
Healthcare Nutrition Council

529 14th Street, NW • Suite 750 • Washington, DC 20045

January 24, 2017

Susan T. Mayne
Director
Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition
Food and Drug Administration
5001 Campus Drive
College Park, MD 20740

RE: Uniform Compliance Date for Food Labeling Regulations (Docket No. FDA-2000-N-0011)

Dear Dr. Mayne:

The Healthcare Nutrition Council (HNC), representing manufacturers of enteral nutrition formulas, parenteral nutritional formulas, supplies, and equipment, submits these comments on the US Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) "Uniform Compliance Date for Food Labeling Regulations" (FDA-2000-N-0011), which was published in the *Federal Register* on November 25, 2016. Our primary recommendation to FDA can be summarized as follows:

HNC supports the uniform compliance date for labeling regulations published in 2017 and 2018 and urges FDA to extend the compliance date to include Nutrition Facts label revisions. HNC believes aligning the compliance date for the revisions to the Nutrition Facts label with other food labeling rules published in 2017 and 2018 will help ensure a more efficient and cost-effective approach to compliance among the entire food industry.

The *Federal Register* notice states that January 1, 2020 will be the uniform compliance date for all food labeling regulations which are issued in calendar years 2017 and 2018. However, this date does not affect existing requirements for compliance dates for labeling rules published prior to January 1, 2017, including the final rule on revisions to the Nutrition Facts label. HNC believes that aligning the compliance date for the revisions to the Nutrition Facts label with other food labeling rules published in 2017 and 2018 will help to ensure a more efficient and cost-effective approach to compliance among the entire food industry.

In the announcement for the 2020 uniform compliance date, the FDA states, "the cumulative economic impact on the food industry of having to respond separately to each change would be substantial." The Nutrition Facts label revisions represent the most substantial changes to US food labeling requirements and will have a remarkable cumulative economic impact on the food industry, especially with the new requirements for labeling and recordkeeping. As manufacturers of enteral and parenteral nutrition formulas, HNC is aware of the vast resources that are needed to update the Nutrition Facts label and the product label in general. The immense use of resources needed for updating product labels has been particularly evident as HNC member companies work to comply with the new requirements outlined in the nutrition labeling rule.

HNC acknowledges the Agency's forthcoming initiatives related to food labeling, as well as the colossal changes on the nutrition label which come following the final rule on revisions to the Nutrition Facts label. As such, HNC strongly encourages the FDA to align the compliance dates for the Nutrition Facts label revisions with the uniform compliance date of January 1, 2020.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this final rule. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact me at ngardner@kellencompany.com or 202-207-1116.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicholas M. Gardner", is centered on a light yellow rectangular background.

Nicholas M. Gardner
Executive Director
Healthcare Nutrition Council