

news release

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Only 1 in 10 People in HK Routinely Read ‘Back-of-Pack’ Nutrition Label All Local Respondents Mis-Judge the Energy Levels of Popular Foods

Coca-Cola Launches ‘Front-of-Pack Energy Labelling’ – A Beverage Industry First – to Help Consumers Make Sensible Dietary Choices

HONG KONG, 10 February 2011 – The Coca-Cola Company (Coca-Cola) today announces the launch of a new prominent energy information label on the front of nearly all product packages in Hong Kong. The new ‘front-of-pack’ label aims to increase consumers’ awareness of the energy levels of its beverages and help them to make informed decisions about the beverages they consume. Coca-Cola is the first beverage company worldwide to make this international commitment.

Coca-Cola launches a beverage industry first ‘Front-of-Pack Energy Labelling’

The Hong Kong Dietitians Association (HKDA) welcomes the new development by Coca-Cola in Hong Kong, believing it can help consumers to make sensible food choices in a balanced diet. “The new ‘Front-of-Pack Energy Labelling’ is particularly useful to shoppers cruising store aisles, or grabbing a beverage at a convenience store, who need to make fast and smart purchasing decisions and have little time to read the back-of-pack label. In addition to the current Nutrition Labeling Scheme, we welcome other food and beverage companies will follow this lead to provide factual and easy to read information to consumers,” said Sylvia Lam, Chair of HKDA.

The new label shows the total calories and respective percentage of Chinese Nutrient Reference Value (NRV) on the front of each package. On the back of pack, information on sugars, fat and sodium contents and the respective percentage of Chinese NRV have been added to the existing nutrition label, to help consumers to more easily read important nutrition information at a glance.

Only one respondent accurately named all components of the back-of-pack nutrition label

To find out what people understand about their energy needs and how they use nutrition labels, Coca-Cola China Limited commissioned the Public Opinion Programme (POP) at the University of Hong Kong to conduct a telephone survey with 511 people in Hong Kong aged between 12 and 49. The results show that only 13% of respondents always read a nutrition label or read the nutrition label when they buy a food or beverage product for the first time. Only one out of 511 respondents accurately named all eight components of the back of pack nutrition label.

“The survey results show that people in Hong Kong need clear and easy to understand nutrition information to help informed dietary decisions,” said Karen So, General Manager, Hong Kong & Macau Region, Coca-Cola China Limited. “Coca-Cola has a leadership responsibility in nutrition labeling. Placing fact-based energy information on the front of our product package is part of our global commitment to active, healthy living and another step in our aim to meet evolving consumer needs around portion control, weight management and lifestyle choices.”

For beverages below 500mL, the new supplementary information is expressed per pack; for beverages at or above 500mL, the information is represented per serving. In Hong Kong, 250mL is a common serving size for beverages.

Other key findings for people in Hong Kong are:

- About 90% (87%) do not routinely read the back-of-pack nutrition label
- No respondents correctly estimated the energy level of a pineapple bun, egg tart, curry fish ball, soft drink, Hong Kong-style ice lemon tea and ice milk tea
- About 90% (91%) overestimated the energy level of a soft drink
- Half of respondents did not know their daily energy needs. Among those who reported that they knew their energy needs, only 20% correctly stated their daily energy needs
- 70% said they seldom or never consider their energy needs before eating
- Less than 30% (26%) agreed that diet control and exercise are equally important in weight management.
- 57% do not know where to seek a qualified dietitian for dietary advice.

“The survey results reveal that more consumer education is needed on energy balance and nutrition information in Hong Kong. Accordingly to the position statement of the American Dietetic Association¹, the total diet or overall pattern of food eaten is the most important focus for regular healthy eating. All foods can fit within a healthy diet, if consumed in appropriate portion size and combined with regular physical activity,” added Sylvia Lam, Chairlady of HKDA.

¹ Source: website of American Dietetic Association
<<http://www.eatright.org/About/Content.aspx?id=8356&terms=overall+pattern>>

For more information about the 'Front-of-Pack Energy Labelling', please visit www.icoke.hk.

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About Hong Kong Dietitians Association

Hong Kong Dietitians Association (HKDA), formerly Hong Kong Practising Dietitians Union, was established in 2001 to enforce professional continuous education and the development of an accreditation system for dietitians in Hong Kong. HKDA is a non-profit organization. All members are registered dietitians who have completed a Bachelor or Master Degree in Nutrition and Dietetics recognized overseas and locally. To date, there are about 160 members. In order to maintain updated academic standards, all members of HKDA are required to acquire enough Continuing Dietetic Education points to attain the title of "Accredited Dietitian" granted by HKDA. The list of accredited dietitians is provided by HKDA to assist the public in choosing qualified professionals for nutrition therapy in Hong Kong. For more information about HKDA, please visit www.hkda.com.hk.

About The Coca-Cola Company

The Coca-Cola Company (NYSE: KO) is the world's largest beverage company, refreshing consumers with more than 500 sparkling and still brands. Together with Coca-Cola, recognized as the world's most valuable brand, the Company's portfolio includes 12 billion-dollar brands, including Diet Coke, Fanta, Sprite, Coca-Cola Zero, vitaminwater, Powerade, Minute Maid, Simply and Georgia Coffee. Globally, we are the No. 1 provider of sparkling beverages, juices and juice drinks and ready-to-drink teas and coffees. Through the world's largest beverage distribution system, consumers in more than 200 countries enjoy the Company's beverages at a rate of 1.6 billion servings a day. With an enduring commitment to building sustainable communities, our Company is focused on initiatives that protect the environment, conserve resources and enhance the economic development of the communities where we operate. For more information about our Company, please visit our website at www.thecoca-colacompany.com.