Nutrition Labelling: Nordic Recommendations Based on Consumer Opinions

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Nordic Council of Ministers

Store Strandstræde 18

DK-1255 Copenhagen K

Phone (+45) 3396 0200

Fax (+45) 3396 0202

Nordic Council

Store Strandstræde 18

DK-1255 Copenhagen K

Phone (+45) 3396 0400

Fax (+45) 3311 1870

www.norden.org

Consumer Co-operation in the Nordic Countries

The aim of the co-operation in the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials on Consumer Affairs is to promote consumer safety, protect their financial and legal interests, inform consumers and promote their education, and promote consumer influence in society. Exchange of information, reports, and research will contribute to the Nordic consumer policy and provides a platform for joint Nordic presentation in international contexts.

The Nordic Food Policy Co-operation

The Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Food Issues is concerned with basic Food Policy issues relating to food and nutrition, food toxicology and food microbiology, risk evaluation, food control and food legislation. The co-operation aims at protection of the health of the consumer, common utilisation of professional and administrative resources and at Nordic and international developments in this field.

The Nordic Council of Ministers

was established in 1971. It submits proposals on co-operation between the governments of the five Nordic countries to the Nordic Council, implements the Council's recommendations and reports on results, while directing the work carried out in the targeted areas. The Prime Ministers of the five Nordic countries assume overall responsibility for the co-operation measures, which are co-ordinated by the ministers for co-operation and the Nordic Co-operation committee. The composition of the Council of Ministers varies, depending on the nature of the issue to be treated.

The Nordic Council

was formed in 1952 to promote co-operation between the parliaments and governments of Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Finland joined in 1955. At the sessions held by the Council, representatives from the Faroe Islands and Greenland form part of the Danish delegation, while Åland is represented on the Finnish delegation. The Council consists of 87 elected members - all of whom are members of parliament. The Nordic Council takes initiatives, acts in a consultative capacity and monitors co-operation measures. The Council operates via its institutions: the Plenary Assembly, the Presidium and standing committees.

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Foreword

Food labelling has long been a matter of interest for the Nordic countries. In the cooperation on food issues, formalised under the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Committee of Senior Officials for Food Issues, important projects have been carried out since the early 1990s.

One aspect of food labelling is the nutrition information, which is increasingly becoming the focus of attention. The Committee of Senior Officials for Consumer Affairs took active part in the nutrition labelling work by contributing personal and economic resources.

The first part of this report describes the process that has led to the production of the final Nordic recommendations on nutrition labelling.

The Nordic project group consisted of:

Ms Auli Suojanen, National Food Agency, Finland

Ms Birgitta Lund, National Food Administration, Sweden

Ms Hilde Helgesen, Norwegian Food Control Authority, Norway

Mr Steinar Aðalbjörnsson, Environment and Food Agency, Iceland

Ms Gitte Gross, Danish Consumer Council, Denmark

Ms Eva-May Ohlander, National Food Administration, Sweden, *project coordinator*.

The second part of the report presents the results from a study on the attitudes of Nordic consumers to nutrition labelling and their opinions on this subject. ACNielsen AIM in Copenhagen was commissioned to conduct the study. The ACNielsen team consisted of Gitte Madsen, MSc (Senior Consultant), Birgitte Knudsen, MA (Moderator) and Inger Petersen (Secretary).

Although the results of the consumer study are included in the present report published by the Nordic Council of Ministers, ACNielsen AIM bear full responsibility for the results, conclusions and the text of their report, included as Part II.

Näringsvärdesdeklaration på livsmedel

Livsmedelsmärkning – nordiskt arbete i korthet

Tillfredsställande märkning av livsmedel och produktinformation är ett legitimt konsumentkrav och har därför länge stått på det nordiska samarbetets dagordning. Ett viktigt steg togs 1994 då Ämbetsmannakommittén för livsmedelsfrågor, ÅK-Livs, beviljade medel till ett projekt med syftet att ge en övergripande bild av livsmedelsmärkningen i Norden. Arbetet resulterade i rapporten *Merking av mat* (TemaNord 1997:550), som i engelsk översättning publicerades som *Food Labelling* (TemaNord 1998:577).

I det arbetet konstaterades att kunskapen om livsmedelsmärkningen är bristfällig när det gäller vad konsumenterna vill ha, vad de förstår och vilka uppgifter kan de använda sig av. För att fylla dessa kunskapsluckor startade ett tvärspektoriellt samarbete på nordisk bas för att ta reda på hur konsumenterna använder sig av livsmedelsmärkningen och vilka attityder de har. Inom ramen för det projektet sammanställdes först uppgifter om relevant litteratur och vetenskapliga studier. De publicerades i den danskspråkiga rapporten *Forbrugernes brug af fødevaremærkning. Litteratur- og pilotstudie*. (TemaNord 2000:525). Nästa fas var att genomföra en studie bland konsumenter i alla nordiska länder, ett uppdrag som gick till det danska företaget Advice Analyse A/S. Resultaten publicerades på danska i rapporten *Forbrugernes krav til fødevaremærkning og vareinformation* (TemaNord 2001:501) och i engelsk översättning i *Food Labelling. Nordic Consumers' Proposals for Improvements* (TemaNord 2001:573).

Advice Analyse A/S sammanfattade resultaten i sex rekommendationer, av vilka en var:

Näringsvärdesdeklaration bör vara obligatorisk på alla livsmedel. Grunden för det var att 79% av de konsumenter som deltog i studien (n = 1323) instämde i påståendet Näringsvärde med upplysning om fettinnehåll och energinivå bör vara obligatorisk på alla livsmedel. 18% instämde inte.

Det yttersta syftet med märkningsprojektet var att formulera en nordisk strategi för arbetet med livsmedelsmärkning. På basen av den studie som nämns ovan, remissyttranden och ett seminarium, sammanfattades märkningsprojektet i ett förslag till nordisk politik som trycktes i den tvåspråkiga rapporten *Nordisk politik for mærkning af fødevarer / Nordic Policy Towards the Labelling of Foods* (TemaNord 2002:589). Policyförslaget har formen av 10 rekommendationer, var och en med sina förutsättningar, som de nordiska länderna väntas förverkliga. En av rekommendationerna är densamma som i konsumentstudien: *Näringsvärdesdeklaration bör vara obligatorisk på alla förpackade livsmedel.*

Näringsvärdesdeklaration

För att följa upp redan nådda resultat, etablerades 2001 en ny projektgrupp för en ny tvåstegs-insats inriktad på deklaration av näringsvärde. Initiativet var ett tvärspektoriellt samarbete mellan ämbetsmannakommittéerna för livsmedel respektive konsumentfrågor.

Första delmålet var att referera relevant litteratur och presentera forskningen på området. De näringsvärdesdeklarationer som var i bruk i Europa och USA granskades, tillsammans med de förslag som lagts fram i Kanada, Australien och på Nya Zeeland (2001). Konsumentstudier relaterade till näringsvärdesdeklaration bedömdes.

På denna bas utarbetades olika format och listor med näringsämnen för en näringsvärdesdeklaration avsedd att motsvara konsumenternas krav och förväntningar. Formaten och listorna tog framför allt hänsyn till sifferinformation tillämplig på livsmedel, men också symboler och påståenden diskuterades. Uteslutna ur översikten var oförpackade livsmedel, livsmedel för särskilda näringsändamål och kosttillskott, liksom mervärdesmat och hälso-påståenden. Litteraturoversikten och förslagen till format och listor sammanfattades i rapporten *Proposals for New Nutrition Labelling Formats* (TemaNord 2002:554).

