

TRUTH in Labeling Act of 2023 (S.3512/H.R.6766)

Several countries, including Canada and Mexico, have policies requiring labels on packaged, processed foods to help people identify those that are high in saturated fat, sugars, and sodium.^{1,2} These labels must appear on the front of the package, where they are easily noticeable and quickly accessible to consumers.



Polling shows that Americans want front-of-package labels too, with 75% responding that they would support a policy requiring labels like these in the United States, including majorities of Democrats (83%), Republicans (68%), and Independents (73%).³

The Transparency, Readability, Understandability, Truth, and Helpfulness in Labeling Act of 2023 (the TRUTH in Labeling Act) directs the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to develop front-of-package labels for foods and beverages sold in the United States.

What will food labels look like under the TRUTH in Labeling Act?

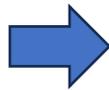
Currently, food labels often spotlight when they're high in "healthy" nutrients, but never when they're high in nutrients we should limit. The TRUTH in Labeling Act will change that by amending the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to require standardized nutrition labels on the front of food packages that must include calories and interpretive information highlighting which products contain high levels of certain nutrients, such as added sugars, sodium, and saturated fat. Foods will still also have Nutrition Facts labels on the back or side of the package.

Highlights the protein (but not the high sodium)

Cholesterol	0mg	0%	0mg	0%
Sodium	580mg	25%	1240mg	54%
Total Carbohydrate	49g	9%	53g	19%
Dietary Fiber	8g	29%	13g	46%

"High in Fiber" (but also high in added sugars)

Insoluble Fiber	5 g	5 g
Total Sugars	12 g	22 g
Includes 12g Added Sugars	12 g 24%	12 g 24%
Protein	5 g 4%	11 g 16%



High In !

Sodium
Saturated Fat
Added Sugars

FDA.gov

BBQ CHICKEN PIZZA RECIPE

BBQ-seasoned grilled white-meat chicken, red onions, cilantro, mozzarella & hickory smoked gouda cheeses over sweet & tangy BBQ sauce

290 CALORIES PER SERVING

NET WT 14.7 OZ (418g)

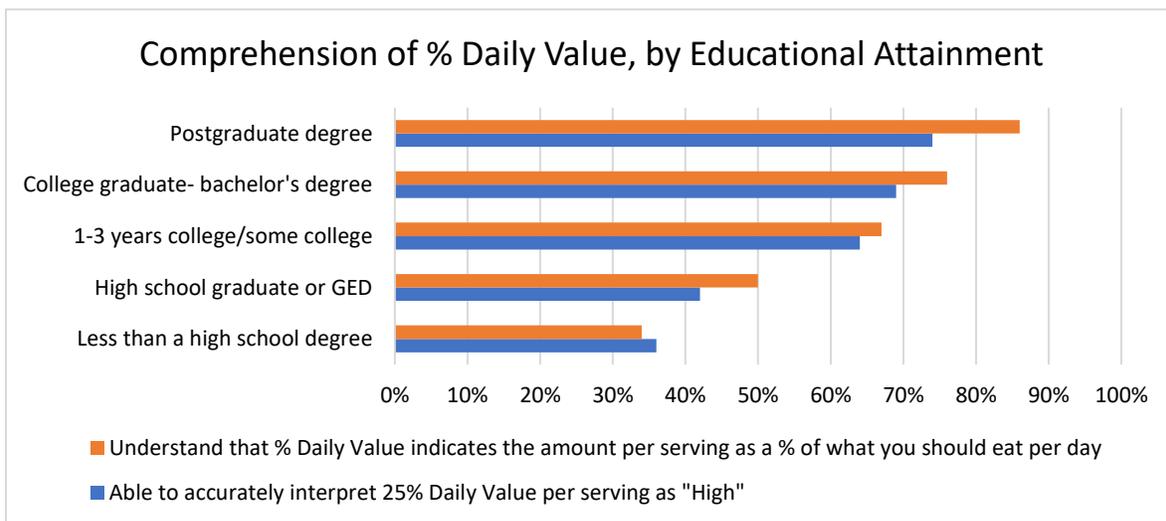
The bill gives FDA flexibility regarding the specific format of the labels, but outlines a few principles for the agency to consider:

- Consumers should be able to quickly and easily comprehend the meaning of the label as an indicator of a product's contribution to a healthy diet without requiring sophisticated nutritional knowledge.
- The information should aim to facilitate consumer selection of healthy products, including by nutritionally at-risk subpopulations.
- FDA should periodically evaluate the labeling system to assess its effectiveness in facilitating consumer selection of healthy products and encouraging manufacturers to offer healthier products.
- Implementation of the label should be accompanied by consumer education campaigns.

