Ministry of Health

GENERAL DIRECTORATE FOR FOOD HYGIENE, FOOD SAFETY AND NUTRITION
OFFICE V

Shared objectives for improving the nutritional characteristics of food products, with a particular focus on children (3-12 years)

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INTRODUCTION

The proportion of overweight people in Europe remains high, and about 7% of European health care spending is destined to the treatment of obesity-related diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular diseases, etc.(1)

Excess weight and obesity are phenomena that concern both adults and children. Data collected by the Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (COSI) in the WHO European region, on a sample of children between the ages of 6 and 9, show that between 18% and 57% of boys and 18% to 50% of girls are overweight; while 6-31% of boys and 5-21% of girls are obese.(2)

In Italy, the *"OKkio alla salute 2014"* monitoring system on the dietary and exercise habits of primary school children (6-10 years old) showed that 20.9% are overweight and 9.8% are obese, a slight improvement over 22.2% and 10.6% in 2012.(3)

Over the last few years, social, economic, and demographic changes have unquestionably and significantly modified lifestyles and entrenched food habits.

In Italy, although milk and yogurt consumption on the part of children has declined somewhat, the consumption of high-energy products, such as soft drinks or sweet snacks, does not significantly affect total calorie consumption in children between the ages of 3 and 9.9 (Table 1).

Table 1

	SCAI consumption data 3-9.9 years of age (g/d)	**Average calorie content x 100 g (kcal)**	**% of daily calorie requirement (1850 kcal)**
Sweet snacks	28.1	350	5.1
Savoury snacks	6	490	1.5
Biscuits	18.5	450	4.3
Breakfast cereal	4	440	0.9
Soft drinks	27.9	40	0.6

Leclercq C et al, Public Health Nutrition 2009: 12(12), 2504-2532

The impact of the products examined here on the diet of children does not appear to be particularly critical. Additionally, efforts on the part of the food industry have led to the availability of a considerable amount of reformulated products on the market.

Overweight in childhood can be attributed to a number of lifestyle-related factors, particularly a lack of regular and adequate physical activity. By the same token, another important factor is a diet that does not take into account the nutritional quality and the totality of daily food intake. Indeed, many children skip breakfast, avoid vegetables, and only eat fruit occasionally.

Adopting a healthy lifestyle from an early age is the first step to prevent certain diseases and remain in good shape, even in adulthood.

It is thus a primary goal to "*reverse the rising trend in overweight and obesity and reduce the burden of diet-related noncommunicable diseases in all age groups*", as indicated in the *"Rome Declaration on Nutrition"*. (4)

Optimistically, if behavioural and environmental factors are part of the problem, then adequate nutritional policies and awareness-raising campaigns should be able to mould behaviours and environmental factors, steering consumers towards healthier and better informed food choices.

The "*Vienna Declaration on Nutrition and Noncommunicable Diseases in the Context of Health 2020"* strengthens the commitment to the fight against obesity, and represents a new political responsibility for European governments. The document stresses the importance of taking decisive action to:

- ✓ reduce food marketing pressure to children,
- ✓ implement common approaches to promote product reformulation of foods high in energy, saturated fats, trans fatty acids, free sugars, and salt,
- ✓ promote consumer-friendly food labelling.(5)

At the same time, the EU's *"Action Plan on Childhood Obesity 2014-2020"* lists among its main objectives the promotion of a healthy diet as the simplest option, and encourages the reformulation of food products taking nutritional needs into account.(6)

In addition, consumption of milk and dairy products, fruits, and vegetables on the part of children should be encouraged, so as to help them adopt healthy eating habits and contribute to the fight against obesity.

The European Union has adopted two Regulations aiming to inform, educate, and protect consumers:

- ✓ REGULATION (EU) N. 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers
- ✓ REGULATION (EC) N. 1924/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on nutrition and health claims made on food

Regulation (EU) 1169/2011 updates and simplifies previous norms on food labelling. The purpose is to better protect the health of consumers and ensure clear and transparent information.

