



Department  
of Health

# Technical guidance on nutrition labelling

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# Introduction

## Purpose

This Guidance explains the nutrition-related requirements under Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers (hereinafter referred to as EU FIC).

This is a living document, which will be reviewed periodically and topics will be added as necessary. It will be amalgamated with technical guidance on general labelling and allergens issues once this is available.

This Guidance should be read in conjunction with the separate Q&A guidance on EU FIC produced by the European Commission.

## Status

This Guidance has been produced with the aim of providing informal, non-statutory advice and should be read in conjunction with [EU FIC](#) (relevant sections of which are referred to as appropriate). It is not exhaustive.

The notes and examples in this Guidance should not be taken as an authoritative statement or interpretation of the law. Ultimately, the decision as to whether or not a particular aspect of nutrition labelling is acceptable is for the courts and tribunals.

It is the responsibility of individual organisations to ensure their compliance with the law. You may wish to seek advice from your Home or Primary Authority.

You may also choose to contact trade associations such as the British Retail Consortium (BRC) and the Food and Drink Federation (FDF) for advice on nutrition labelling issues relating to your sector.

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# 1. Scope of nutrition labelling provisions

## Application of nutrition labelling rules

Mandatory nutrition labelling will apply to the majority of prepacked food. EU FIC also contains rules governing the provision of voluntary nutrition information in the following circumstances:

- “repeat” nutrition labelling on “front of pack” of prepacked foods
- nutrition labelling for non-prepacked foods
- nutrition (energy) labelling for alcoholic drinks

The nutrition labelling rules do not apply to:

- Food supplements (these fall within the scope of Directive 2002/46/EC); or
- Natural mineral waters (these fall within the scope of Directive 2009/54/EC).

In addition, the nutrition labelling rules in EU FIC apply without prejudice to Foods for Specific Groups (FSG), regulated by Regulation 609/2013 and its delegated acts. So while EU FIC applies to Foods for Specific Groups, there may be specific requirements in the FSG regulations that take precedence over EU FIC.

## Exemptions for prepacked foods

Foodstuffs exempted from the mandatory nutrition declaration are listed in Annex V of EU FIC. Exemptions relate mainly to minimally processed foods and those with little nutritional value.

Food directly supplied by manufacturer of small quantities of products to the final consumer or to local retail establishments directly supplying the final consumer is also exempt under Annex V point 19.

We interpret “manufacturer of small quantities” to be a micro business under the EU and UK definition: less than 10 employees and a turnover/balance sheet total of less than €2m (£1.4m)<sup>1</sup>.

We interpret “local” retail establishments to be those within the supplying manufacturer’s own county plus the greater of either the neighbouring county or counties or 30 miles (50 kilometres) from the boundary of the county the manufacturer is in.

## How the exemption works

Food from manufacturers meeting the definition of a micro business, supplied direct to the consumer (including distance sales, e.g. internet sales), need not have nutrition labelling under this exemption.

Food from those micro businesses supplied to the consumer via a third party, if this third party is a local retail<sup>2</sup> establishment supplying direct to the consumer, need not have nutrition labelling under this exemption.

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<sup>1</sup> Commission Recommendation of 6 May 2003 concerning the definition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (2003/361/EC)

<sup>2</sup> “retail” means the handling and/or processing of food and its storage at the point of sale or delivery to the final consumer, and includes distribution terminals, catering operations, factory canteens, institutional catering, restaurants and other similar food service operations, shops, supermarket distribution centres and wholesale outlets.”

## 2. Dates of application of nutrition labelling provisions

### Application dates

EU FIC will make nutrition labelling mandatory for the majority of pre-packed foods from 13 December 2016.

If you provide a nutrition declaration on a voluntary basis before 13 December 2016, it must still comply with the nutrition labelling provisions of EU FIC.

If you make a nutrition and/or health claim or add vitamins and/or minerals to a foodstuff, you must make a nutrition declaration in accordance with EU FIC.

### Requirement to follow all relevant nutrition labelling provisions

If you choose to voluntarily comply with one aspect of the nutrition labelling provisions of EU FIC prior to 13 December 2016, then you must follow all the relevant nutrition labelling provisions which apply to that product.