The TRUTH in Labeling Act gives FDA two years to issue a proposed rule and three years to issue a final rule. FDA will determine a timeline for industry compliance with the new label.

Why do we need the TRUTH in Labeling Act?

Every day, the average American adult consumes 50% more sodium, 40% more added sugars, and 30% more saturated fat than is recommended.^{4,5} Meanwhile, approximately 47% of adults have hypertension,⁶ 9% of adults have cardiovascular diseases,⁷ and 13% of the population has diabetes, with Type 2 diabetes accounting for approximately 90-95% of these cases.⁷ Each of these conditions is strongly linked to excess intake of salt, added sugar, or saturated fat, and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends limiting their consumption.⁴



Source: FDA Food Safety and Nutrition Survey (2019)

Foods and beverages in the United States already have Nutrition Facts labels, which provide essential information about more than a dozen nutrients. The food industry has also developed a voluntary front-of-package labeling system called "Facts Up Front." However, only 40% of people frequently use the Nutrition Facts label⁸ and since Facts Up Front is voluntary, it only appears on a fraction of foods. Also, the only interpretive component of the Nutrition Facts label and Facts Up Front that is intended to help people understand the nutritional value of a

food in the context of their total daily diet is the percent Daily Value, and FDA surveys show that 37% of people are unable to accurately interpret the % Daily Value, with lower utilization and understanding among groups with less educational attainment.⁹

Front-of-package labels can help people across age groups, languages, levels of education, and nutrition literacy identify foods that are high in saturated fat, added sugars, and sodium (and which should therefore be consumed in moderation). Research shows that front-of-package nutrition labels help empower consumers to make healthier choices and prompt food manufacturers to offer healthier foods.^{10,11}

Co-sponsor the TRUTH in Labeling Act to provide consumers with easy-to-use, front-of-package nutrition labels!

The TRUTH in Labeling Act would require the same front-of-package labels requested in a Citizen Petition filed by CSPI, the Association of State Public Health Nutritionists, and the Association of SNAP Nutrition Education Administrators, available [here](#).

Learn more about how front-of-package nutrition labeling can inform consumers and promote public health [here](#) or by contacting policy@cspinet.org.

References

¹ Government of Canada. Front-of-package nutrition labelling. February 2023. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-labelling-changes/front-package.html>. Accessed April 11, 2023.

² Gobierno de Mexico. Etiquetado frontal de alimentos y bebidas. October 2021. <https://www.gob.mx/promosalud/acciones-y-programas/etiquetado-de-alimentos>. Accessed April 11, 2023.

³ Center for Science in the Public Interest. Widespread support for mandatory front-of-package labeling in the United States. April 2023. <https://www.cspinet.org/resource/widespread-support-mandatory-front-package-labeling-united-states>. Accessed April 11, 2023.

⁴ U.S. Department of Agriculture & U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. What We Eat in America, Nutrient Intakes from Food and Beverages, NHANES 2017-2018. https://www.ars.usda.gov/ARSUserFiles/80400530/pdf/1718/tables_1-56_2017-2018.pdf

⁵ U.S. Department of Agriculture & U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. What We Eat in America, Food Pattern Equivalent Intakes from Food, NHANES 2017-2018. https://www.ars.usda.gov/ARSUserFiles/80400530/pdf/FPED/tables_1-4_FPED_1718.pdf

⁶ Tsao CW, Aday AW, Almarzooq ZI, Beaton AZ, Bittencourt MS, Boehme AK, et al. Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics—2022 Update: A Report From the American Heart Association. *Circulation*. 2022;145(8):e153–e639.

⁷ U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Diabetes Statistics Report, 2020. 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pdfs/data/statistics/national-diabetes-statistics-report.pdf>

⁸ Storz MA. Nutrition facts labels: who is actually reading them and does it help in meeting intake recommendations for nutrients of public health concern? *BMC Public Health*. 2023;23:1947.

⁹ U.S Food and Drug Administration. FSANS Explorer: FDA's Food Safety and Nutrition Survey (2019). <https://fsans-explorer.fda.gov/>. Accessed April 10, 2023.

¹⁰ Song J, Brown MK, Tan M, et al. Impact of color-coded and warning nutrition labelling schemes: A systematic review and network meta-analysis. *PLoS Med*. Oct 2021;18(10):e1003765.

¹¹ Reyes M, Smith Taillie L, Popkin B, Kanter R, Vandevijvere S, Corvalán C. Changes in the amount of nutrient of packaged foods and beverages after the initial implementation of the Chilean Law of Food Labelling and Advertising: A nonexperimental prospective study. *PLoS Med*. Jul 2020;17(7):e1003220.