Projektets andra del bestod i att testa de fyra formaten och fyra listorna bland konsumenter i de fem nordiska länderna. Uppdraget gick till ACNielsen AIM i Danmark.

Resultaten från konsumentstudien var avsedd som en grund för att formulera nordiska rekommendationer att lägga fram för Nordiska ministerrådet och förhoppningsvis en nordisk politik för att utveckla näringsvärdesdeklarationer på livsmedel. Eventuellt kunde utgången bli en enda ideal näringsvärdesdeklaration som kunde ge framtida konsumenter möjlighet att göra informerade livsmedelsval.

Konsumentstudien om näringsdeklarationer

De fyra föreslagna formaten och listorna testades i de fem nordiska länderna. Uppdraget gick till det danska företaget ACNielsen AIM. Syftet var att skaffa information och kunskap om användningen av näringsvärdesdeklaration, vilka behov konsumenterna har och vad de föredrar.

I varje land samlades fyra fokusgrupper. Två bestod av sporadiska (*occasional*) användare, som läser näringsdeklaration minst en gång i månaden och blivande (*potential*) användare, som läser dem 2-4 gånger per år. Både grupperna företrädde av två åldersgrupper.

För att få önskade upplysningar undersöktes följande frågeställningar:

1. Konsumenternas förståelse av de fyra formaten, dvs. vilken information fick de, och, för de potentiella användarna, hur kunde de tänkas använda den?
2. Vilket av de fyra formaten föredrog konsumenterna? Svaren skulle ge insikt i motiven till och hindren för konsumenternas val.
3. Konsumenternas förståelse av de fyra listorna med näringsämnen, dvs. vilken information fick de, och, för de potentiella användarna, hur kunde de tänkas använda den?
4. Vilken av näringsämneslistorna föredrog konsumenterna? Svaren skulle ge insikt i motiven till och hindren för konsumenternas val.

ACNielsen AIMS rekommendationer

När konsumentstudien var avslutad summerade företaget resultaten i fem slutsatser.

- * **Arbetet bör fortsätta med att utveckla format IV och lista D.**
Format IV och lista D var de som generellt sett bäst uppfyllde önskningar och behov i grupperna. ACNielsen AIM rekommenderar att utformningen ses över för att ge konsumenten bästa möjliga chans att göra motiverade val.
- * **Formatet ska ange näringsvärdet per 100 g, inte per styck.**
Det är viktigt att konsumenten kan använda näringsdeklarationerna för att jämföra produkter med varandra. Uppgifter per stycke är inte jämförbara, medan information per 100 gram är oberoende av styckestorlek och portion.
- * **Man bör noga överväga hur man ska informera om rekommenderat intag så att det blir lättare att förstå.**
Konsumenterna visade stort intresse för rekommenderat dagligt intag, men de kunde inte förstå den information som gavs. Andra sätt att förmedla uppgifterna bör övervägas.
- * **Fotnoter och asterisker bör undvikas.**
Konsumenterna blev frustrerade av uppgifter som ges i fotnoter och asterisker – sådan ”överinformation” skymmer tydlighet och tillgänglighet.

* **Man bör noga överväga hur information om fett och socker kan bli tydligare och mer tillgänglig.**

Konsumenterna hade inte någon tydlig uppfattning om skillnaden mellan hårt, mättat och trans-fett, eller av skillnaden mellan mono- och disackarider. De vill ha informationen, men behöver bättre instruktioner.

Seminarium

För att få en bredare diskussion om resultaten ordnades ett nordiskt seminarium i Stockholm i juni 2003. Deltagarna representerade livsmedelsmyndigheter, *ernæringsråd*, konsumentorganisationer, handel och industri. Projektgruppen glädde sig åt en framstående skara föreläsare. Den första presentationen handlade om syftet med näringsdeklarationer och deras funktion som redskap i utbildning, därpå presenterade ACNielsen AIM konsumentstudien och dess resultat. Brittisk forskning på området var det intressanta innehållet i nästa föredrag och sist, men inte minst gick ordet till den SANCO-representant som då hade ansvar för översynen av EG-direktivet om näringsdeklaration.

Efter föredragen diskuterade församlingen för- och nackdelar med näringsdeklaration och dess utformning.

Diskussionerna samlades i korthet runt följande åsikter:

1. Huvudsyftet med näringsdeklaration är att informera om produkten och ge köparen möjlighet att jämföra och göra hälsosamma val.
2. Myndigheter och konsument/näringsexperter menade att näringsdeklaration bör vara obligatorisk, handel/industri att den bör vara frivillig.
3. Alla var eniga om att uppgifter bör ges både per 100 gram och per portion. Önskvärt är med uppgift om rekommenderat dagligt intag, RDI, men den måste vara lätt att förstå. Lättbegripligheten är viktig och en standardiserad utformning med heltal och gärna grafisk illustration förespråkades av de flesta.
4. En allmän slutsats var att det inte finns en ideal form för näringsdeklaration, men att användbarheten beror både på lättillgängligheten och den allmänna nutritionsbildningen.

Resultat: Nordiska rekommendationer om näringsvärdesdeklaration

Det nordiska projektets slutsatser gällande näringsdeklaration på livsmedel sammanfattas i följande fyra rekommendationer.

Näringsdeklaration ska vara obligatorisk på alla förpackade livsmedel.

Näringsdeklarationen ska vara standardiserad till sin utformning.

Näringsämnen. Näringsinformationen ska ges enligt följande obligatoriska lista:

Energi

Fett

varav hårt fett

Kolhydrater

varav socker

Fibrer

Protein

Salt

Transfettsyror ingår i hårt fett

Fibrer bör definieras och specificeras

Obligatoriskt format bör ge information

1. Per 100 gram, och
2. Per portion (med stycke eller hushållsmått inom parentes)
3. Ett enkelt system att ge råd – hög/låg halt, symbol – utvecklas och testas. RDI bör inte användas, begreppet är för komplicerat.

Kommentarer

Det finns ingen perfekt modell för näringsdeklaration och den är alltid en kompromiss mellan många behov.

Näringsdeklarationen är ett redskap för att förmedla information och ska stödjas med utbildning och andra åtgärder.

Beräkning av livsmedel ingår inte i resonemangen i denna rapport.

Nordiska ministerrådet

När de nordiska ministrarna för fiskeri, jord- och skogsbruk och livsmedel träffades i juni 2001 deklarerade de sin avsikt att prioritera forskning och förbättrade kunskaper gällande livsmedelsmärkning. Speciellt nämndes att utformningen av näringsvärdesdeklarationer skulle testas.

Jämsides med detta fattade Nordiska ministerrådet beslut om ett program för *Hållbar utveckling i Norden*. I kapitel 6 om livsmedelssäkerhet finns ett avsnitt som handlar om märkning och konsumentinformation, som slutar med uttalandet *Næringsdeklarasjoner må gøres obligatoriske og mere forståelige for forbrugeren*.

När ACNielsen AIM hade avslutat konsumentprojektet, seminariet var hållet och projektgruppen hade formulerat de slutliga fyra rekommendationerna, sändes dessa till de två ansvariga ämbetsmannakommittéerna. Båda kommittéerna ställde sig bakom de fyra rekommendationerna om näringsdeklaration på livsmedel och sände dem vidare till ministerrådet.

Ministerrådet – de nordiska ministrarna för fiskeri, jord- och skogsbruk och livsmedel – har antagit rekommendationerna som riktlinjer för det nordiska arbetet med näringsdeklarationer.

