

EUVEPRO



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POSITION PAPER ON THE NUTRITION CLAIM "Free from Cholesterol"

(Amendment to the Annex of Regulation N° 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims)

This position paper should be used in the efforts of ENSA and EUVEPRO for an Amendment to the Annex of Regulation N° 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims on National and European level, as well as the National Food Industry and European Federations (CIAA, FEVIA, ANIA, etc.)

Nutrition Claim: 'Free from Cholesterol'

CHOLESTEROL-FREE or 0% Cholesterol

A claim that a food does not contain cholesterol, and any claim likely to have the same meaning for the consumer, may only be made where the product contains:

- no more than 0,005g/100 g (solids) or no more than 0,005g/100 ml (liquids) and
- less than 1,5 g saturated fat per 100 g (solids) or 0,75 saturated fat per 100 ml (liquids), and
- no more than 10% of energy of saturated fat
- or
- 70% of the total fatty acids are unsaturated.

In the case of foods naturally cholesterol-free, the term "naturally may be used as a prefix to this claim.

Justification:

This claim is based on the Codex definition; the references to 70% of the total fatty acids are generally approved.

There are two sources of cholesterol in the human body; one is dietary cholesterol and the other is cholesterol produced in the body itself.

The human body produces cholesterol itself in sufficient quantities.

In general in healthy food guidelines it is recommended to limit the intake of cholesterol through food.

Cholesterol containing foods are generally also high in saturated fats, which are known to have a negative impact on blood cholesterol levels.
Therefore plant-based foods which do not contain any cholesterol can help in keeping the dietary daily intake under control.

Therefore a nutrition claim 'free from cholesterol' is scientifically substantiated.

- Recommendations:

International recommendations to limit the intake of cholesterol in the diet

According to **international nutrition recommendations**, it is advised to limit the daily dietary intake of cholesterol to maximum **300 mg cholesterol per day**.

See recommendation of the

* American Heart Association (1)

* European guidelines on cardiovascular disease prevention (2)

* WHO (5)

National recommendations to limit the intake of cholesterol in the diet

On national level the **Belgian Health Council** (Hoge Gezondheidsraad) recently published new recommendations 'Voedingsaanbevelingen voor België' – revised November 2006 (HGR dossier 7145-2)(3)

Limitation of the intake of cholesterol to a **maximum level of 300 mg per day** is also recommended.

In the last version (dd sept 2006) of the food table published by **Nubel vzw**, it is also stated that a too high intake of cholesterol through the diet is negative for health and a **maximal intake of 300 mg/day is recommended**.(4).

The Nubel vzw has a scientific committee with Mr C. Crémer as president (Director FOD); members of this scientific committee are key opinion leaders of all Belgian Universities.

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS:

The codex alimentarius GUIDELINES FOR USE OF **NUTRITION** AND HEALTH **CLAIMS** CAC/GL 23-1997, Rev. 1-2004 provides for a 'free from cholesterol claim'; the conditions set forward are as follows:

"Cholesterol – free"

not more than 0,005g/100 g (solids) or not more than 0,005g/100 ml (liquids) and less than 1,5 g saturated fat per 100 g (solids) or 0,75 saturated fat per 100 ml (liquids), and no more than 10% of energy of saturated fat.

By lack of community legislation relating to nutrition and health claims the national authorities have applied since years the Codex Guidelines as a basis on national level.

For example the **French DGCCRF** supports the 'free from cholesterol' claim in accordance with the codex alimentarius GUIDELINES FOR USE OF NUTRITION AND HEALTH CLAIMS CAC/GL 23-1997, Rev. 1-2004:

“Exempt de cholestérol”
≤5 mg/100g (solides) ≤5 mg/100ml(liquides)
et pour les deux allégations
moins de 1.5 g de graisses saturées par 100g (solides),0.75 g de graisses saturées par 100 ml (liquides) et 10% d'énergie ou ≤ 1g/100 kcal provenant des acides gras saturés

Therefore an amendment to the Annexe of the Nutrition and health claim regulation N° 1924/2006/EG to include this claim is requested.

- Rationale for ENSA and EUVEPRO

Soya products are 100 % vegetable made from soy beans and therefore naturally exempt from cholesterol. They are also low in saturated fatty acids. Therefore they fit in a healthy balanced diet.

As the consumer decides every day about what he/she will be eating, he or she can do something about the intake of cholesterol through food in the framework of a balanced and varied diet low in cholesterol.

In order to help the consumer to make a healthy food choice, the claim “free from cholesterol” is highly important.

If you want to keep the intake of cholesterol coming from food under control, you can decide to change the eating habits by replacing cholesterol rich foods by foods from vegetable origin, such as soy foods, which are naturally exempt from cholesterol.

- Scientific References:

- 1 AHA Scientific statement – Diet and lifestyle recommendations revision 2006 –A scientific statement from the American Heart Association Nutrition Committee
Circulation 2006;114:82-96
2. European guidelines on cardiovascular disease prevention in clinical practice – Third Joint Task force of European and other Societies on Cardiovascular disease prevention in clinical practice
European Heart Journal 2003; 24,1601-1610
3. Hoge Gezondheidsraad - Voedingsaanbevelingen voor België – Herziening november 2006
HGR dossiernummer 7145-2
4. Belgische Voedingsmiddelentabel – NUBEL vierde uitgave, vijfde druk september 2006

5. WHO. Report of the Joint WHO/FAO Expert Consultation on Diet, Nutrition and the Prevention of Chronic Disease (2002: Geneva, Switzerland). WHO Technical Report Series 916. WHO Geneva, 2003.

6. Weggemans RM, Zock PL, Katan MB. Dietary cholesterol from eggs increases the ratio of total cholesterol to high-density lipoprotein cholesterol in humans: a meta-analysis. *Am J Clin Nutr* 2001;73:883-91

7. ATP III Final Report

V. Adopting Healthful Lifestyle Habits to Lower LDL Cholesterol and Reduce CHD Risk *Circulation* 2002;106:3253

CONTACT

ENSA

EUVEPRO

Should you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to contact us at:

ENSA Secretariat
118 Avenue de Cortenberg
1000 Brussels
Tel: + 32 2 741 62 15
Fax: + 32 2 739 16 11

website: www.ensa-eu.org
email: Secretariat@ensa-eu.org

EUVEPRO
Boulevard Saint Michel 77-79
B-1040 Brussels
Tel: + 32 2 743 87 43
Fax: + 32 2 732 51 02

website: www.euvepro.eu
email: euvepro@agep.eu