Regulation (EC) 1924/2006 harmonizes the nutritional and health claims made by food products to ensure consumers are provided with accurate and truthful information.

Nevertheless, for information and communication efforts to be effective, they must be accompanied by real market innovation to ensure products and solutions that better meet the needs of a healthy diet. For this reason, institutions and food companies are paying increasing attention to the nutritional properties of food products and the way they are marketed, including specific steps to facilitate consumption in moderation.

As sanctioned by the "*Milan Charter",* it is crucially important to "produce and market healthy, safe food, informing consumers about the nutritional content, environmental impact and social implications of the product", and that "everyone has the right to have access to a sufficient quantity of safe, healthy and nutritious food, that satisfies life-long personal nutritional requirements and enables them to lead an active life". (7)

The availability of a wide variety of reformulated and improved food products allows consumers to make easier choices that are better adapted to their lifestyles.

The reformulation of food products takes place by modifying their composition while trying to maintain their flavour, texture, and shelf life.

The Ministry of Health is doing this through the national programme "*Guadagnare salute: rendere facili le scelte salutari*" ["Gaining in health: making healthy choices easier"], whose approach to health and prevention is based on inter-sectorial strategies and supported by institutional commitment at various levels.

In this regard, the food manufacturing sector has launched a series of voluntary initiatives in which each producer has set goals and targets.

The Ministry of Health has drafted the following document in collaboration with certain sectors of the food industry. The document provides an overview of the current situation, identifies the reformulation efforts carried out so far, and highlights possible opportunities and priorities for future actions.

In this context, we identified several product categories (baked goods, cereals, and sweets; non-alcoholic drinks; and dairy products and ice cream) for which the food industry commits to reducing sugar, saturated fat, trans fatty acids, and salt, together with a constant effort to modify serving sizes and provide additional information on labels.

This effort is part of a broader initiative to fight childhood overweight and obesity, and falls within the framework of the strategies that have been pursued in recent years, such as the Memoranda of Understanding signed between the Ministry of Health and food producers' associations to reduce salt content in products such as bread and frozen soups.

In conclusion, overweight and obesity are a public health problem whose solution cannot be entrusted exclusively to the health care system: the potential recipe for success in the reformulation of food products favoured by children requires cross-cutting, multi-sector interventions, with close cooperation between health authorities and the food industry.

The commitments made so far are important to achieve the goal of improving the nutritional characteristics of food products, but it is essential that the effort to study and design new formulations continue to be pursued, together with the dissemination of a culture that promotes healthy lifestyles from an early age.

Sources:
(1) Global status report on non-communicable diseases 2010- World Health Organization April 2011
(2) WHO European Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative: implementation of round (2007/2008) and round 2 2009/2010 WHO/Europe, 2014
(3) http://www.epicentro.iss.it/okkioallasalute/
(4) Second International Conference on Nutrition - http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/icn2/en/
(5) Vienna Declaration on Nutrition and Noncommunicable Diseases in the Context of Health 2020Vienna, Austria 4–5 July 2013
(6)http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/childhoodobesity_actionplan_2014_2020_en.pdf
(7) http://carta.milano.it/

SWEET CEREAL BASED PRODUCTS

The following sub-groups were examined:

a) breakfast cereals
b) biscuits
c) savoury snacks
d) crackers
e) *merendine*[1]

a) **BREAKFAST CEREALS**

The nutritional quality of all ready-to-eat breakfast cereals was evaluated: corn flakes; puffed, dried, or toasted rice; muesli, etc.

The problems highlighted were:

- salt
- sugars

Targeted interventions concerned:

Sodium/salt: starting in 1999, the sodium content of these products has been carefully monitored and gradually reduced. The industry has committed to accelerating this reformulation process until the current average sodium content has been further reduced.

Year	**2008**	**2014**	**2017**
Average concentration (g/100g)	0.900 g	0.600 g	0.400 g
% reduction	-	33%	56%

Sugars: for several years, the industry has been actively searching for solutions to keep sugar concentration within technological limits and consumer acceptability thresholds. An additional reduction in the average concentration of sugars is nevertheless expected for 2017.