## 3. Mandatory (“back of pack”) nutrition labelling

### Content of nutrition declaration

#### Mandatory nutrition declaration

You must declare the following items:

- a) energy value (in both kilojoules (kJ) and kilocalories (kcal)); and
- b) the amounts (in grams (g)) of fat, saturates, carbohydrate, sugars, protein and salt

#### Declaration of salt rather than sodium

The term “salt” must be used since it is more readily comprehensible by consumers than “sodium”. The amount of salt in a product is calculated by determining the total sodium in a product (naturally occurring, and that deriving from salt and other additives) and multiplying by 2.5.

#### Highlighting of no added salt in a product

Where appropriate, you may highlight that salt content in your product is exclusively due to the presence of naturally occurring sodium by means of a statement in close proximity to the nutrition declaration, for instance:

*“This product contains no added salt. Salt content is due to naturally occurring sodium.”*

#### Voluntary declaration of “supplementary” nutrients

You can, on a voluntary basis, supplement the mandatory nutrition declaration with information on the amounts (in grams (g)) of one or more of the following:

- mono-unsaturates
- polyunsaturates
- polyols
- starch
- fibre
- any of the vitamins or minerals listed in point 1 of Part A of Annex XIII, and present in significant amounts as defined in point 2 of Part A of Annex XIII.

No other nutrient or substance may be declared in the nutrition declaration

#### Nutrition or health claim in respect of “supplementary” nutrients

If you make a nutrition or health claim in respect of any of the supplementary nutrients, you must declare them in the same field of vision as the nutrition declaration.

#### Provision of % reference intakes for vitamins and/or minerals

If you declare vitamins and minerals, you have to provide % reference intakes for them in addition to absolute amounts. (See the sections entitled ‘Declaration of vitamins and minerals: Significant amounts’ below and ‘Nutrient reference values (“Reference Intakes”)’ in Chapter VII for further details.)

*Note that for labelling purposes, the Commission's decision is that, you should use the generic term "reference intakes" and not NRVs.*

## Declaration of other nutrients

You may declare only the nutrients contained in the "mandatory" and "supplementary" lists in the nutrition declaration.

However, where you make a nutrition or health claim in respect of a substance not referred to in either list, you must declare the amount of the substance in the same field of vision as the nutrition labelling (but not within the nutrition table). An example of such a claim would be "High in Omega-3".

The units of measurement used to express the amount of any additional substance must be appropriate for the individual substance concerned, e.g. milligrams (mg) for Omega-3.

## Labelling of trans fats

Information on trans fats cannot be provided as these are not included in the list of mandatory or supplementary nutrients.

## Declaration of cholesterol

As cholesterol is not included on the list of mandatory or voluntary nutrients, you cannot declare it.

## Declaration of vitamins and minerals: Significant amounts

### Declaration of vitamins and/or minerals on a voluntary basis

The vitamins and/or minerals have to be present in "significant amounts". This is defined in Annex XIII of EU FIC as follows:

*As a rule, the following values should be taken into consideration in deciding what constitutes a significant amount:*

- *15% of the nutrient reference values specified in point 1 of Part A of Annex XIII supplied by 100g or 100ml in the case of products other than beverages,*
- *7.5% of the nutrient reference values specified in point 1 of Part A of Annex XIII supplied by 100ml in the case of beverages, or*
- *15% of the nutrient reference values specified in point 1 of Part A of Annex XIII per portion if the package contains only a single portion.*

"Point 1" of Part A of Annex XIII provides the nutrient reference values (NRVs)<sup>3</sup> for each of the vitamins and minerals that may be declared under EU FIC.

## Rules on "significant amounts" for single serve portions

If you have a single serve portion of a food or a beverage, then you must have 15% of the nutrient reference value (NRV) for the vitamin(s) and/or mineral(s) in question (see the third bullet of the definition for "significant amounts" quoted above).

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<sup>3</sup> For labelling purposes, you should use the generic term "reference intakes".