Part I. Nutrition labelling – a Nordic overview

A. Food labelling in general – the Nordic work in brief

Satisfactory food labelling and product information is an important consumer demand, and has therefore been a topic for Nordic co-operation since the 1980s. An important step was taken in 1994 when the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Food Issues (EK-Livs) began funding a project to produce a comprehensive overview and general description of food labelling. The result was published by the Nordic Council of Ministers, first in Norwegian in the report *Merking av mat* (TemaNord 1997:550) and then in an English translation as *Food Labelling* (TemaNord 1998:577).

Specific gaps in existing knowledge were identified: What do consumers want? What can they understand? What can they use? To fill these gaps, the Nordic Council of Ministers continued the work on food labelling by launching a project in 1998 with the main objective of throwing light on consumers' use of food labelling and their knowledge and attitudes in this area from an overall perspective. The work was carried out in several steps, the first being to review relevant literature and publish it in the report *Forbrugernes brug af fødevaremærkning. Litteratur- og pilotstudie* (TemaNord 2000:525, in Danish).

The next step was to carry out a pan-Nordic survey of attitudes among Nordic consumers. Advice Analyse A/S in Denmark were commissioned to carry out the study. Their results were published in Danish in the report *Forbrugernes krav til fødevaremærkning og vareinformation* (TemaNord 2001:501), and in an English translation as *Food Labelling. Nordic Consumers' Proposals for Improvements* (TemaNord 2001:573).

Advice Analyse A/S compiled the results of the survey into six recommendations, of which one concerns nutrition labelling:

Nutrition declarations should be mandatory on all products. The foundation for this is that 79% of the consumers surveyed (n = 1323) agreed with the statement '*Nutrition declaration with information on fat content and calorific value ought to be mandatory on all foods*'. 18% disagreed.

The ultimate goal of the food labelling project was to formulate a Nordic strategy for food labelling. On the basis of the investigation mentioned above, hearings and a seminar, the final summary of the food labelling project presented a proposal for a Nordic policy in the area. It was published in Danish as *Nordisk politik for mærkning af fødevarer* and in English as *Nordic Policy Towards the Labelling of Foods* (TemaNord 2002:589). The policy suggested that the Nordic countries pursue initiatives presented as ten recommendations, each accompanied with relevant pre-conditions. One of these was similar to that stated above: Nutrition declarations should be mandatory on all pre-packed foods.

B. Nutrition labelling

In following up the results achieved so far concerning food labelling, a new project group was engaged in 2001 for a second two-step project dealing with nutrition labelling. This project was a joint initiative by two Nordic committees of Senior Officials, one for Food issues, the other for Consumer affairs.

The first task was to review relevant literature and research in the field of nutrition labelling. Nutrition labels in use in Europe and the United States were examined, together with proposals put forward in Canada, Australia and New Zealand (2001). Consumer studies relating to nutrition labelling were evaluated. On this basis, various formats were developed to meet consumer needs and expectations. The Nordic Nutrition Recommendations and the prevalence of food-related diseases in Europe were used as aids in selecting nutrients for the label. The development of the formats focused on numerical nutrition information as applicable to com-

mon foods, but nutrition claims and symbols were also discussed. Excluded from the survey were non-packed foods, foods for special dietary uses and food supplements, as well as functional and health claims. The literature review and the formats developed were published in the report *Proposals for New Nutrition Labelling Formats* (TemaNord 2002:554).

The second task for the project group was to carry out consumer tests in all Nordic countries with the four formats and four lists developed. The Danish company ACNielsen AIM was commissioned to organise and summarise this testing, and the study was performed in 2002.

The knowledge obtained from this testing was intended to form the basis for formulating recommendations to the Nordic Council of Ministers, and possibly a common Nordic policy on nutrition labelling. The eventual outcome might be a single, ideal nutrition label that might enable future consumers to make informed choices based on the nutrition value of the food products.

1. The ACNielsen AIM consumer study

The four proposed formats and four lists were tested in all Nordic countries, with the aim of obtaining information and knowledge about:

- The use of, and need for, nutrition labelling, and
- Consumer preferences in relation to nutrition labelling.

In order to do so, four focus groups were assembled in each country: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Two groups were assembled with *occasional users* – i.e. those who read a nutrition label at least once a month – and two groups with *potential users*, who read a nutrition label 2-4 times a year.

In order to provide the information required, the following issues were studied:

1. The consumers' understanding of the four formats, i.e. what information did they derive from them and, in the case of potential users, what might they use it for?
2. Which of the four formats did the consumers prefer? The answer was intended to provide an insight into the motivations and barriers that determine consumer choices.
3. The consumers' understanding of the four lists of nutrients, i.e. what information did they derive from them and, in the case of potential users, what might they use it for?
4. Which of the nutrient lists did the consumers prefer? The answer was intended to provide an insight into the motivations and barriers that determine consumer choices.

The ACNielsen AIM recommendations

On completion of the study, ACNielsen AIM summarized the results of the tests in five recommendations:

- **Work should be continued with Format IV and List D**
Generally speaking, these were those that best met the desires and demands of the target groups. ACNielsen AIM recommend that the design of the format and the list be revised in order to ensure that the consumers have the best possible chance of making informed choices.
- **The format should indicate the nutritional value per 100 g – not per item**
It is important for consumers that they can use the nutrition labels for comparing two food products, and the indications calculated for each individual product are not comparable, whereas the indications per gram do not depend on the size of a piece or a serving.

- **Consideration should be given to how one can inform consumers about Recommended Daily Intake (RDI) in a manner that is easier to understand**
Consumers voiced a strong interest in RDI, but they did not understand the current indications. One should consider how RDI can be expressed in an accessible manner.
- **Footnotes and asterisks should be avoided**
Consumers became frustrated by information in footnotes and asterisks – “over-information” confuses clarity and accessibility.
- **Consideration should be given to how specifications of fat and sugars can be expressed in a more clear and accessible manner**
Consumers did not have a clear understanding of the difference between hard, saturated and trans- fat, or of the difference between mono- and disaccharides. They want this information, but they also need further instructions.

Formats and lists tested in the consumer study

Format I (per 100g):

PIZZA WITH HAM	Nutrition information per 100g
Energy	200 kcal / 850 kJ
Fat	11 g
Carbohydrate	13 g
Protein	14 g

List A (short list * of nutrients):

LIST A
Energy
Fat

* in close proximity to the name of the product

Format II (per serving):

PIZZA WITH HAM Package contains 4 slices	Nutrition information per two slices (250 g)
Energy	510 kcal / 2140 kJ
Fat	27 g
Carbohydrate	33 g
Protein	35 g

List B (current list of nutrients):

LIST B
Energy
Protein
Carbohydrate
Fat

Format III (per 100g and per serving):

PIZZA WITH HAM Package contains 4 slices	Nutrition Information	
	per 100g	per two slices (250 g)
Energy	200 kcal / 850 kJ	510 kcal / 2140 kJ
Fat	11 g	27 g
Carbohydrate	13 g	33 g
Protein	14 g	35 g

List C (longer list of nutrients):

LIST C
Energy
Fat
– hard fat *
Sugars **
Fibre
Sodium (as salt)

* hard fat = saturated fat and trans- fat

** sugars = natural and added mono- and disaccharides

Format IV

(per serving and as percentage of recommended daily intake RDI):

PIZZA WITH HAM Package contains 4 slices	Nutrition information per serving = two slices (250 g)	
Energy	510 kcal / 2140 kJ	
	% RDI *	
Fat	27 g	42 %
Carbohydrate	33 g	12 %
Protein	35 g	46 %

* Percentage of RDI (recommended daily intake) is based on a 2000 kcal diet. Your RDI may be higher or lower depending on your energy needs.

