

A Global perspective on consumer understanding and use of nutrition information on food labels

Session Description

In many parts of the world, food companies, consumers and governments are re-examining the provision of nutrition information on food and drink product labels. For example, the European Commission is proposing mandatory front of pack nutrition labeling. In a climate where the prevalence of diet, nutrition and health related diseases is increasing, it is important that the nutrition information provided on label is appropriate and understandable to the consumer, and has an impact on food choice behaviours. The nutrition label is an important vehicle through which food manufacturers can communicate essential information about the nutritional value and composition of their product. Potentially, this represents a valuable tool to help consumers make informed decisions about their diet and lifestyle.

The Food Information Organisations globally have been conducting consumer research on attitudes and trends in the perception and use of this information on label, and consumers' attitudes to food, nutrition and health, for many years.

Purpose

This session would examine the most recent consumer research evidence globally, of consumers understanding, use, and attitudes towards nutrition information on food and drink labels. The research is both qualitative and quantitative.

Outcomes – knowledge and action points

A Global overview of the current nutrition labelling situation will be presented, and research evidence on consumer use and understanding of those labels, and their nutrition knowledge with respect to the understanding and use of the labels.

Session Chair: Dr Tee E-Siong, President of the Nutrition Society of Malaysia

Session Topics and Speakers:

Topic 1: *Consumer Perception and Use of Nutrition and Health Information on Food Labels; the USA perspective*

Speaker: David B. Schmidt, President and CEO, International Food Information Council, USA

Topic 2: *Nutrition Labelling Status, and Future Developments: The Asian Perspective*

Speaker: George Fuller, Executive Director, Asian Food Information Centre, Thailand

Topic 3: *Consumer Views on Nutrition Information on Label: The European Perspective*

Speaker: Dr Josephine Wills, Director General, European Food Information Council, Belgium