## **Declaration of vitamins and/or minerals when a nutrition or health claim is made about them and/or when vitamins and/or minerals have been added to a product**

Under the EU Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation (NHCR)<sup>4</sup> and the EU Addition of Vitamins and Minerals and of Other Substances to Food Regulation,<sup>5</sup> nutrition labelling is mandatory if a claim is made or the food is fortified. In both cases the vitamin or mineral must be present in a significant amount. You should follow the procedure outlined above and below to determine whether your product meets the test for significant amounts.

### **Application of the “significant amounts” rule in the event of a “Source of” nutrition claim where the typical serving size is less than 100g or 100ml**

Where the typical serving size of a product is less than 100g or 100ml, the Article 5(1)(d) NHCR requirement has to be considered alongside the “significant amounts” provisions in the NHCR Annex and EU FIC Annex XIII, which say that 15% of the NRV per 100g or per 100ml should be taken into consideration (in the case of products other than beverages) when deciding what constitutes a significant amount.

Let us take the example of a hard cheese. If 30g hard cheese is taken to be the quantity that can “reasonably be expected to be consumed”, it would, in our view, be reasonable to require that the significant amount of the vitamin and/or mineral be present in 30g in order to satisfy the relevant conditions of use for e.g. a “source of calcium” claim. Therefore, a 30g portion would, as a rule, have to contain a minimum of 15% of the NRV for calcium set out in EU FIC (Annex XIII, Part A), i.e.  $15\% \times 800\text{mg} = 120\text{mg}$ .

The 30g hard cheese that might reasonably be expected to be consumed as one serving is evidently substantially less than the 100g reference quantity mentioned in Annex XIII of EU FIC. In order not to mislead consumers, a Source of [name of Vitamin(s)] and/or [name of Mineral(s)] nutrition claim should be based on 30g hard cheese whenever the claim is made, i.e. whether it is made on a 30g single serve portion or on a larger pack.

## **Expression per 100g or per 100ml and per portion or per consumption unit (see also Table A of the flow chart in the Annex to this guidance)**

### **Amount of food to which the nutrition declaration relates**

You must express the nutrition information (energy value and amounts of nutrients) per 100g, per 100ml or per portion of the food.

### **Per portion nutrition information on “back of pack”**

You may give nutrition information per portion (e.g. half a pizza) and/or per consumption unit (a single unit of food you might take from a packet, e.g. one biscuit or one chicken nugget), as long as this information is given in addition to the mandatory per 100g or per 100ml information.

When you provide nutrition information per portion and/or per consumption unit as set out above, this information must be easily understandable by the consumer (e.g. “one burger”), and

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<sup>4</sup> Regulation (EC) 1924/2006 on Nutrition and Health Claims made on Foods

<sup>5</sup> Regulation (EC) 1925/2006 on the Addition of Vitamins and Minerals and of Other Substances to Food

you must quantify the portion or consumption unit used on the label in close proximity to the nutrition declaration.

You must also state the number of portions and/or consumption units contained in the package. EU FIC does not specify where this information should be placed on the packaging.

## Presentation of nutrition declaration

### Presentation of nutrition information on the packaging

In the case of prepacked food, mandatory nutrition information must appear directly on the package or on a label attached thereto.

You must present the mandatory nutrition declaration (Article 30(1)) and any supplementary nutrients (Article 30(2)):

- in the same field of vision
- together in a clear format
- in the order of presentation provided for in Annex XV.

### Placement of mandatory nutrition information on the packaging

While it is common practice to provide the mandatory nutrition declaration on the back of pack, EU FIC does not require this. You are therefore free to provide the information on any surface of your packaging, provided that it meets the minimum font size requirements (see below for details).

### Order of the mandatory nutrition information

You must present the information in the following order: energy, fat, saturates, carbohydrate, sugars, protein and salt.

### Order of the “supplementary” nutrients

The table below shows the required order of presentation of the mandatory and, as appropriate, supplementary nutrients, together with the units of measurement to be used:

Energy	kJ/kcal
Fat	g
of which	
- saturates	g
- mono-unsaturates	g
- polyunsaturates	g
Carbohydrate	g
of which	

## Mandatory (“back of pack”) nutrition labelling

- sugars	g
- polyols	g
- starch	g
Fibre	g
Protein	g
Salt	g
Vitamins and minerals	The units specified in point 1 of Part A of Annex XIII

## Requirement for the nutrition declaration to be in tabular format

If space permits, you must present the nutrition declaration in tabular format with the numbers aligned. Where space does not permit, the declaration must appear in linear format.

