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The international use of front of pack labels on food products to stimulate healthier choices

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The incidence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), like cardiovascular diseases, hypertension, obesity and cancer, is still rising in the world; not only in well developed Western countries, but also in Latin America, The Middle East, Africa and in Asia. These diseases have been correlated with a too high dietary intake of saturated fatty acids, trans fatty acids, sodium, added sugar and energy, or a too low consumption of fibers. Governments are looking for tools to reduce the incidence of NCDs. Also the WHO asked food producers to make the healthy choice the easy choice for consumers. Already over 20 years ago, this led to the development of a Front of Pack (FoP) symbol indicating food products with relatively better amounts of the above mentioned nutrients. Nowadays, in many countries these kind of FoP symbols are used or in development. There are several appearances of FoP-logos around the world, all with a slightly or more different set up of the criteria system behind the logo. There are also other less directive FoP symbols used that leave the interpretation of the healthiness of the product more to the consumer. In the presentation an overview will be given of different kind of logos around the world and some insights in the effectiveness of the Dutch Choices logo will be presented.

Biography

Leon Jansen obtained his MSc in Food Technology, PhD in Toxicology from Wageningen University and performed Post-doc research at the WHO International Agency for Reserach on Cancer (Lyon, France) and at the Dutch Cancer Institute. For five years, he was the Toxicologist of the Netherlands Nutrituion Centre. In 2006, he joined the Schuttelaar & partners and worked on the launch of the Dutch Choices Foundation. Since then, he is scientific coordinator of Choices International Foundation and the Dutch Choices foundation. This work is partially financed by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research, in the program of Social Responsible Innovation.

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