[1] "Merendine" (from "merenda", in Italy a small mid-morning, mid-afternoon meal) are serving-size baked cakes, prepared after traditional home-made recipes.

Year	2008	2014	2017
Average concentration (g/100g)	35 g	33 g	30 g
% reduction	-	6%	14%

Trans fatty acids: the industry has committed to drastically reduce the content of trans fatty acids from the industrial production of fats (hydrogenation) until its complete elimination, in accordance with the following timeline:

Year	2008	2014	2017
TFA concentration from hydrogenated fats (g/100 g)	2 g	0.4 g	trace
% reduction	-	80%	100%

Fibre: the industry has committed to gradually increase the average fibre content in foods consumed by children.

Year	2008	2014	2017
Average concentration (g/100g)	2 g	3.5 g	4.5 g
% increase	-	75%	125%

Serving size: at the national and Community level, the industry has strongly committed to identifying proper reference serving sizes, not only in relation to the new Regulation 1169/2014 on information to consumers, but also in order to promote the proper consumption of food products in keeping with current nutritional requirements.

Labelling: nutritional labelling will become mandatory starting in 2016. The industry voluntarily commits to providing nutritional information per 100 g and per serving at least with regards to macro-nutrients. It also commits to indicating the % of Reference Intake, at least as concerns energy.

Year	2008	2014	2017
% companies	60%	80%	100%

The commitments made by the industry association that accounts for 90% of the national market refer to the average of products (products for children and so-called "all family", often consumed by children as well).

b) **BISCUITS**

All types of biscuits were considered, including sugar-free ones.

The problems highlighted were:

- fats (both quality and quantity)
- sugars

Targeted interventions concerned:

Trans fatty acids: the industry has committed to drastically reduce the content of trans fatty acids from the industrial production of fats (hydrogenation) until its complete elimination, in accordance with the following timeline:

Year	**2008**	**2014**	**2017**
TFA concentration from hydrogenated fats (g/100 g)	2 g	0.4 g	trace
% reduction	-	80%	100%

Saturated fats: for several years, the industry has been actively searching for solutions to keep saturated fats within technological limits and consumer acceptability thresholds. An additional reduction in the average concentration of saturated fats is nevertheless expected for 2017.

Year	**2008**	**2014**	**2017**
Average concentration (g/100g)	11 g	10.5 g	10 g
% reduction	-	4.5%	9%

Sugars: for several years, the industry has been actively searching for solutions to keep sugar concentration within technological limits and consumer acceptability thresholds. In this regard, new products have been introduced that are without added sugars or have reduced sugar content.

An additional reduction in the average concentration of sugars is nevertheless expected for 2017, compatibly with technological needs.

Year	2008	2014	2017
Average concentration (g/100g)	35 g	33 g	28 g
% reduction	-	6%	20%

Fibre: the industry has committed to gradually increase the average fibre content in foods consumed by children.

Year	2008	2014	2017
Average concentration (g/100g)	2 g	2.5 g	3 g
% increase	-	25%	50%

Labelling: nutritional labelling will become mandatory starting in 2016. The industry voluntarily commits to providing nutritional information per 100 g and per serving at least with regards to macro-nutrients. It also commits to indicating the % of Reference Intake, at least as concerns energy.

Year	2008	2014	2017
% companies	60%	80%	100%

The commitments made by the industry association that accounts for 80% of the national market, keeping in mind the wide variety of available product types (dried biscuits, short biscuits, filled biscuits, etc.) refer to the average of products. The average includes both children's products and all-family products, which are often consumed by children.

The types of biscuits whose composition is regulated by specific legislations (e.g. savoiardi and amaretto biscuits) cannot be reformulated.

c) **SAVORY SNACKS**

This category includes potato chips, crackers, and other savoury snacks.

Although savoury snacks do not significantly impact calorie intake in children between the ages of 3 and 9.9, as indicated in Table 1, the industry has nevertheless acted in recent years to improve the product profile through technology, choice of ingredients, and quality control.