List D (extensive list of nutrients):

LIST D
Energy
Fat
– saturated + trans- fat *
Carbohydrates
– sugars **
– fibre
Protein
Sodium (as salt)

* hard fat = saturated fat and trans- fat

** sugars = natural and added mono- and disaccharides

2. Seminar on nutrition labelling

The third step in the project was to arrange a seminar in Stockholm in June 2003 with the purpose to provide a forum for a broad discussion of the results achieved. The project group was delighted to be able to attract excellent speakers. The seminar programme started with a presentation of the purpose of nutrition labelling and its role in nutrition education. Then a representative from ACNielsen AIM briefly presented the Nordic consumer study and the results. Next, useful data on nutrition labelling – gathered in research carried out in the UK – was presented by the head of the Food Labelling and Standards Division at the Food Standards Agency in the UK. Last but definitely not least, the floor was given to a SANCO representative, who used to be responsible for reviewing the EU directive on nutrition labelling (90/496/EC).

Seminar participants included interested parties such as food authorities, nutrition councils, consumer organizations, trade and industry.

After the oral presentations, the seminar assembly held open discussions about pros and cons of nutrition labelling, first in groups and then in plenum. The participants formed three discussion groups: food authorities; consumer organizations and nutrition experts; and food trade together with food industry.

The assembly was asked to consider several questions regarding nutrition labelling and to give their feedback. These questions were:

1. What is the most important purpose of nutrition labelling?
2. Should nutrition labelling be voluntary or mandatory? Why?
3. ACNielsen AIM recommended Format IV, List D, with a few moderations. What are the pros and cons of these models?
4. What would the perfect nutrition label look like?

The answers to the questions that the assembly came up with were as follows:

1. The main purpose should be to provide information about a single product and information that enables consumers to make healthy choices between products.
2. The authority group and consumers/nutrition experts concluded that nutrition labelling should be mandatory, while food trade/industry thought that it should be voluntary.
3. All groups agreed that Format IV should have nutrition information per 100 g of product as well as per relevant portion (unit or serving). All groups also agreed that displaying nutrition information as a percentage of RDI was not helpful and could confuse the consumer. However, all groups thought that it was necessary to provide relevant information on recommended daily intake. The three groups also agreed that the model of choice should be easy to read and that there should be no footnotes or asterisks included on the label.

Authorities and consumers/nutrition experts preferred List D for nutrition information, while food trade/industry did not like List D, the longest of the four presented.

All groups wanted the list to be standardized with whole numbers, not fractions. When possible, graphic illustrations of high, medium or low content were desired. All groups also agreed that hard fat should be presented as such and not as trans-fatty acids and saturated fatty acids.

4. Overall, the groups concluded that there is no perfect model to use for nutrition labelling. However, the groups stated that the success of any model used for nutrition information depends on both the availability and the quality of general nutritional education.

C. Results: Nordic recommendations on nutrition labelling

In conclusion, this Nordic work on nutrition labelling has led to the following recommendations:

- I. Nutrition labelling should be mandatory** on all pre-packed foods. However, certain exceptions have to be allowed. Well-known products without a nutrient content, such as spices, tea, and coffee, are acceptable exceptions. A procedure for dealing with problems arising from e.g. unpredictable variations in natural contents of a nutrient (e.g. fat in fish) need to be discussed further.

Considered a tool for delivering information, the label can be developed over time, following a rise in level of education and increasing scientific knowledge.

If – or when – claims of various types are allowed, nutrition labelling on all foods will be required to provide the consumer with means of comparison.

- II. Standardised nutrition labelling.** Nutrition labels should be standardised. No asterisks, or footnotes. Legible text.

- III. Nutrients.** Nutrition information should consist of the following mandatory list:

Energy

Fat

of which hard fat

Carbohydrates

of which sugars

Fibre

Protein

Salt

Trans- fatty acids are included in hard fat

Fibre needs to be defined and specified

- IV. Mandatory formats** should give information:

1. Per 100 g, and
2. Per portion (item or household measure explanation in brackets)
3. A simple guidance system – low / high or symbols – should be devised and tested. Recommended daily intake (RDI) should not be used as this concept is too complicated.

Comments

There is no perfect model for nutritional information, and a nutrition label is always a compromise between many demands.

A nutrition label is a tool for delivering information, to be supported by educational and other efforts.

Fortification of food products was not included in the reasoning behind this report.

D. Position of the Nordic Council of Ministers

When the Nordic ministers for fisheries, agriculture, forestry and foods met in June 2001, they declared their intention to prioritise research and to improve existing knowledge on food labelling. They particularly mentioned testing of formats for nutrition labelling.

In a parallel process, the Nordic Council of Ministers agreed on a programme for *Sustainable Development* (TemaNord 2001:507). In Chapter 6 of this document, which deals with food safety, one section discusses Labelling and Consumer Information and concludes with the statement that '*Nutrition declarations should be mandatory and more intelligible to consumers*'.

When the ACNielsen AIM study was completed, the seminar held and the project group had formulated the four final recommendations, these were presented to the two Nordic Committees responsible, namely those for Food Issues and Consumer Affairs. Both Committees adopted the recommendations put forward, and in their turn recommended that the Council of Ministers accept the recommendations as guidelines for the Nordic work regarding nutrition labelling. The Nordic ministers for fisheries, agriculture, forestry and foods have made a decision in accordance with this recommendation.

Part II. The Consumer Study. Report from ACNielsen AIM

Testing nutrition label formats

Nordic Council of Ministers

Summary

Prepared by Birgitte Knudsen

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Introduction

This qualitative study about Nordic consumers' view on nutrition labels is conducted by ACNielsen AIM in Denmark. The study contains local research in the five Nordic countries, and ACNielsen has cooperated with local research institutes, which collected and analyzed some of the data.

The local institutes were:

- In Finland – Marketing Radar Ltd
- In Norway – ACNielsen Norway
- In Sweden – Demoskop
- In Iceland – Gallup Iceland

The study was designed in cooperation with a Project Group appointed by the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Food Issues under the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The Project Group consisted of the following persons:

Denmark	Gitte Gross, Chair Lady
Finland	Auli Suojanen
Iceland	Steinar Aðalbjörnsson
Norway	Hilde Helgesen
Sweden	Birgitta Lund
Secretary	Eva-May Ohlander, Sweden

The study is conducted in accordance with the ESOMAR codex for qualitative studies by the ACNielsen team below:

Senior consultant, MSc Business Economics and Administration,
Gitte Madsen
(Client responsible)

Moderator, MA, **Birgitte Knudsen**
(Moderating and reporting)

Secretary **Inger Petersen**
(Layout)

Summary and Recommendations

The Project Group under Nordic Council of Ministers has prepared four suggestions for nutrition labeling formats and four suggestions for lists of content for nutrition labeling. The background for these suggestions has been described in the report *Proposals for New Nutrition Labelling Formats*, published by Nordic Council of Ministers, 2002.

The task for ACNielsen AIM was to test the consumers' understanding of the proposed four formats and lists, and also to test which format and list they prefer, across the five Nordic countries. The nutrition labeling could be used to compare foods, but also as a tool for finding out what the food products consist of.

The task of ACNielsen AIM was to test the consumers' understanding of the four formats and lists, and also to test which format and list they prefer, across the five Nordic countries. The study confirms that consumers use the nutrition labeling for comparisons but also as a tool for finding out what the food products consist of.