## Application of legibility rules to the nutrition declaration

You must print the mandatory nutrition declaration on the package or on the label in characters using a font size where the “x-height” (as illustrated below) is a minimum of 1.2mm.

## Definition of x-height



Legend:

- 1 Ascender line
- 2 Cap line
- 3 Mean line
- 4 Baseline
- 5 Descender line
- 6 x-height
- 7 Font size

## Minimum font size for the nutrition declaration in small packages

If the largest surface of your package or container has an area of less than 80 cm<sup>2</sup>, then the minimum “x-height” (see definition above) is reduced to 0.9mm.

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If the largest surface of your package or container has an area of less than 25 cm<sup>2</sup>, then your product is exempt from the requirement to provide a mandatory nutrition declaration.

## 4. “Front of pack” nutrition labelling<sup>6</sup>

### Content of “front of pack” nutrition labels

#### Aim of “front of pack” (FoP) nutrition labelling

EU FIC allows voluntary repetition on pre-packed food labels of those elements of the mandatory nutrition declaration that are of key importance for public health. The aim is to provide consumers with at-a-glance nutrition information, so that they can make informed food choices and can balance their diets and control their energy intake.

#### Format for FoP labelling

If you choose to provide this repeat information, it must be in one of the following formats:

Energy value (kJ and kcal) alone; or

Energy value (kJ and kcal) plus amounts (in grams) of fat, saturates, sugars and salt (energy + 4)

#### Expression per 100g or per 100ml and per portion or per consumption unit (see also Table A of the flow chart in the Annex)

#### Expression of FoP information per 100g or per 100ml and/or per portion

You can provide FoP nutrition information in the following formats:

- per 100g or per 100ml only (applies to energy value alone and energy +4);
- per 100g or per 100ml plus per portion and/or per consumption unit (applies to energy value alone and energy +4);
- if you provide information on energy + 4, you can express the amounts of the four nutrients per portion and/or consumption unit only, but in this case you must express the energy value both per 100g or per 100ml and per portion and/or consumption unit

#### Presentation of portion size information

You must quantify the portion and/or consumption unit used in close proximity to the nutrition declaration.

#### Statement of number of portions

If you provide nutrition information per portion on both front and back of pack, it is sufficient in our view to state the number of portions just once on the package. (EU FIC does not specify where on the packaging this information has to be placed.)

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<sup>6</sup> This Chapter should be read in conjunction with the separate [Guide to creating a front of pack \(FoP\) nutrition label for pre-packed products sold through retail outlets](#).

## Presentation

### Placement on packaging of repeat nutrition information

While in practice the repeat information usually is provided on front of pack, EU FIC does not require this<sup>7</sup>. The Regulation simply specifies that this information has to be presented in the “principal field of vision”. This is defined as *“the field of vision of a package which is most likely to be seen at first glance by the consumer at the time of purchase and that enables the consumer to immediately identify a product in terms of its character or nature and, if applicable, its brand name.”* The Regulation goes on to say that if *“a package has several identical principal fields of vision, the principal field of vision is the one chosen by the food business operator”*.

### Application of legibility rules to FoP labelling

You have to provide the repeat nutrition information in a font size where the “x-height” (see section entitled “Presentation of nutrition declaration” in Chapter III above for further details) is a minimum of 1.2mm.

### FoP legibility rules for small packages

Where the largest surface of a package has an area of less than 80cm<sup>2</sup>, the derogation allowing the minimum “x-height” to be reduced to 0.9mm does not apply to FoP labels. The minimum “x-height” of 1.2mm would still apply to FoP labels in this scenario.

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<sup>7</sup> Although there is no legal requirement for it to appear on the front of pack, repeat nutrition information is referred to in this section as “FoP information” as a convenient form of shorthand.

## 5. Non-prepacked foods

### Scope

#### Categories of food covered

Non-prepacked food covers the following categories:

- Foods offered for sale to the final consumer or mass caterers without prepackaging;
- Foods packed on the sales premises at the consumer's request; and
- Foods prepacked for direct sale.