Additionally, being aware of the need for educational interventions, the industry has launched educational activities and activities to promote physical exercise in children, a crucial component of a healthy lifestyle together with proper nutrition.

In terms of reformulation, the following nutrients/ingredients were targeted:

- salt
- fats

Targeted interventions concerned:

Total, saturated, and trans fats: the leading companies in the industry have committed to reducing levels of total and saturated fats. The quantities of trans fatty acids are currently considered to be negligible and of no impact. Fat reduction efforts, which must take into account technological limits and consumer acceptance thresholds, have targeted potato crisps and chips in terms of both total and saturated fats.

TOTAL FATS potato crisps or chips		
Year	2008	2009-2017
% reduction	-	25%

SATURATED FATS potato crisps or chips		
Year	2008	2009-2017
% reduction	-	35%

Salt/sodium: the leading companies in the industry have committed to reducing levels of salt and sodium, taking into account technological limits and consumer acceptance thresholds.

SALT/SODUIM potato crisps or chips		
Year	2009	2010-2017
% reduction	-	19 %

SALT/SODIUM savoury snacks		
Year	2009	2013-2017
% reduction	-	10 %

Serving size: Single-serving packages are widely available on the market, and facilitate the controlled consumption of these products.

Additionally, with regards to the recommended portion of 30 g indicated by ESA (*www.esa.org.uk*) based on reference serving size, the leading companies in this sector indicate a smaller serving size of 25 g on labels for formats of over 50 g.

Labelling: many companies in this sector have used nutritional labels per 100 g of product and for serving size for many years now, even though this will only become mandatory in 2016. Reference serving sizes are already widely used, with 2000 kcal as the recommended daily calorie intake, since these are all-family products and are not specifically targeted to children between the ages of 3 and 12.

The commitments made by the industry association refer to the average of products.

d) **CRACKERS**

The problems highlighted were:

- salt
- fats

Targeted interventions concerned:

Trans fatty acids: the industry has committed to drastically reduce the content of trans fatty acids from the industrial production of fats (hydrogenation) until its complete elimination, in accordance with the following timeline:

Year	**2008**	**2014**	**2017**
TFA concentration from hydrogenated fats (g/100 g)	2 g	0.4 g	trace
% reduction	-	80%	100%

Sodium/salt: for several years, the industry has been actively searching for solutions to reduce sodium levels in keeping with technological limits and consumer acceptability thresholds. Products with no added salt/sodium or low salt/sodium content are available on the market. An additional effort to reduce salt/sodium content, in keeping with technological limits, is nevertheless expected for 2017.

Year	**2008**	**2014**	**2017**
Average concentration (g/100g)	1.1 g	0.9 g	0.8 g
% reduction	-	18%	27%

Fibre: the industry has committed to gradually increase the average fibre content in foods consumed by children.

Year	**2008**	**2014**	**2017**
Average concentration (g/100g)	2.5 g	3.5 g	4 g
% increase		40%	60%

Labelling: nutritional labelling will become mandatory starting in 2016. The industry voluntarily commits to providing nutritional information per 100 g and per serving at least with regards to macro-nutrients. It also commits to indicating the % of Reference Intake, at least as concerns energy.

Year	2008	2014	2017
% companies	60%	80%	100%

e)***MERENDINE***

All types of *merendine*[2] were considered, including those with cream or fruit fillings.

The main problems highlighted include:

- sugars
- fats
- variable portion sizes

Targeted interventions concerned:

Trans fatty acids: the industry has committed to drastically reduce the content of trans fatty acids from the industrial production of fats (hydrogenation) until its complete elimination, in accordance with the following timeline:

Year	2008	2014	2017
TFA concentration from hydrogenated fats (g/100 g)	2 g	0.4 g	trace
% reduction	-	80%	100%

Saturated fats: for several years, the industry has been actively searching for solutions to keep saturated fats within technological limits and consumer acceptability thresholds. An additional reduction in the average concentration of saturated fats is nevertheless expected for 2017.

