

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Vietnam Sets New Requirements on Nutritional Labeling for Pre-packaged Foods

Country: Vietnam

Post: Hanoi

Report Category: Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

Prepared By: Thu Pham

Approved By: Ralph Bean

Report Highlights:

On December 30, 2023, Vietnam's Ministry of Health (MOH) released Circular 29/2023, which provides guidelines for Nutritional Labeling on Food Products. As of January 1, 2026, pre-packaged foods must adhere to the updated nutritional labeling requirements outlined in MOH's Circular 29/2023. These requirements encompass the labeling of nutritional ingredients and reference values for energy, protein, carbohydrates, fat, sodium, and sugar, specific to various categories of pre-packaged foods.

Summary

Vietnam's Ministry of Health (MOH) introduced Circular 29/2023 on December 30, 2023, which serves as a guideline for Nutritional Labeling on Food Products in the country. This marks the first time that MOH has established mandatory requirements for nutritional labeling on pre-packaged foods, following consultations with local industries that began in 2021. The new nutritional labeling requirements are compulsory for all pre-packaged foods manufactured, traded, imported, and distributed in Vietnam starting from January 1, 2026.

Vietnam first notified the draft of the Circular on Nutritional Labeling to the World Trade Organization (WTO) on April 19, 2022, as G/TBT/N/VNM/219. The United States provided comments to this notification on June 17, 2022.

Below are highlights of Circular 29/2023.

Mandatory Contents of Nutritional Labeling

Article 5.1 of Circular 29 requires that pre-packaged foods manufactured, traded, imported, and circulated in Vietnam must be labeled with the following nutritional ingredients:

- Energy
- Protein
- Carbohydrates
- Fat
- Sodium

In addition to the above-mentioned nutritional ingredients, specific nutritional ingredients are required for relevant food categories:

- For beverages and processed milk with added sugar (specified in Food Safety Decree 15/2018) and other foods with added sugar: Total sugars must be added.
- For frying foods: saturated fat must be added.

Article 5.3 of Circular 29 states that nutritional labeling is exempted for pre-packaged foods that either lack nutritional ingredients or contain them in quantities lower than the thresholds specified in Appendix I of Circular 29/2023.

Foods Exempted from Nutritional Labeling

Article 1.2 of Circular 29/2023 provides the exemption of nutritional labeling for the following food categories:

- Food ingredients and foods that are not sold directly to consumers, including ice for food purpose;
- Single-ingredient foods;
- Natural mineral water, bottled water (including those with only added CO₂ and/or flavorings);
- Food-grade salt, refined salt;

- Vinegar and vinegar substitutes, including those that are only added with flavorings;
- Flavorings, additives, food processing aids;
- Food-grade enzymes;
- Tea and coffee that do not contain other additional ingredients except colors and flavorings;
- Health supplements, dietary supplements;
- Alcoholic beverages;
- Fresh and raw foods, processed foods without packaging and sold directly to consumers;

Guidelines on Presenting Nutritional Values on Labels

Article 6.1 provides guidelines on presenting nutritional values per 100g or 100ml of pre-packaged foods or in a serving or per a packaged portion.

- Energy value must be presented in kilocalories (kcal);
- Contents of protein, carbohydrate, fat, saturated fat, and total sugar must be presented in grams (g);
- Sodium content must be presented in milligrams (mg).

In addition, Article 6.2 recommends the add-in of the percentage of reference nutritional values for nutritional ingredients to pre-packaged food labels.

Reference Values for Nutritional Labeling

Appendix II of Circular 29/2023 provides reference values for nutritional ingredients as below:

Nutritional ingredient	Measuring unit	Reference value	Bases for proposal
Energy	Kcal	2000	Based on research on the nutritional needs of Vietnamese people and dietary data from the Vietnam Nutrition Census.
Protein	g	50	According to recommendations of the Codex Alimentarius International Food Standards.
Carbohydrate	g	325	Based on research on recommended nutritional needs for Vietnamese people.
Total Sugar	g	Not available	The reference value has not been recommended.
Fat, including saturated fat	g	56	Fat: According to research and calculations from the nutritional needs of Vietnamese people, fat diets should only provide a maximum of 25% of total dietary energy.

Saturated fat	g	20	Saturated fat: As recommended by Codex.
Sodium	mg	2000	According to recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO) and Codex.

Implementation Period

Vietnam allows an implementation period of two years from the date of issuance of Circular 29/2023 for a transition to new nutritional labeling requirements. Starting from January 1, 2026, pre-packaged food must be labeled in compliance with nutritional labeling requirements provided in MOH’s Circular 29/2023.

Vietnam continues to allow the use and circulation of the products without labels in compliance with Circular 29/2023 but being placed in the market before January 1, 2026, until the expiration date of these products.

Circular 29/2023 (in Vietnamese) can be accessed here <https://luatvietnam.vn/y-te/thong-tu-29-2023-tt-byt-huong-dan-cach-ghi-thanh-phan-dinh-duong-tren-nhan-thuc-pham-286693-d1.html>

Should U.S. exporters have any questions or need clarification, please contact aghanoi@usda.gov

Attachments:

[Unofficial translation - MOH Circular on Nutritional Labeling.doc](#)