### Content

#### Nutrition labelling requirements for non-prepacked food

There is no requirement in EU FIC for nutrition information to be provided for food sold non-prepacked. But if you provide information voluntarily, it must be in one of the following formats:

- the full "mandatory" nutrition declaration (energy value plus amounts of fat, saturates, carbohydrate, sugars, protein and salt); or
- energy value only; or
- energy value plus amounts of fat, saturates, sugars and salt (energy + 4).

#### Nutrition information for non-prepacked food displayed on shelf barkers

If you provide nutrition information on shelf barkers, you need to comply with the nutrition labelling provisions as set out above. You cannot therefore pick and choose the nutrients that you declare, e.g. energy and fat only. So, assuming you did not want to provide the full "mandatory" nutrition declaration, you would have to give information on either energy value alone, or energy + 4.

#### Expression per 100g or per 100ml and per portion or per consumption unit (see also Table B of the flow chart in the Annex)

#### Expression of nutrition information per 100g or per 100ml and/or per portion

You can provide nutrition information on non-prepacked food in the following formats:

- per 100g or per 100ml only (applies to the full "mandatory" nutrition declaration, energy value alone and energy +4);
- per 100g or per 100ml plus per portion and/or per consumption unit (applies to the full "mandatory" nutrition declaration, energy value alone and energy + 4);
- per portion and/or per consumption unit only (applies to energy value alone and energy + 4).

## Per portion information on energy + 4

If you provide information on energy + 4 and express the four nutrients per portion and/or consumption unit alone, there is no requirement to express the energy component both per 100g or per 100ml and per portion and/or per consumption unit, as would be the case for “front of pack” labels. The energy component may therefore also be expressed per portion and/or per consumption unit alone on non-prepacked food.

## Nutrition labelling requirements for non-prepacked food in the event of a nutrition and/or health claim

### Position from 13 December 2014

The separate Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation (Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006) will exempt all non-prepacked food (i.e. including all the categories outlined under “Scope” above) from nutrition labelling.

## Presentation of nutrition information

### Application of legibility rules to non-prepacked food

There is no requirement to meet the minimum font size requirements on nutrition labelling for non-prepacked food.

### Placement of voluntary nutrition information on non-prepacked food

EU FIC does not specify where the information has to be placed.

If, however, you are signed up to the Responsibility Deal pledge on energy labelling in out of home (OOH) settings, then you have committed to providing information on energy alone at the point of choice (e.g. next to the name of the food on a menu board in a fast food outlet).

## National measures

### UK position on mandating nutrition information for non-prepacked food

There are no current plans to adopt a “national measure” (as permitted by EU FIC) to introduce mandatory nutrition labelling for non-prepacked food.

## 6. Alcoholic drinks

### EU FIC provisions for nutrition labelling of alcoholic drinks

EU FIC exempts all alcoholic drinks above 1.2%abv from mandatory nutrition labelling. It does, however, allow alcoholic drinks to carry an energy declaration on a voluntary basis without the need to provide a full nutrition declaration.

The Commission was due to submit a report regarding the mandatory labelling of ingredients and nutrition information on alcoholic drinks, with a particular focus on energy labelling, by 13 December 2014, and to potentially accompany this with any legislative proposals. Member States are still awaiting the production of this report but it is now thought that it may become available later 2016.

### Voluntary energy only declaration

You can make a voluntary energy declaration on alcoholic drinks without the need to provide the full list of (“back of pack”) nutrients, which would otherwise be mandatory on prepacked food. You would need to provide this energy declaration in kJ (kilojoules) and kcal (kilocalories), and on a per 100ml basis. You may additionally provide the energy information per portion<sup>8</sup>.

Alternatively, you may provide a full (“back of pack”) nutrition declaration (see Chapter III above for details) on a voluntary basis on alcoholic drinks. This must be expressed per 100ml. You may additionally provide this information per portion<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> See also Table C of the flow chart in the Annex.

<sup>9</sup> See also Table A of the flow chart in the Annex.

## 7. General

### Reference intakes

#### Definition of reference intakes

Reference intakes (RIs) are benchmarks for the amount of energy and key nutrients that can be consumed on a daily basis in order to maintain a healthy diet.