[2] "Merendine" (from "merenda", in Italy a small mid-morning, mid-afternoon meal) are serving-size baked cakes, prepared after traditional home-made recipes.

Year	2008	2014	2017
Average concentration (g/100g)	11 g	10.5 g	10 g
% reduction	-	4.5%	9%

Sugars: for several years, the industry has been actively searching for solutions to keep sugar concentration within technological limits and consumer acceptability thresholds. In this regard, new products have been introduced that are without added sugars or have reduced sugar content.

An additional reduction in the average concentration of sugars is nevertheless expected for 2017, compatibly with technological needs.

Year	2008	2014	2017
Average concentration (g/100g)	35 g	33 g	30 g
% reduction	-	6%	14%

Serving size: The merendine sector has committed to gradually reducing serving size, with a consequent reduction in the energy value of an average portion (the goal is to reduce the energy value of the average portion by an additional 15% in 2017).

Year	2008	2014	2017
Average serving size	200 kcal	180 kcal	170 kcal
% reduction	-	10%	15%

Labelling: nutritional labelling will become mandatory starting in 2016. The industry voluntarily commits to providing nutritional information per 100 g and per serving at least with regards to macro-nutrients. It also commits to indicating the % of Reference Intake, at least as concerns energy.

Year	2008	2014	2017
% companies	60%	80%	100%

The commitments made by the industry association that accounts for 85% of the national market refer to average of the products available on the market, since merendine and cakes are made with a wide variety of techniques and types of dough (e.g. sponge cakes, short-crust pastries, brioche, and others, with or without filling).

The sectors under letters B, D, and E, as part of their own voluntary code of ethics, refrain from selling their products in vending machines located in primary and first-degree secondary schools.

NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINKS

The following sub-groups were examined:

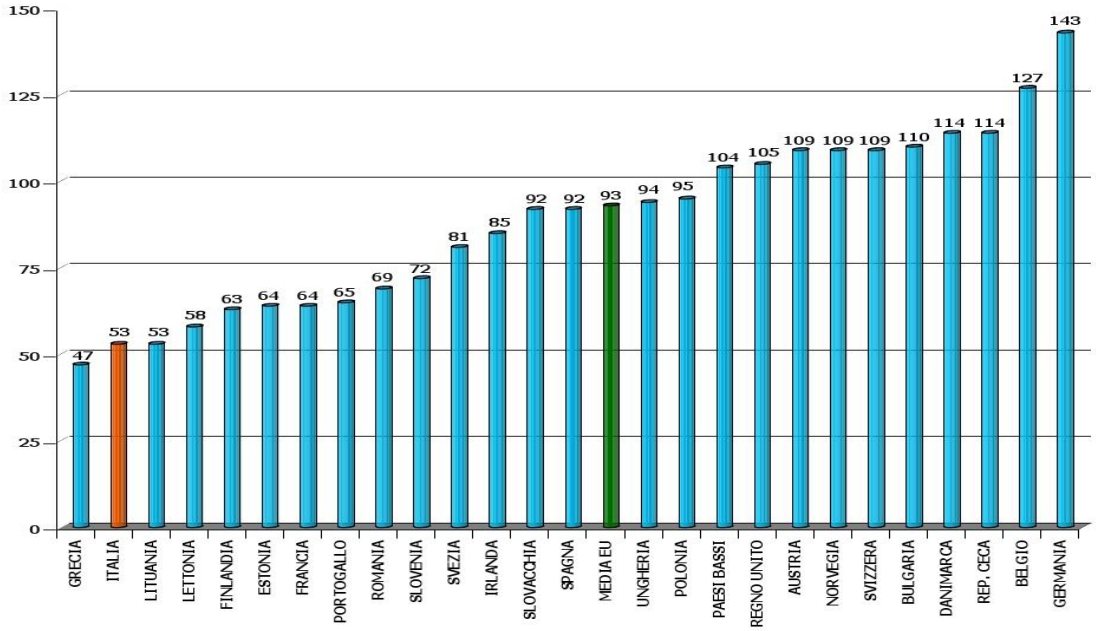
a) soft drinks
b) fruit juices and drinks

a) **SOFT DRINKS**

The soft drink category includes a wide array of non-alcoholic drinks: carbonated drinks with fruit extracts or flavouring (*soda, chinotto, cola, tonic water, lemonade, orangeade, etc.*); drinks made with fruit juice; iced tea or coffee; and functional drinks with vitamins, minerals, and/or stimulants.