The knowledge about nutrition labels and the motivation to use them is rather limited, especially in the *potential* users part of the target group. It is therefore still a big challenge simply motivating the consumers to use the nutrition labels.

This comparative management summary contains the conclusions and recommendations based on results from the qualitative research in the five Nordic countries.

The road towards an informed choice

The purpose of this study is to supply the Project Group with information and knowledge about use of, need for and preferences in relation to nutrition labeling. The study is meant to identify a form of nutrition labeling which is ideal for ensuring that future consumers can make informed choices.

The study conducted in the five Nordic countries shows that although the need for nutritional information is present in all the countries, it coincides with a lack of knowledge about what the information on the nutrition label can be used for.

One of the results is that the target group, across all five countries, does not seem to distinguish between nutrition labeling and product information. Furthermore, the study shows that there is a different kind of focus on the types of nutrients in the various countries and that this focus is closely related to information campaigns and tendencies in the public debate. In Finland, there is thus an increased focus on the effects of sodium intake, due to a national information project about the connection between sodium intake and for instance the occurrence of high blood pressure and cardiovascular diseases. In Denmark the focus is mainly on the fat-energy percentage, due to the media attention it has received in recent years.

The target group expresses interest in being able to use the nutrition labels for making informed choices. The study shows that the nutrition labels in their current form are used as a tool for checking the various nutrients contained in the food product. But in their current form, the nutrition labels are rather descriptive, and the study suggests that the target group, both when it comes to occasional and potential users, in fact needs a form of nutrition labeling which has a form that is more guiding. This could be, e.g., a nutrition label with a symbol or a color indicating to which extent the product is healthy or not. In principle this would be the same as the Swedish “Keyhole” symbol. This Summary describes the primary recommendation for the Project Group under Nordic Council of Ministers, and it then proceeds to explain the motivation behind this recommendation by presenting the findings across the five countries.

Recommendations

Based on the study, ACNielsen AIM recommends that the Project Group:

Continues their work with format 4 and list D

Generally speaking, these are the ones which best meet the target group’s desires and demands. We still recommend that the design of the format and the list is revised in order to ensure that the consumers have the best possible chances of making informed choices.

When revising the format, the following points should be considered:

Indicates the nutritional values per 100 g and not per two pieces

It is important to consumers that they can use the nutrition labels for comparison between two food products, and the indication calculated for two pieces is not expedient, whereas the indication per gram does not depend on the size of a piece or a serving.

Considers how one can inform about Recommended Daily Intake (RDI) in a manner that is easier to understand.

The target group voices a strong interest in RDI but they do not understand the current indications. One should consider how RDI can be indicated in an accessible manner.

Avoids indications in foot notes or using asterisks

The target group is frustrated when it is presented with information in foot notes because it detracts from the clarity and accessibility.

Considers how the specifications about types of fat and sugar can be indicated in a more clear and accessible manner

The target group does not have a clear understanding of the difference between hard, saturated and trans fat, just as the concepts mono- or disaccharide do not make them any wiser. They desire this information, but they also need further instructions.

The use of nutrition labels

When the target group members use nutrition labels they generally focus on checking information about the energy values. Apart from that, the nutrition labels are primarily used for:

- Comparison of food products
- Checking new or foreign products

The consumers use nutrition labels as a guideline when they choose between different food products. They wish to compare the difference between the nutrient values, and base their final choice on this.

Furthermore, the nutrition label is used when consumers encounter new or foreign products. In these cases, the consumers wish to check what the product contains and how the nutrients are balanced. When they suspect a high content of fat, the consumers are especially prone to reading the nutrition label.

Qualifications for understanding nutrition labels

The consumers' qualifications for understanding the nutrition labels are generally small. Only a limited number of the target group members have sufficient knowledge about nutrition labels to use the information constructively.

The greatest barrier for extracting information from the nutrition labels is that the consumers feel the need for further calculations based on the indicated values.

Definition of a nutrition label

As mentioned in the introduction, the target group does not have a clear picture of what a nutrition label is and contains. Generally, the target group confuses nutrition labels with product information, and especially vitamins and minerals seem to play an important role. In this study vitamins and minerals are not part of the nutrition label, many consumers wish to be informed about them. Vitamins and minerals are part of nutrition labels in a.o. Sweden and are thus inevitably mentioned in the discussion.

Prerequisites for ensuring that consumers can make use of nutrition labels

If one wishes to ensure that the nutrition labels give optimal information to the two segments of consumers, occasional and potential users, it is decisive that the information is:

- Simple – i.e. does not require further calculations or specialized knowledge
- Easily understood

It is important that the information on the nutrition labels can be decoded immediately – regardless of the reader's preexisting knowledge.

Occasional and potential users

When potential and occasional users read nutrition labels they are motivated by the same factors: e.g. to obtain information about a new product, to check the fat content, to compare two almost identical products or check ready prepared products. The difference (cf. the recruitment criteria) is that the potential users feel a less frequent need for reading nutrition labels – they are generally less interested in the indicated information.

A factor that impedes potential users from considering nutrition labels helpful is that their pre-existing knowledge is not as extensive as that of the occasional users. The occasional users simply know more about what the information entails for them and what they can use it for.

Occasional users	The occasional users generally exhibit a greater interest in health and healthy food products and in using their own knowledge about the information on the nutrition labels.
Potential users	<p>The potential users, to a greater extent than the occasional users, state that they read the nutrition label at home when they consume the food product. I.e. <i>when</i> they read it, it is when they take the product out of the refrigerator or when they eat it. This is interesting in connection with motivating the potential users to read the labels more often, because it shows that they read them in situations with more available time than during shopping.</p> <p>The potential users also mention that a complicated nutrition label is a barrier. Combined with the previously stated fact that nutrition labels are often read at home, this leads us to assume that a clear and understandable nutrition label may motivate the potential users to read nutrition labels more often: If they read an easily accessible nutrition label at home in their kitchen, they will possibly feel better equipped to read nutrition labels during future shopping, and thus make informed choices!</p>
How extensive should nutrition labels be?	Although simplicity and accessibility are the most important factors for the consumers, making short nutrition labels is not the ideal solution. In fact, the nutrition labels primarily need to be easily understood . In principle, an ideal nutrition label should meet the following demand for simplicity: if a consumer who has not used nutrition labels so far suddenly gets the urge to do so, he or she should be able to understand the information on the label – regardless of his/her previous knowledge.
Future motivation factor	<p>Simplicity, however, is not sufficient to make the target group read nutrition labels more often than is currently the case. The potential target group primarily needs to be motivated through different channels. Once the motivation is there, it is easier for them to understand the nutrition labels.</p> <p>If one wishes to motivate the target group, this should be done by making the information personally relevant for the consumer – a good nutrition label is not enough.</p> <p>One suggestion for a motivation factor is the public debate. Fat, which is generally discussed in connection with health, is a desired category on nutrition labels in all countries. Sodium receives special interest in Finland as the country has a frequent occurrence of high blood pressure and cardiovascular diseases and there has been a concerted effort on a national level to limit the sodium intake. It is very likely that this effort is behind the target group's desire to have sodium on the nutrition labels. Considering this and the widespread focus on fat, we can assume that information campaigns have an instructive effect.</p>
Focus on nutrients	As can be seen in the figure below, the consumers, across all participating countries, primarily focus on fat, secondly on carbohydrates, sodium and protein. Fat, sugar and carbohydrates are nutrients that the target group knows the most about – and are best able to apply their knowledge about.

The reason why the consumers do not focus on e.g. protein is that they are incapable of using the information that they receive on the current nutrition labels, and they have very little knowledge about what the indication of the protein value means.