Part B of Annex XIII of EU FIC sets out the RIs for energy, total fat, saturates, carbohydrate, sugars, protein and salt (the elements of the mandatory nutrition declaration). These are values for an adult, and are based on an average-sized woman, doing an average amount of physical activity.

#### Provision of information on percentages of reference intakes

The provision of information on percentages of the RIs set out in Part B of Annex XIII is voluntary. In addition to declaring energy and key nutrients in absolute amounts, you may also express them as a percentage of their respective RIs.

Provision of % reference intakes per 100g/100ml and/or per portion/consumption unit

You may provide this information in the following ways<sup>10</sup>:

- Per 100g or per 100ml only; or
- Per 100g or per 100ml plus per portion and/or per consumption unit; or
- Per portion and/or per consumption unit.

#### Requirement for the additional statement “Reference intake of an average adult (8 400 kJ/2 000 kcal)”

If you provide any of the information on % RIs per 100g or per 100ml, you must provide the additional statement in close proximity to the information on reference intakes<sup>11</sup>.

For example, you would have to provide the statement if you chose to give the information on % RIs per 100g or per 100ml only, or per 100g or per 100ml plus per portion and/or per consumption unit.

You would also have to provide the statement if you chose to provide the percentage reference intake for energy both per 100g or per 100ml and per portion when you label energy + 4 on “front of pack” (FoP) as follows:

- you provide the absolute values and % RIs for the four FoP nutrients (fat, saturates, sugars and salt) per portion only; and
- as required by EU FIC, you give the absolute value for energy both per 100g or per 100ml and per portion and/or per consumption unit.

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<sup>10</sup> See also Tables A-C of the flow chart in the Annex.

<sup>11</sup> EU FIC Article 32(5)

There is no requirement to provide the additional statement if you give the information on % RIs per portion and/or per consumption unit only.

## **RIs for other “population groups” (e.g. children)**

From 13 December 2014, you will be able to use only the reference intakes listed in Annex XIII unless, as provided for by EU FIC, the European Commission adopts rules on reference intakes for “specific population groups” or the UK adopts national measures in the meantime.

## **Nutrient reference values (“Reference intakes”)**

### **Definition of nutrient reference values**

Nutrient reference values (NRVs) are guidelines about the amount of vitamins and minerals that it is recommended should be consumed on a daily basis in order to maintain a healthy diet.

Point 1 of Part A of Annex XIII of EU FIC sets out the NRVs for those vitamins and minerals which may be declared under the Regulation.

### **Mandatory information on percentages of NRVs (“Reference intakes”)**

If you declare vitamins and/or minerals on your label, it is mandatory to express this information as a percentage of the nutrient reference values (NRVs) set out in point 1 of Part A of Annex XIII. You must provide this information in addition to the absolute values for vitamins and/or minerals. (See also the section entitled “Declaration of vitamins and minerals: Significant amounts” in Chapter III above.)

Information on % nutrient reference values must be expressed per 100g or per 100ml. You may additionally provide this information per portion and/or per consumption unit<sup>12</sup>.

NOTE: For labelling purposes, you should use the generic term “reference intakes”.

## **Calculation of energy value and amounts of nutrients**

### **Calculation of energy value**

Energy value must be calculated using the conversion factors listed in Annex XIV.

### **Relation of energy value and amounts of nutrients declared to food as sold vs as prepared**

EU FIC stipulates that the energy value and amounts of nutrients must be those of the food as sold. However, the Regulation also allows you to relate the nutrition information to the food after preparation, provided that sufficiently detailed preparation instructions are given.

### **Methodologies used to arrive at declared values for nutrients**

Declared values must be average values based on the following methodologies:

- the manufacturer’s analysis of the food;
- a calculation from the known or actual average values of the ingredients used; or

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<sup>12</sup> See also Table A of the flow chart in the Annex.

- a calculation from generally established and accepted data.