Consumption of such drinks is significantly lower in Italy than in other EU countries (53 litres/year per person versus an average of 93). They account for less than 1% of calorie intake from food.

Source: Canadean 2014



The companies affiliated with ASSOBIBE and MINERACQUA acknowledge the health concerns of consumers, which are caused in part by unbalanced diets, a lack of exercise, and the failure to account for the balance between calorie intake and calories burned (the so-called caloric balance). The soft drink industry is a particularly wide-ranging and innovative one, and for this reasons it believes that playing an active and responsible role is essential.

For many years now, the industry has implemented activities to protect children's health and to expand its line of products and containers in order to encourage adequate choices and behaviours.

Targeted interventions concerned:

Marketing to children: in order to better protect children, companies affiliated with ASSOBIBE have introduced specific limits on marketing and advertising, including:

1. Refraining from marketing through channels targeting children under 12;
2. Refraining from direct marketing in primary schools (including vending machines);
3. In first- and second-degree secondary schools, providing a wide array of drinks (including water, fruit juices, and other drinks, such as low-calorie drinks) packaged in a way that facilitates controlled consumption.

Reduction of sugar/calories:[3] in order to reduce the caloric impact of soft drinks, the industry is constantly searching for new formulas and ingredients, within the bounds of consumer acceptance and technological constraints.

1. **Calorie content in soft drinks**. By partially or completely replacing the main ingredients used, and by using smaller containers, the calorie content of soft drinks is gradually being reduced. Significant progress has been made in recent years, and additional calorie reduction is likely.

Year	2008	2012	2016
% reduction	-	7 %	20 %

2. **New low-calorie or calorie-free products.** In recent years, low-calorie or calorie-free drinks have increasingly become available.

Year	2008	2012	2016
%	-	+ 15 %	+ 30 %

3. **Use of sugar.** In recent years, the quantity of added sugars in non-alcoholic drinks has fallen significantly. An additional reduction in added sugar is likely in the near future.

[3] *In carbonated non-alcoholic drinks, energy drinks, and iced tea/coffee. ASSOBIBE data sourced from Canadean*

Year	2008	2012	2016
% reduction	-	6 %	18 %

A significant effort has also been made to promote low-calorie and low-sugar options with consumers.

Serving size: in order to contain portion size and the frequency of consumption, the industry has committed to finding new solutions such as:

1. **Smaller containers** for children;
2. **Closing systems to allow for consumption in more than one stage**, which helps prevent excessive consumption.

Labelling and moderation: to facilitate consumer choices that are in line with their lifestyles and encourage moderation, the industry has committed to strengthening certain voluntary actions, including:

1. **providing** simplified nutritional information on labels per serving, indicated the % of GDA for each nutrient;
2. **avoiding** promotional activities that encourage the excessive consumption of products in order to participate in prize competitions or sweepstakes;
3. **highlighting** on labels the suggestion "*Not recommended for children, pregnant women, or during breast feeding"* for energy drinks, in light of their high caffeine content.

b) **FRUIT JUICES, NECTARS, AND FRUIT PULP**

Fruit nectars, labelled as "fruit juice and pulp" when made exclusively with pureed fruit, are made by adding water and sugar to the fruit juice, puree, or both.

Directive EU 2012/12 (and subsequent amendments) and national decrees transposing it call for a mandatory minimum fruit content (50, 40, 25%) depending on the type of fruit used.

The most popular fruit juices/nectars in Italy (pear, peach, apple, and apricot) all have at least 50% fruit, except for apricot juice/nectar (40%).

Targeted interventions concerned added sugar.

