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OKLAHOMA COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION SERVICE

Label Literacy: Basic Training

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The new food labels will make it easier for you to compare foods, make better food choices and plan your meals to meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Knowing some basic facts about the new labels will get you started toward putting them to the best use.

The new label is more than just changes in the nutrition panel. There is an expanded ingredient list. More foods will have their ingredients listed.

Under the old labeling system some foods were standardized. That meant that they were made from a basic recipe and the ingredients did not need to be listed. Ingredients are still listed by weight from most to least.

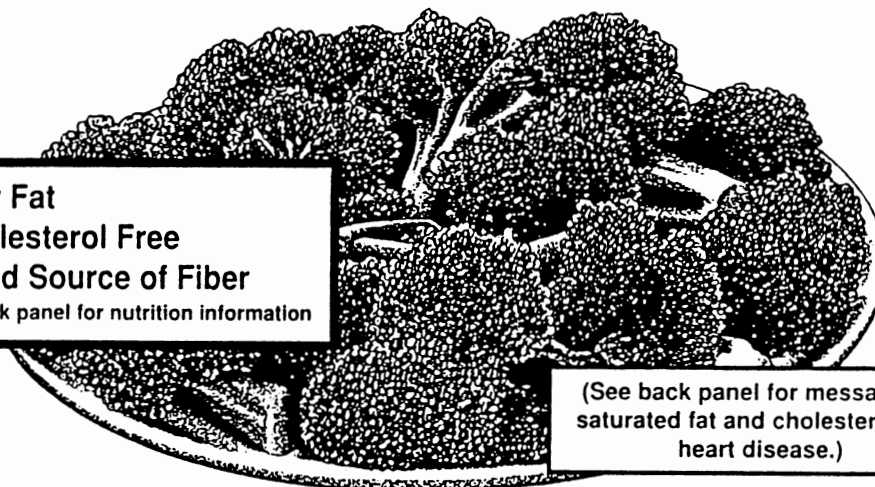
The expanded ingredient list on the new labels will tell you:

- Certified color additives by name (for example FD&C Blue No. 1, Yellow 5 Lake)
- The source of protein hydrolysates (such as hydrolyzed wheat gluten, hydrolyze soy protein). These are used in many foods as flavoring and flavor enhancers.

The New Food Label

FROZEN BROCCOLI IN SAUCE

- Low Fat
 - Cholesterol Free
 - Good Source of Fiber
- See back panel for nutrition information



(See back panel for message on saturated fat and cholesterol and heart disease.)

NET WT. 8.9 oz. (252g)

Ingredients: Broccoli, soybean oil, milk solids, modified cornstarch, salt, spices.

Health claim message referred to on the front panel is shown here:

"While many factors affect heart disease, diets low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of the disease."

Adapted from: Food and Drug Administration

- Caseinate will be identified as a milk derivative on the ingredients list of foods that claim to be non-dairy, such as coffee whiteners.
- The percent of juice present in a product that is labeled with a specific type of fruit or vegetable (such as raspberry juice).

Other improvements on the new labels are the legalization or definition, of words such as “light,” “lite,” “free,” “low,” or “reduced.” You will find health claims on some foods. Health claims are statements about the relationship between a food, or part of a food such as vitamin or mineral, and a disease or health-related condition. For a food to make a health claim, a food must meet certain conditions. If you find health claims or words such as “light” on the new labels, you could believe them.

Remember, there are no good or bad foods. All foods can fit into a healthful diet. However, it is important to eat a variety of foods in moderate amounts.

The Nutrition Panel

1. You’ll know you’ve got a food with one of the new labels when the title on the nutrition panel is “Nutrition Facts.” In the sign below, the label meets the January 1993, government labeling regulations.
2. Look at the serving sizes. They will be uniform across product lines and reflect the amounts people usually eat. This will make it easier to compare similar foods such as different types of breakfast cereal or different brands of lunch meats.
3. Knowing the number of calories from fat can help you meet the dietary guideline that says no more than 30 percent of your calories should come from fat. The percentage of fat in a specific food may be higher than 30 percent, but your total fat intake should be no higher than that.
4. This part of the label includes information on nutrients of greatest interest to many health conscious people. Amounts are given in metric measures.
5. The % Daily Values show how a food fits into an overall daily diet. The values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet.
6. Only vitamins A and C, calcium and iron are required on the label. Food companies have the option of listing other nutrients in the food.
7. This is the Daily Value reference section. The numbers are based on diets of 2,000 and 2,500

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 cup (114g)	
Servings Per Container 4	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 90	Calories From Fat 30
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 3g	5%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 300 mg	13%
Total Carbohydrate 13g	4%
Dietary Fiber 3g	12%
Sugars 3g	
Protein 3g	
Vitamin A 80%	Vitamin C 60%
Calcium 4%	Iron 4%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9	Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

calories. Some of the values are maximums (such as 65 grams or less total fat), some are minimums (such as 300 grams or more total carbohydrates). If you eat fewer than 2,000 calories a day your needs may be slightly less. If you eat more calories your needs may be slightly more.

8. The label includes information on the number of calories in a gram of fat, carbohydrates, and protein.

Almost all packaged foods will have nutrition labels as a result of the new regulations, but there are some exemptions. These include:

- food with no nutrition (plain coffee, tea, and spices)
- restaurant foods
- bulk foods not for sale to consumers

- food served to be eaten right away (hospital cafeterias, airplanes)
- food cooked/baked on site in food stores (bakeries, delis)
- food sold by vendors (mall cookies, vending machines)
- food in very small packages (must have phone numbers or address to obtain nutrition information)
- food produced by small businesses
- medical food

References:

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The Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service

Bringing the University to You!

The Cooperative Extension Service is the largest, most successful informal educational organization in the world. It is a nationwide system funded and guided by a partnership of federal, state and local governments that delivers information to help people help themselves through the land-grant university system.

Extension carries out programs in the broad categories of agriculture, natural resources and environment; home economics; 4-H and other youth; and community resource development. Extension staff members live and work among the people they serve to help stimulate and educate Americans to plan ahead and cope with their problems.

Some characteristics of the Cooperative Extension system are:

- The federal, state and local governments cooperatively share in its financial support and program direction.
- It is administered by the land-grant university as designated by the state legislature through an Extension director.
- Extension programs are nonpolitical, objective and based on factual information.
- It provides practical, problem-oriented education for people of all ages. It is designated to take the knowledge of the university to those persons who do not or cannot participate in the formal classroom instruction of the university.
- It utilizes research from university, government and other sources to help people make their own decisions.
- More than a million volunteers help multiply the impact of the Extension professional staff.
- It dispenses no funds to the public.
- It is not a regulatory agency, but it does inform people of regulations and of their options in meeting them.
- Local programs are developed and carried out in full recognition of national problems and goals.
- The Extension staff educates people through personal contacts, meetings, demonstrations and the mass media.
- Extension has the built-in flexibility to adjust its programs and subject matter to meet new needs. Activities shift from year to year as citizen groups and Extension workers close to the problems advise changes.

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