

[Reply] AVA checks food labels for compliance

We thank Mr Ang for his feedback in "Review egg labelling" (ST Online, 03/01/12).

2 As part of our routine and inspection programme, the Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority (AVA) regularly monitors and samples food products for food safety. Food labels, including nutrition labels, are also checked for compliance with the labelling requirements. Companies are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of food and nutrition labelling of food products. Should their products' labels fail to comply with labelling requirements, AVA can take enforcement action against the companies. Companies will also be required to rectify the label for compliance.

3 For the case highlighted by Mr Ang, eggs carrying the claim of "lower in cholesterol" should contain at least 25 percent less cholesterol when compared to the average value of cholesterol for eggs in the market. We thank the writer for his feedback and invite him to contact us at 6325 7625 or ava_email@ava.gov.sg for further assistance.

4 AVA would like to take this opportunity to advice consumers to refer to the Nutrition Information Panel on food products for its nutrients content in order to make informed food choices.

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ST Online Forum, 03/01 [Letter] Review egg labelling Review egg labelling

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HIGH blood cholesterol, doctors say, is a risk factor for heart diseases and it is important to understand food nutrition information.

Many consumers do not read the nutrition information but rely on eye-catching, bold wording on the packaging to make their product choices.

Recently, I bought a pack of KHF brand eggs which did not contain the commonly seen 'lower cholesterol' tag on its packaging, yet it had only 158.3mg of cholesterol per 100g of egg.

However, the 'lower cholesterol' tag is commonly found on the packaging of other egg brands, even though the nutrition information shows 285mg or 295mg of cholesterol per 100g of egg.

Consumers may be enticed to select the eggs with the label 'lower cholesterol' though there is more cholesterol in these brands than in the KHF brand eggs.

As for the value of eggs, a lower price tag does not mean they are cheaper.

A carton of 50g eggs with a price tag of \$1.90 for 10 eggs is not cheaper than a carton of 60g eggs with a price tag of \$2.10 for 10 eggs.

The authorities should review the labelling and pricing on egg cartons to help consumers make better choices.

Ang Chin Guan