In recent years, producers have gradually decreased the quantity of added sugar in nectars from 8% to 7% between 2009 and 2014, from an average of 9.0 g/100ml to an average of 8.0 g/100ml.

Averages are considered here because the quantity of added sugar varies depending on the natural sugar content of each type of fruit.

It should be pointed out that fruit nectars and fruit pulp are different from "fruit juice", which by law is a term that can only applied to products made entirely with fruit, and without added sugar.

Labelling of fruit nectars and fruit pulp: Many companies have listed nutritional information per 100 ml on their labels for years. When labels list nutritional information per serving, they use the serving size of 200 ml recommended by the European Fruit Juice Association. Labels must list the total quantity of fruit employed.

DAIRY PRODUCTS AND ICE CREAM

The following sub-groups were examined:

a) yogurt and fermented milk
b) ice cream

a) **YOGURT AND FERMENTED MILK**

Yogurt and fermented milk products retain all of the characteristics of milk, and are more easily digested thanks to the substances they produce (peptides and free amino acids) and the action of the micro-organisms present in the finished product[4]. These are very varied product in terms of composition (skim, whole, fortified with vitamins/minerals/probiotics, etc.), structure (compact, liquid, creamy, strained) and formulation (plain, flavoured with fruit or vanilla, with cereal, etc.).

For children in particular, these foods are an excellent alternative for breakfast or a nutritionally balanced snack, especially if accompanied by fruit. They help achieve the recommended intake of important vitamins and minerals for growth in addition to high-quality protein.

Interventions: Starting in 2006, the sector has constantly reduced the amount of added sugars, within the constraints arising from structural and flavour motives. In light of these constraints and the need not to reduce the consumption of yogurt and fermented milk on the part of children any more than it already has, the industry nevertheless intends to continue its efforts to gradually decrease the amount of added sugar. It is estimated that in products where this is possible, the amount of added sugar will fall by as much as 5% by 2018

Year	**2006**	**2011**	**2015**	**2018**
Total sugar/ 100 g of product	> 15g/100g	< 15g/100g	< 13,5g/100g	< 13g/100g

[4] *Milk and dairy products in human nutrition (FAO, 2013)*

Added sugar*/ 100 g of product	>11.5 %	< 10.5 %	≤ 9 %	< 8.5 %
% reduction in added sugar*	-	10%	23%	27%[5]

* *excluding the sugar naturally present in food*

b) **ICE CREAM**

Industrial ice cream must meet very specific requirements in terms of composition (protein, fat, fruit, etc.) defined by the *"Codice di Autodisciplina dell'Istituto del Gelato Italiano"* ["Self-regulation code of the Italian Ice Cream Institute"]; there are then additional technological and structural constraints that make it quite difficult to reduce sugars and fats content.

For several years now, the industry has invested in research projects to develop innovative solutions and achieve the ideal balance between flavour and nutritional profile, and to reduce the energy content of a portion by modifying the ratio of ingredients and making available smaller serving sizes as alternative to the standard ones.

Targeted interventions concerned*:*

The industry has undertaken to reduce the average energy content in a serving of children's ice cream, with the goal of achieving a 20% reduction by 2017.

Year	**2008**	**2014**	**2017**
Average serving	210 kcal	190 kcal	170 kcal
% reduction	-	10%	20%

Trans fatty acids: the industry has committed to drastically reduce the content of trans fatty acids from the industrial production of fats (hydrogenation) until its complete elimination, in accordance with the following timeline:

Year	**2008**	**2014**	**2017**
TFA concentration from hydrogenated fats (g/100 g)	1 g	0.2 g	trace
% reduction	-	80%	100%

[5] *This reduction refers to the yogurt and fermented milk category as a whole, and not specifically to children's products.*

Saturated fats: For several years now, the industry has made efforts to reduce the amount of saturated fats in its products, within the limits of technological constraints and consumer acceptability. An additional reduction in saturated fats content is nevertheless expected for 2017.

