

July 3, 2013

Attention Trade Partners:

Over the past few years there has been a growing trend in the production and marketing of lower calorie beverage alcohol products. Suppliers should be aware that there are federal labelling requirements when claims of lower calories or other health related benefits are made on beverages with an alcohol content of more than 0.5%. In order that all such products meet applicable regulations, the National Quality Assurance Committee of the Canadian Association of Liquor Jurisdictions wishes to remind our trade partners of the labelling requirements for these products.

When an energy/calorie or other health claims are made the following is required:

- A reduced calorie claim must make comparative reference to a specific product, typically the non-reduced calorie version of the supplier's product or the market top seller. The product must be at least 25% lower in calories to be allowed a low calorie claim.
- A non-comparative claim must meet maximum levels, e.g. a "low calorie" claim has a maximum of 40 calories per serving.
- All claims must be factual and not misleading.
- A bilingual nutrition facts table is required.
- Calories listed in the nutrition facts table must be rounded to the nearest multiple of 10 for claims greater than 50 calories.
- The standard serving size should be based on Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines serving sizes developed on behalf of the National Alcohol Strategy Advisory Committee and supported by Federal, Provincial and Territorial Health Ministers, which list a standard drink as equivalent to 17.05 mL or 13.45 g of ethanol and corresponds to:
 - 142 mL for wine at 12% alc./vol.
 - 341 mL for beers, ciders, coolers at 5% alc./vol.
 - 43 mL for spirits at 40% alc./vol.
- For single serve containers, the standard drink size is the volume of the container.
- The serving size of the claim must be consistent with that in the nutrition facts table.

Further information on the labelling requirements can be found on the Health Canada <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/label-etiquet/claims-reclam/index-eng.php> and CFIA <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/labelling/eng/1299879892810/1299879939872> websites and the links contained therein. These requirements are in the Canada Food and Drugs Regulations, the Consumer Packaging and Labelling Regulations and the CFIA Guide to Food Labelling.

Please share this information with your suppliers. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'George J. Soleas', with a stylized flourish at the end.

George J. Soleas, M. Sc., Ph.D.
Chair, National Quality Assurance Committee
Canadian Association of Liquor Jurisdictions

Copy: Bob Peter, President & Chief Executive Officer, LCBO
Nancy Cardinal, Senior Vice President, Sales and Marketing
Bill Kennedy, Executive Director, Corporate Communications
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NQAC-CALJ Members