Motivation behind reading nutrition labels

The target group primarily reads nutrition labels on food products which are new to them or which are fatty, sugary, processed or ready-made.

Conviction and **experience** are the factors that determine on which food products the target group finds it relevant to read the nutrition label. If the consumers are convinced that they know the product and simultaneously assume that the product is either healthy or unhealthy or contains little or much fat, then this conviction is decisive for whether they read the nutrition label or not.

The general motives for reading nutrition labels can be seen in the figure on the next page.

As can be seen on the figure above, the incentives for reading nutrition labels are generally the same across all five Nordic countries. The desire to use nutrition labels is based on a wish to use them as a tool when one is in doubt or considers buying an unfamiliar product. It is therefore a matter of being able to use nutrition labels for making informed choices.

Standardization

The results of the study show that there is a need for standardizing nutrition labels so that they are identical on all food products.

Whether nutrition labels are necessary on all food products is more uncertain, since it varies greatly how relevant the target group considers nutrition labels to be, and depending on products and product categories.

There definitively should be nutrition labels on products which:

- are in any way compounded or processed
- contain more than just a minimal amount of fat
- contain sugar

The target group to a large extent finds it irrelevant to check nutrition labels on products that consist of one ingredient or raw material only.

Future information

Information campaigns, brochures about nutrients and teaching during cooking classes at school are mentioned as the most suitable manner of educating the population about nutrients. Statements from the target group saying that they do not read nutrition labels because it has been a long time since they went to school support this argument.

Formats and lists

Introduction	<p>In the following section, there will be a brief summary of the most central conclusions based on the target group's attitudes towards the various formats and lists (The different formats and list are show in appendix A). The conclusions should be read while keeping in mind the recommendations for future nutrition labels that was outlined in the introduction. Below we go over the findings trying to choose the best layout for the future nutrition labels, and in this connection we briefly recount the expressed views on the different formats and lists.</p> <p>The critique of the individual formats and lists reflect how the target group members use nutrition labels and what their need for information is. At times this also entails demands for information that they do not actually understand. E.g., there is a certain consciousness about RDI, and the concept is associated with something positive and desirable, although it is not clear what the concept means exactly. Likewise, the desire for protein to be on List C was voiced, because the target group expects the nutrient to be there, regardless of whether they are able to use this piece of information or not.</p> <p>The nutritional information that the target group retrieves from the formats and lists is inextricably connected with their purpose for reading nutrition labels, e.g. knowing the fat content in a food product.</p>
The most easily understood	<p>Calculations per 100 g and per serving are the models that seem the most easily understood for the target group because the information is very concrete. However, the format is not so popular among the respondents because they still feel that they get a lot of information, and is not directed or helped to understand in any way.</p>
Per 100 g	<p>The calculation of nutritional values per 100 g is an absolute necessity. For one thing, it is a calculation that the target group is familiar with, for another it meets their need for comparison between food products.</p> <p>Indications per 100 g have the great advantage that consumers do not need to make further calculations based on them – they are immediately applicable.</p>
Per serving	<p>There is a positive attitude towards indications per serving = two pieces, when there is only a need for information about those exact pieces. This format is not sufficient when the consumer wishes to use the nutrition label for other purposes than getting information about that exact product.</p> <p>In other words, the indication per serving is not useful for comparisons, and it is also difficult to base calculations on it. Indicating the values for two pieces, as opposed to one, makes it more difficult for the consumers to calculate the values for three or four pieces.</p> <p>The indication that two pieces equal 250 g receives the same criticism. 250 g is too difficult to calculate with and to use for comparison. The target group does not like indications per two pieces because it varies whether one eats one ore more pieces. If the indication per serving is used, then one serving should equal one piece.</p> <p>The weakness is that indications per serving are too complicated when used for products that do not originally come in pieces like for instance jam.</p>

Per 100 g and per serving	<p>The indication per serving and per 100 g is good because it can be used on all food products due to its dual indication. This indication is good when the consumers wish to know the precise intake of energy. The format allows freedom of choice for individual consumers about which information is relevant.</p> <p>However, generally the target group considers this format to be confusing and useless for further calculations. Some also dislike the indirect message inherent in the fact that a serving is pre-defined, since servings usually vary according to people's weight and size.</p>
Per serving and RDI	<p>RDI generally gets a positive reception because the indication meets the consumers' need for information. But the way it has been implemented is too difficult to relate to. The indication of RDI guides the consumer about what is little and much of a certain nutrient.</p> <p>Certain users of nutrition labels in Iceland and Finland are particularly positive towards RDI because it gives them general guidelines for recommended intake of individual nutrients. When consumers choose this format it seems that the important factor is not only to get detailed information but also that this information works as a guideline, which makes it more interesting.</p> <p>The barrier in connection with RDI is that consumers do not believe it possible to indicate one specific set of nutritional values for all people – the consumers assume that the values need to be individually adapted to people's weight, size, age etc. In consequence, the calculation is probably not used as something absolute but rather as a guideline.</p> <p>Once again, the target group misses the indication per 100 g instead of the indication per serving because they wish to use it for comparisons.</p>
List A	<p>List A is too short to meet the target group's desires, regardless of whether they are potential or occasional users. At the most, the list can be used for comparisons of fat content. Despite the need for short, clear information, list A is <i>too</i> short.</p>
List B	<p>List B is considered the standard list that the consumers are used to seeing. It gets a positive reception, because it is easily accessible. For the consumers who prefer a short and simple list, B is the preferable choice. However, List B does receive some criticism, such as the absence of sodium.</p>

List C

List C gets a positive reception because it has more specified information than the target group is used to and thus begins to fulfill their wishes and demands. There are, however, certain complications connected with whether the users, both potential and occasional, actually understand the information.

Some feel that the list is not sufficiently clear in its presentation and that the contents are confusing. Others (occasional) think that diverse information is good. It is confusing, e.g., that fibers and sugar have been included but not protein, which is included on List B. Furthermore, List C has indications outside the actual nutrition label, using asterisks, with notes about fat and sugar. This signals that there is a need to check and decode further information. There is a wish for specifications of soft and hard fat, but the version that List C represents is too complicated. In other words, the consumers know that there are different types of fat, but they do not know what these differences entail.

List D

The majority of the consumers choose List D as their favorite. They prefer this list because it has specified information. Simultaneously this list is confusing due to its detailed information, and there is a risk that certain parts of the target group do not understand all the information and that finding the relevant information can be difficult. Some think that this list demands further education and information. For example, the fat and sugar indications are a problem for part of the target group.

The reason why many end up preferring this list is that it provides the most detailed information, which is viewed positively. The individual consumers can choose which pieces of information they wish to focus on according to their personal needs. List D is also recommended as the best option for enabling future consumers to make informed choices. And since the consumers are conscious of what a nutrition label should contain, List D is the correct choice for the future.

Background

Business Needs Assessment

Nordic Council of Ministers wishes, in cooperation with ACNielsen AIM, to test four formats for the design of nutrition labels as well as four lists of contents for nutrition labels. The test is performed via four focus groups; two groups with *occasional users* and two groups with *potential users*. Four focus groups is carried out in each of the Nordic countries, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland.

The purpose of the study is to supply the project group with information and knowledge about the use of, need for and preferences in relation to nutrition labeling. This knowledge is to form the basis for the project group's recommendations to Nordic Council of Ministers for a possible common Nordic policy on nutrition labeling. This means that the study is meant to identify a form of nutrition labeling which is ideal for ensuring that future consumers can make informed choices.