Year	2008	2014	2017
Average concentration (g/100g)	11 g	10,5 g	10 g
% reduction	-	4.5%	9%

Sugars: For several years now, the industry has made efforts to reduce the amount of sugars in its products, within the limits of technological constraints and consumer acceptability. An additional reduction in sugar content is nevertheless expected for 2017, compatibly with technological requirements.

Year	2008	2014	2017
Average concentration (g/100g)	35 g	33 g	28 g
% reduction	-	6%	20%

Labelling: nutritional labelling will become mandatory starting in 2016. The industry voluntarily commits to providing nutritional information per 100 g and per serving at least with regards to macro-nutrients. It also commits to indicating the % Reference Intake, at least as concerns energy.

Year	2008	2014	2017
% companies	60%	80%	100%

As part of a voluntary code, the industry refrains from selling ice cream in vending machines in elementary and middle schools.

The commitments made by the industry association that accounts for 90% of the national market refer to average targeted to children.

Conclusions

The commitments made so far are important in terms of achieving health goals, and they will hopefully constitute a paradigm for voluntary cooperation between the food industry and the public administration, and one that can be extended to other segments of the population.

Responsiveness on the part of the food industry – which is aware of the problem and considers itself part of the solution – is indispensable, and it includes not only an awareness of the relationship between health and various nutrients, but also the cognizance of a proper lifestyle model combining exercise and healthy nutrition, taking into account serving size and the frequency of consumption of certain types of food.

This will allow consumers to choose to modify their own dietary habits by selecting reformulated products, eating smaller portions, and exercising.

In this context, a particularly important role is played by the implementation of an effective and continuous effort to provide "institutional nutritional education", in cooperation with other competent administrations, through actions such as promoting the Ministry of Health's website in order to provide suitable and timely information to citizens.

SUMMARY TABLE

	Total fats	Saturated fats	Trans fats	sugars	Fibre	Sodium	Energy content of the serving size	Calorie-free version	Other options
Breakfast cereal 2014 2017			- 80% - 100%	- 6% - 14%	+75% +125%	- 33% - 56%			**L**
Biscuits 2014 2017		- 4.5% - 9%	- 80% - 100%	- 6% - 20%	+ 25% + 50%				**L**
Savoury snacks 2009/2017 (potato chips) 2010/2017 (potato chips) 2013/2017 (savoury snacks)	- 25%	- 35%				- 19% - 10%			**L**
Crackers 2014 2017			- 50% - 100%		+ 40% + 60%	- 18% - 27%			**L**
Merendine 2014 2017		- 4.5% - 9%	- 90% - 100%	- 6% - 14%			- 10% AET - 15% AET		**L**
Soft drinks 2012 2016				- 6% - 18%			Smaller containers	+30%	**L**
Fruit juice * **Nectar** 2009-2014				(added sugars) - 7/8%					

Yogurt/fermented milk 2011 2015 2018				(added sugars) - 10 % - 23 % - 27 %					Total sugars < 13g/100g
Ice cream 2014 2017		-4,5% -9%	- 80% - 100%	-6% -20%			- 10% AET - 20% AET		**L**

L: *indicates that the proposal refers to improved labelling criteria*

***:** regulated by specific norms (modification of Directive EC 2001/112) banning added sugar

We agree with the present document.

Signed:

A.I.D.E.P.I.
Associazione delle Industrie del Dolce e della Pasta Italiane

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A.I.I.P.A. *(Gruppo Succhi e nettari - Gruppo Chips & Snacks)*
Associazione Italiana Industrie Prodotti Alimentari

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ASSOBIBE
Associazione Italiana tra gli Industriali delle Bevande Analcooliche

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ASSOLATTE
Associazione Italiana Lattiero Casearia

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CONFIDA
Associazione Italiana Distribuzione Automatica

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FEDERALIMENTARE
Federazione Italiana dell'Industria Alimentare

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FIPE
Federazione Italiana Pubblici Esercizi

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MINERACQUA
Federazione Italiana delle Industrie delle Acque Minerali Naturali, delle Acque di Sorgente e delle Bevande Analcooliche

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The Minister of Health

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