

Campaign for Sweetener Transparency

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What exactly are you asking the FDA to do?

A: We are asking the FDA to make it easier for consumers to know when alternative sweeteners are in their food and beverage products and help ensure that any sugar content claims are truthful and non-misleading. We're also asking for clear labeling of low- and no-calorie sweeteners in children's products. These changes will enable consumers to clearly see when sweeteners are used.

Q: Why is this being done now?

A: We view the requests in this Petition as items that should have been included by the FDA when updating the Nutrition Facts label in 2016. The asks are a natural extension of the FDA's focus on transparency and improving consumer access to information.

Additionally, given FDA's new requirement to label added sugars on the Nutrition Facts label, there has been a sharp increase in the use of alternative sweeteners in packaged food, unbeknownst to many consumers. There has also been an increase in the marketing and use of sugar content claims with foods containing alternative sweeteners.

As it stands, we have an alternative sweetener labeling scheme that is incomplete, lacks transparency and is misleading and confusing to consumers. Our proposed changes will provide consumers with clear and accurate information about the use of low- and no- calorie sweeteners in consumer products and help them make more informed decisions for themselves and their families.

Q: What would this mean for consumers?

A: If FDA were to implement these changes, it would mean that consumers could easily find accurate information about all the nutritive and non-nutritive sweeteners used in their products, allowing them to make informed decisions when they shop. For parents, not only would the presence of sweeteners be disclosed on children's products, but the quantity would be as well—something the American Academy of Pediatrics called for in November 2019.¹

Q: What actions are expected and what is the timing?

A: We submitted the original Citizen Petition to FDA in June 2020. FDA responded in November 2020 acknowledging receipt of the Citizen Petition and stating the agency was not able to reach a decision given other agency priorities and resources.

In March 2022, we submitted a Supplement to the original Citizen Petition presenting new supporting information and data.

Consumers, food companies and other interested parties can continue to provide comments to FDA in support of our request. Comments can be submitted to the docket, [FDA-2020-P-1478](#). Once FDA has the opportunity to complete their review of the Petition and if changes are determined necessary, the agency will set a date when food and beverage manufacturers must comply with new labeling changes.

1. Baker-Smith CM, et al. American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Nutrition. *Pediatrics*. 2019;144(5):e20192765.

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