In the UK, “generally established and accepted data” can be found in book form in McCance & Widdowson’s *The Composition of Foods*<sup>13</sup> or online in McCance & Widdowson’s *The Composition of Foods integrated dataset (CoF IDS)* at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/composition-of-foods-integrated-dataset-cofid>

## Definition of “average values”

The term “average value” in this context is defined in the [European Commission’s guidance on the setting of tolerances for nutrient values](#) as:

*“the value that best represents the amount of the nutrient which a given food contains, and allows for natural variability of foodstuffs, seasonal variability, patterns of consumptions and other factors which may cause the actual value to vary.”*

## Tolerances

### Level of accuracy required for declaring amounts of nutrients

It is recognised that it is not always possible for foods to contain the exact amount of nutrients labelled, owing to natural variations and variations arising from production and length of storage. However, it is important that the actual nutrient content of foods should not deviate substantially from labelled amounts, as the consumer could otherwise be misled.

As a result, the European Commission has drawn up, in collaboration with EU Member States, [guidance on the setting of tolerances for nutrient values](#). The document sets tolerances for:

- the nutrition declaration under EU FIC;
- compliance with the levels of nutrients and other substances specified in Regulation (EC) No. 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims;
- controlling the levels of vitamins and minerals specified under Regulation (EC) No. 1925/2006 on the addition of vitamins and minerals; and
- vitamins and minerals in food supplements.

The guidance also contains information on the rounding (including the number of decimal places or significant figures) of declared values (see also section entitled “Negligible amounts” below).

## Analysis of fibre content for nutrition labelling purposes

### Methods of fibre analysis

The various methods for analysing fibre are set out in the European Commission’s [guidance document on Methods of Analysis for Determination of the Fibre Content declared on a Label \(December 2012\)](#).

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<sup>13</sup>Food Standards Agency (2002), McCance & Widdowson’s *The Composition of Foods*, Seventh summary edition. Cambridge: Royal Society of Chemistry.

## Negligible amounts

### Labelling of negligible amounts of nutrients

Section 6 of the European Commission's [guidance document on setting tolerances for nutrient values declared on a label](#) sets out rounding guidelines for nutrition declarations. These guidelines cover the amounts of nutrients that can be regarded as negligible and can therefore be declared as "0g" or as "<x g". The following table illustrates how negligible amounts for the mandatory ("back of pack") nutrients may be declared:

Nutrient	Negligible amount	Nutrition declaration
Fat, Carbohydrate, Sugars, Protein	No detectable amount is present or concentration is $\leq 0.5\text{g}$ per 100g or per 100ml	"0g" or "<0.5g"
Saturates	No detectable amount is present or concentration is $\leq 0.1\text{g}$ per 100g or per 100ml	"0g" or "<0.1g"
Salt	No detectable amount is present or concentration is $\leq 0.0125\text{g}$ per 100g or per 100ml	"0g" or "<0.01g"

Alternatively, where the amount of a nutrient(s) in your product is negligible, you may replace the information on this element(s) by a statement such as:

*"Contains negligible amounts of..."*

The statement must be in close proximity to the nutrition declaration.

## Distance selling

### Application of distance selling rules to nutrition labelling

When you offer prepacked food for sale by means of distance communication, you will have to make available nutrition information before the purchase is concluded and provide this information on "the material supporting the distance selling" (e.g. on a website) or by "other appropriate means" (e.g. by means of a telephone information line), which should be provided at no additional cost to the customer. Exemptions may apply here (e.g. Annex V point 19).

## **Dates of application of distance selling rules to nutrition labelling**

From 13 December 2014, the distance selling rules outlined above will apply in the following circumstances:

- When a nutrition and/or health claim is made on the product;
- When vitamins and/or minerals are added to the product.

From 13 December 2016, it will be mandatory to provide nutrition information in the manner outlined above on prepacked food offered for sale by distance communication, i.e. irrespective of whether a nutrition and/or health claim has been made or vitamins and/or minerals have been added to the product.

## **Application of distance selling rules to nutrition labelling for non-prepacked food**

You do not have to provide nutrition information on the “material supporting the distance selling” or “by other appropriate means” in the case of non-prepacked food.

## **Application of distance selling rules to prepacked products sold in vending machines**

There is no requirement to comply with the distance selling provisions set out above if, for example, you provide information on a website or mobile ‘phone app on foods that you offer for sale by means of automatic vending machines or automated commercial premises. However, you would still need to provide nutrition information on the packaging of your prepacked products as described in Chapter III above.