Thematic Session: Food Labelling

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WTO
Content

The APEC Survey on Packaging and Labelling Requirements on Pre-packaged Food Products:
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Background

• Technical Regulations (TBT Measures) are another hurdle for exporters.
• Majority of the Specific Trade Concerns (STCs) raised in the WTO TBT Committee involved labelling requirements, particularly food labelling, as well as conformity assessment requirements.
• Businesses, including micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have to comply with the labelling requirements to be able participate in cross-border trade.
Objectives

• To stock-take the labelling and packaging requirements of Member Economies, particularly in the sectors of food processing and agriculture. This survey will focus on pre-packaged food products and follow-up surveys can then include other products.

• To increase transparency
Respondents

Fourteen economies - representing Asia (Australia, Hong Kong, China, Malaysia, Japan, The Philippines, New Zealand, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, and Viet Nam) and the Americas (Chile, Mexico, Peru and The United States) responded to the survey.
Key findings

Laws/Regulations

• All responding Member Economies have specific laws/regulations that provide them mandate to implement requirements for packaging and labelling.
• Websites or links are available for public access.
• Information in some instances are in their domestic languages.
• One or more agencies are mandated to implement rules in some economies.
Key findings

Information on labels and other requirements

• Responses shown variations/divergence on the requirements of the information to be indicated in the labels of pre-packaged food products. Some Member Economies have comprehensive requirements compared to others.

• Placement of particular labels are also mandated in some economies (e.g. labels on principal display panels)

• There are also economies that have rules and regulations on the Usage of Numbers and Letters for Statements of Net Quantity and Expression of Units of Measurements and Symbols

• Most respondents required translation of selected information into the domestic languages. While, other economies allowed use of the national language and English.

• All respondents allow use of stickers or removable materials but different processes are in place to implement the use of such materials.
Key findings

Guide/Assistance for Business

• All respondents have websites or portals that are accessible by its stakeholders. Information available includes:
  • Laws/regulations
  • Guides/Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)/Questions and Answers (Q&As); Information are in their domestic languages
  • Contact Points to placed queries/hotlines
Key findings

Guide/Assistance for Business

• Most respondents have also instituted capacity building programs (workshops, seminars, courses, briefings) for business to ensure their compliance to requirements.
Way forward

• Increase transparency
  – Share results of the survey through the APEC website
  – If possible, post the web-links to specific regulations and relevant agencies contact information and its continuous updating to ensure predictability/consistency of information
  – In the future, continue populating the information covering other product categories/sectors
Way forward

• **Continue Collaboration**
  – Identifying other areas for possible future work such as organization of conferences/seminars focused on the area of packaging and labelling requirements
National Level

• Training courses related to Packaging and Labeling were conducted in various regions
• Export Marketing Bureau held a “Packaging Summit”
• Capacity building activities oriented to training businesses, especially SMEs, to improve their knowledge, expertise and skills on standards and conformance matters, including the conduct of public consultations.
Maraming Salamat
Thank you.
 Merci.
Gracias.