Description of purpose

In order to clarify the points above, the following themes need to be studied and answered:

1. The consumers' understanding of the four formats, i.e. which information do they retrieve from them? And what might they use it for (this only concerns *potential users*)?
2. Which of the four formats do the consumers prefer? In this connection we gain insight into the motivations and barriers that determine the choice.
3. The consumers' understanding of four lists of nutrition labels, i.e. which information do they retrieve from them? And what might they use it for (this only concerns *potential users*)?
4. Which of the lists they prefer. In this connection we gain insight into the motivations and barriers that determine the choice.

Materials and methods

Research Design

In order to study the research issue described above, four focus groups have been conducted in each of the five Nordic countries, which makes 20 focus groups altogether.

The project is coordinated and managed by ACNielsen AIM in Denmark who have been responsible for:

- Preparation of the interview guide
- Contact to national institutes and moderators
- Printing and distribution of the test material
- Preparation of report template
- Preparation of the comparative report.

The Project Group has been responsible for providing the correct test material and acceptance of the questioning guide.

Recruitment criteria

In the figure below, one can see the criteria according to which the respondents in the study have been recruited.

The potential users groups in Iceland are extended to include respondents that “never” read nutrition labels, due to difficulties finding potential users that fulfilled the original criteria.

Number of attendees at in the groups in the five countries

	Occasional younger		Occasional Older		Potential younger		Potential Older		Total appearances
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	
Denmark	3	2	6	4	7	4	6	3	35
Sweden	5	3	6	2	4	4	6	2	32
Norway	4	2	7	2	7	1	5	2	30
Finland	7	3	4	2	6	3	7	3	35
Iceland	6	4	5	2	6	3	6	3	35

Interview guide for focus groups about nutrition labeling

Description of purpose Nordic Council of Ministers wishes, in cooperation with ACNielsen AIM, to test four formats for the design of nutrition labels as well as four lists of contents for nutrition labels. The test is performed via four focus groups; two groups with *occasional users* and two groups with *potential users*. Four focus groups is carried out in each of the Nordic countries, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland.

The purpose of the study is to supply the project group with information and knowledge about the use of, need for and preferences in relation to nutrition labeling. This knowledge is to form the basis for the project group's recommendations to Nordic Council of Ministers for a possible common Nordic policy on nutrition labeling. This means that the study is meant to identify a form of nutrition labeling which is ideal for ensuring that future consumers can make informed choices.

In order to clarify the points above, the following themes need to be studied and answered:

5. The consumers' understanding of the four formats, i.e. which information do they retrieve from them? And what might they use it for (this only concerns *potential users*)?
6. Which of the four formats do the consumers prefer? In this connection we gain insight into the motivations and barriers that determine the choice.
7. The consumers' understanding of four lists of nutrition labels, i.e. which information do they retrieve from them? And what might they use it for (this only concerns *potential users*)?
8. Which of the lists they prefer. In this connection we gain insight into the motivations and barriers that determine the choice.

As a tool for gaining insight into this issue, we employ ACNielsen AIM's analysis model, the QNA model which structures the focus group process and ensures that we investigate all relevant questions. The QNA model has three phases: the explorative phase, the identity phase and the hypothesis-testing phase.

The interview guide is constructed according to the QNA model. In three phases it will investigate the two consumer segments' perception and understanding of the following points:

Explorative phase	1. In which cases do the consumers consider nutrition labels unnecessary / necessary (identify these cases)? 2. Which conditions should be present in order to make sure that consumers read nutrition labels?
Identity phase	3. How extensive should the nutrition labeling be, and which form should it have, to provide ideal information to each of the two segments of consumers?
Hypothesis testing phase	4. Which preferences for nutrition labels (list)/ indication of components (format) do the two groups have? 5. Which nutritional and other demands must the list comply with? 6. Which lists/formats provide the best information in relation to any given need (e.g. weight loss, too high cholesterol level etc.)? 7. Which lists/formats best fulfill the respondents' demands?
Reading instruction for interview guide	The interview guide should not be considered as a final frame for the process, but rather as a guideline for the group discussion. After the headings " Comment " follow descriptions of the purpose of the exercise in question and the way it is carried through.

Interview guide

Nutrition labeling

1. Introduction by the moderator (approx. 10 min.)

The focus group starts by the moderator welcoming the participants and introducing him- or herself.

After this, ACNielsen AIM's role as a neutral and independent research company is introduced, and it is simultaneously stressed that the purpose of the interview is to **identify** the respondents understanding of a number of issues – whereas it is absolutely not the intention to affect or manipulate these understandings in a certain direction.

In this connection, it is pointed out that, as a rule, individuals have different experiences that tend to influence their view of various themes. For the same reason, people will often have differing views of the themes being discussed in the course of the evening.

The purpose of the discussion is thus not necessarily to reach an agreement. Rather, the intention is to gain insight into the differences and variations that there might be in the understandings of the theme.

In other words, there are no “right” or “wrong” understandings in this evening’s debate. The participants are asked to imagine that they are having an informal discussion with their colleagues. There is thus no reason to keep one’s opinions to oneself; on the contrary, everyone is encouraged to voice them spontaneously as the discussion moves along.

The participants are guaranteed complete anonymity and in this connection, they are made aware of the legal demands and obligations that ACNielsen AIM is subject to as a research institute. At the same time, the applied recording-method (in the form of a video-recorder) is introduced as a necessary tool to secure an accurate and authentic report of the results of the study.

Once again, the participants are bid welcome and thanked for their presence, after which they are told that the theme of the evening is nutrition labeling.

2. Introduction round (5-10 min.)

The participants are asked to introduce themselves to each other in groups of two, stating first name and age. This means that the participants “interview” the person sitting next to them, after which they introduce him or her to the whole group.

***Comment:** The purpose of this exercise is to make the respondents talk to each other and to create an informal mood where everyone feels comfortable about saying something.*

Explorative phase

3. Definition of nutrition labels (10 min.)

The moderator initiates the groups by asking the following question:

“When I say nutrition labels, what do you think of?”

The respondents are asked to write down their thoughts and associations individually on a piece of paper. After that, the moderator asks them to recount what they have written while he/she jots their comments down on a flip-over.

When all answers have been written down, the following issues are further investigated:

- Where do you read it? In the store or at home?
- When is a nutrition label relevant?
- Why do you read nutrition labels?/Why not?
- When do you read the nutrition label (on what kind of products)?
- How often do you read them?
- On which products and why?
- When you read them, which kind of information do you need?
- What would it require to make you read them more often? (*potential users*)
- Where do you miss this?

Comment: *This initial exercise primarily serves the purpose of introducing the participants to the world of nutrition labels and to disclose their immediate associations with them. What do the participants think of in connections with nutrition labels? Do they distinguish between data in product information and nutrition labels respectively?*

The exercise furthermore serves the purpose of giving the respondents an opportunity to discuss demands of and differences in the content of product information and nutrition labels. It is important to identify this, before the interview continues. Finally, this exercise gives us insight into the respondents' verbalized behavior, i.e. their behaviour as they themselves understand it.

4. Understanding of and behavior in connection with nutrition labels – introduction to products (10-15 min)

The moderator starts out by asking:

- When did you last read a nutrition label? On which product and why?

The participants are then asked to approach a table with products placed at a small distance from the conference table.

The moderator asks the respondents to sort the products into two groups, one containing products whose nutrition label they would read, one containing products where they would not.

Then the following questions are posed and discussed:

- What do you look for in a nutrition label – specifically in various product categories?
- When is it necessary to read a nutrition label, and when is it not?

The moderator asks for more details in connections with the answer which were given in the previous exercise.

