigh them against the benefits they may deliver, and make appropriate decisions for the future. We urge FDA to consider the following guiding principles when designing these important consumer studies:

- lay out clear objectives and decision criteria to dictate the research design and ensure that critical information is collected to guide decision making;

- use purchase decision at point of sale and what information consumers used to make the decision (i.e. nutrition facts) as the key behaviors to measure;
- include a test and control cell to isolate behaviors and assess impact on behavior; and
- measure the impact of increasing calorie prominence across a variety of categories including categories for which calories has a high, medium and low influence on purchase decisions.

### **Percent Daily Value for Calories**

FDA asks whether establishing a Daily Value (DV) for calories, and presumably requiring that information to appear as part of the nutrition facts, would assist consumers in making sound dietary choices. As with many questions posed in this and the companion ANPR, there is no immediate, obvious answer.

A 2000-calorie DV would give consumers an accurate representation of the place of a food in the diet using the same standard employed for other macronutrients in the nutrition facts box. As with other DVs, a calorie DV could serve as a ready reference tool, helping consumers assess the relative calorie content of various products quickly, at point of purchase. Moreover, with the increased emphasis on nutrient density in dietary recommendations, a calorie DV could help consumers determine if the other nutrients in a product (e.g., calcium, vitamin A) are commensurate with its calorie load in the context of the overall diet. Thus, a calorie DV could add another important dimension to the educational value of the nutrition facts. At the same time, a calorie DV could enhance the prominence of the quantitative declaration of calories, bringing more consumer attention to the undisputed conclusion that “calories count.”

We are mindful, however, that a calorie DV could have disadvantages. Some research, by FDA and others, suggests that many consumers find the information imparted by percent DV declarations confusing and difficult to interpret. In addition, the calorie needs of Americans vary widely by age, gender, and level of physical activity. Thus, a single DV for calories (e.g., the percent the calories in the food are of a 2000 calorie diet) might not be particularly useful for the many consumers who need significantly fewer than 2000 calories per day.

Finally, we are concerned that a calorie DV could lead to consumption of more rather than fewer calories. A majority of our products, and those of other packaged food manufacturers, provide fewer than 200 calories per serving. At a DV of 2000 calories, these products would all be represented as providing 10% or less of the DV, regardless of nutrient density and overall nutritional quality. Consumers might interpret that

percentage as a small contribution to total calories, although whether this interpretation would affect food choices or consumption is unknown.

In short, there are many factors that bear upon the utility of establishing a calorie DV. We urge FDA to consider all of these factors carefully and to conduct the consumer research necessary to test the hypotheses offered by us and other stakeholders to ensure that any action to establish a calorie DV advances, rather than undermines, public health policy with respect to overall calorie intake.

Regardless of whether FDA eventually acts to establish a calorie DV, we suggest that that the nutrition facts reference MyPyramid to encourage consumers to discover the calorie level and eating pattern best suited to their needs. For example, in the asterisked footnote at the bottom of the nutrition facts, FDA might consider adding "For more information about your needs see [www.MyPyramid.gov](http://www.MyPyramid.gov)." In this same footnote, we recommend that the table listing nutrient values for 2000 and 2500-calorie diets be eliminated as outdated. This information was meant to show consumers that macronutrient levels change with calorie levels. However, with the advent of MyPyramid, the better consumer educational approach is to encourage consumers to use the MyPyramid dietary recommendations.

### **Calories from Fat**

We have very little knowledge about consumers' use of the "calories from fat" declaration. Although 39% claim to check calories from fat when reading a label, little is known about how consumers use that information. (*The 2005 Health & Wellness Trends Report, Natural Marketing Institute*) In addition, major reports from IOM/NAS, together with the 2005 Dietary Guidelines, conclude that the type of fat consumed is more relevant in reducing the risk of chronic disease than overall fat intake. Accordingly, the "calories from fat" statement seems to perpetuate outdated dietary guidance, oversimplify current messages about fat, and potentially distract consumers from focusing on the overall importance of total calories for weight control.

In the absence of evidence to suggest that consumers rely on information about calories from fat, and given the very limited space available on many food labels, Kraft shares FDA's view that the "calories from fat" declaration should be eliminated and would support a proposal by FDA to that effect.

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Kraft appreciates the opportunity to comment on this important first step in the agency's efforts to enhance the role of the food label in helping consumers make appropriate dietary choices. We look forward to working cooperatively with the agency as the rulemaking proceeds. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barbara Yehling". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Barbara Yehling

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sheryl A. Marcouiller". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Sheryl A. Marcouiller