Sri Lankan Experience in implementation of the traffic light system in food safety

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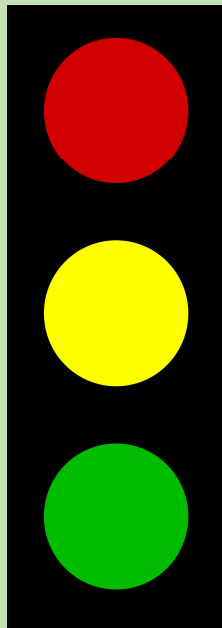
Ministry of Health

Direct contribution from Food control Administration unit in NCD control

- Food (colour coding for sugar levels) Regulations - 2016
- Food colour coding for sugar, salt and fat) Regulations – 2019
- Food (Iodization of salt) Regulations 2005

- Food (Labelling and Advertising) Regulations 2021 (Draft)
- Food (Trans Fat) Regulations – 2021 (Draft)

Food(Colour Coding for Sugar level) Regulations 2016

Effective from 01.Aug.2016

Our Experience...

Positive effects

- Reduction of sugar levels in many beverages within a short period of time.

- Raised awareness among the public (Sugar levels and health effects)

- Industry took new initiatives (Sugar free, zero Cola)

Negative effects

- Adding more and more artificial sweeteners in place of sugar.

- Using the green logo for sugar free products.

Colour coding for Sugar salt and fat
Effective from 01.06.2019 -01.01.2021

	Green	Amber	Red
Sugar	<5g/100g	5g-22g/100g	>22g/100g
Salt	<0.25mg	0.25mg-1.25mg/100g	>1.25mg/100g
Fat	<3g/100g	3.0g-17.5g/100g	>17.5g/100g

Our Experience...

Positive effects

- Consumer awareness
- Useful tool for Health professionals.
- Reformulation of many products
- Is being used as a regulatory tool to restrict sales of unhealthy foods in schools and hospitals.

Constrains

- Industry – high cost for SMEs for analysis and labelling.
- Testing the levels is costly for authorized officers and facilities limited.
- Only the packaged foods are included missing a fair percentage of consumers.

Survey results

Availability of a colour coded Front of Pack label in the pre-packed solid and semisolid processed food products. Oct-Dec. 2019

Codex Code	Product	Number	Available %	Not available%
1	Dairy products	179	45	55
2	Fats and oils	12	30.8	69.2
4	Fruits and vegetable	44	12.5	87.5
5	Confectionary	165	34.3	65.7
6	Cereals and cereal products	147	22.2	77.8
7	Bakery wares	99	28.1	71.9
8	Meat and meat products	39	42.9	57.1
9	Fish and fish products	22	19.3	80.7
12	Salt, spices, soups, sauces	33	13.1	86.9
13	Foodstuff intended for nutritional value	121	25.9	74.1
15	Ready to eat savories	158	19.3	80.7

Survey results...

Availability of nutrition panel in the pre-packed solid and semisolid processed food products.

Codex Code	Product	Number	Available %
1	Dairy products	179	53.1
2	Fats and oils	12	66.7
4	Fruits and vegetable	44	62.7
5	Confectionary	165	24.1
6	Cereals and cereal products	147	61.2
7	Bakery wares	99	23
8	Meat and meat products	39	45.1
9	Fish and fish products	22	36.8
12	Salt, spices, soups, sauces	33	59.5
13	Foodstuff intended for nutritional value	121	59
15	Ready to eat savories	158	35.6

- Food (Trans Fat) Regulations – 2021 (Draft)
    Cutoff levels will be 1-2g/100g

- Food (Labelling and Advertising) Regulations 2021 (Draft)
    Nutrition panel will be mandatory
    More restrictions on marketing for children

Challenges

- Arriving at effective and acceptable levels with consensus.

- Getting the industry to comply.

- Limited analytical facilities.

- Training of authorized officers.

Activities Recommended for RECAP

- Improve the analytical capacity of food laboratories.

- Training of authorized officers.

Provision of additional cadres for food control

- Establish a information management system.

Thank you