Comment: *The purpose of this exercise is to find out when the respondents read the nutrition labels and when they do not – and why. By introducing the respondents to a selection of products, their memory is stimulated and the behavioral patterns are activated.*

On a separate table, we have arranged a selection of different products which represent different product categories, e.g.: bread, dairy products, breakfast products, meat, pasta and frozen vegetables, beverages such as juice, lemonade, fast food such as pizza, semi-prepared food such as powder soup, canned food, candy and chips. The decisive factor is not how many products there are, but that they represent a broad spectrum of product categories.

Identity phase **5. What constitutes a good nutrition label according to the respondents? (5-10 min.)**

The respondents are asked to return to the conference table. Then the moderator asks:

- What do you consider an adequate (good) nutrition label?
- Which kinds of information should it contain?

The respondents' answers are written on the whiteboard, and when everybody has contributed with input to the definition of a good nutrition label, the moderator asks:

- What do you consider an inadequate (bad) nutrition label?

During the whole process, the answers are written on the whiteboard as illustrated below:

Nutrition label	
Good	Bad
(Answer)	(Answer)

Comment: *The purpose of this exercise is to get a concrete understanding of the respondents' demand for a good nutrition label. This is in order to make sure that we know their views, before we move on to test the new lists and formats. In that way, we can compare the demands with the new lists and formats, and the assessment the respondents make of these, when we analyze the data.*

Hypothesis testing phase **6. Test of formats (45-50 min.)**

We begin the exercise by telling the respondents that the nutrients written on the nutrition labels are those which **must** be declared, **if** the manufacturer chooses to put a nutrition label on his/her product. It is not required by law to do this.

We explain the respondents that they must assess **how** the nutrients are presented and laid out in the four formats (they should not assess **which** nutrients are declared).

The moderator hands out the individual forms and explain how to fill it in. Remember that the respondents must put down their first name, group number and number of the format on each form.

The respondents are introduced to format 1. After having presented each version, the respondents get a few minutes to fill in the individual forms (cf. the enclosures).

Format 1

- What do you think of this?
 - What does it tell you?
 - What is good and what is bad?
 - What are the advantages and disadvantages of this?
- Does it meet the demands you have mentioned?

We go over the following formats in the same manner, and we ask further questions based on the answers that the respondents have given earlier on in the process.

- Which one do you prefer?
- Are they equally suitable for all products?

We make a vote about which format is the best. This vote is a tool for evaluating the discussion and making the respondents take a stance.

It is emphasized that we also listen to and explore all relevant arguments from the smaller groups.

Comment: *Through the individual forms, we get a personal assessment of the formats in which the respondents clarify their own opinion, before it is tested in the discussion. This ensures personal comments, which we can use when we analyze the data.*

7. Test of lists (15 min.)

We explain to the respondents that the following discussion is about nutrients, not vitamins or minerals, and they are thus asked to focus on nutrients.

Initially, the respondents are presented with a complete list of nutrients whose contents are identical with list D.

I.e. the following:

Energy

Fat

*– saturated + trans fat **

Carbohydrates

*– sugars ***

– fiber

Protein

Sodium (as salt)

The moderator asks the respondents to look at the list and asks which nutrients they consider the most important. Then they must choose which nutrients they can/are willing to do without.

The moderator briefly discusses with them why these precise nutrients are chosen as dispensable.

The respondents are now presented with four different versions of lists for nutrition labels – one by one. After each suggestion has been presented, the respondents get a few minutes to fill in individual forms. The respondents must remember to write their first name, group number and what list they are presently talking about. We explain to the respondents that they should assess the lists according to which nutrients they need to be informed of in order to read the nutrition labels more often.

The participants are presented with the lists A-D

List A

- What do you think of this?
- What does it tell you?
- What is good and what is bad?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of this?
- Does it meet the demands you have mentioned?

Lists B-D

We go over list B – D in the same manner, while the moderator connects the discussion to the demands and understandings the respondents voiced earlier on.

When all four lists have been discussed, the respondents are asked to make a hierarchy of the four lists. Then the moderator asks:

- Which one do you prefer?
- Are they equally suitable for all products?

We make a vote about which list is the best. This vote is a tool for evaluating the discussion and making the respondents take a stance.

It is emphasized that we also listen to and explore all relevant arguments from the smaller groups.

Comment: *Through the individual forms we get a personal assessment of the lists in which the respondents clarify their own opinion, before it is tested in the discussion. This ensures personal comments, which we can use when we analyze the data.*

8. Future information possibilities

Depending on the remaining time, and assuming that the moderator considers that the issues has been dealt with exhaustively, there can be a brief discussion of the future possibilities for information about nutrition labels.

The moderator asks:

- If you were to have a better understanding of nutrition labels in the future, where would you like to access information? (TV, brochures, the Internet, at school, during courses or...)

Conclusion

The respondents are thanked for their participation and receive incentives.

Prepared by moderator, MA, Birgitte Knudsen

Country report: Finland

Demographics

The focus group discussions were conducted October 29th and 30th, 2002. The total amount of respondents who showed up was 35, of which 16 were occasional users and 19 were potential users of nutrition labels. Of the 35 respondents 24 were women and 11 were men. 19 of the respondents reported to have children living at home and the total amount of their children was 31. The average age in the first occasional users-group was 29 years and in the second group 48 years. The average age in the first potential users-group was 31 years and in the second group 50 years.

Demographics	Occasional users (group 1)	Occasional users (group 2)	Potential users (group 3)	Potential users (group 4)
N =	10	6	9	10
Men	3	2	3	3
Women	7	4	6	7
Children living at home	5	4	3	7
Total amount of children	7	6	6	12
Average age of respondents	29	48	31	50

The social group of the respondents was mainly middle class white collar even if there were some blue collar workers in every group, too.

Definition of nutrition labelling

The participants were first inquired to write on a paper what kind of thoughts and associations they connect with nutrition labels.

In the **occasional users** groups the first associations were that nutrition labels include information about

- Additives
- Fat
- Sodium
- Product information
- Healthiness
- Energy
- Vitamins
- Fibre
- Lactose
- Sugar

It was clearly easier for the younger group to answer this question. They mentioned more detailed to the question whereas in the older group the answers were not that detailed.

Additives were mentioned by most of the respondents in these two groups. Next often the respondents mentioned fat and salt. There were some confusion in the difference of product information and nutrition labelling.

'What the product contains and how healthy it is. How much there is fat and salt and so on.'
(Female, group 1)

'Product information and additives.'

'My first thought was also additives, a long list on ingredients and vagueness. Product information.' (Female, group 1)

'I think this is anyhow the product information of food and I associate it with fat, sugar, salt – the amount of them and then these calorie amount and what all the product contains.' (Male, group 2)

'I thought very simply that these labels give hints of the contents of the food or nutrition and associations about how it tastes and what you put in your mouth. And of course you start to read more about the energy, salt, fat and sugar.' (Female, group 2)

Some of the respondents associated nutrition labelling with healthiness, exercise and sports. Energy was also mentioned in some of the answers but only one or two respondents mentioned some other items.

'The first thoughts I have are vitamins, fibre, additives, energy and fat.' (Female, group 1)

'I thought of simple things like health, exercise and spots.'

The **potential users** mentioned most often following items:

- Fat
- Additives
- Product information
- Energy
- Vitamins
- Carbohydrate
- Proteins

In fairly many answers the first associations were connected to the difficulties to read and understand these nutrition labels.

'The first thought is that there are confused codes, numbers and letters and I don't have any idea what they could mean. Calories per 100 g, and you have to count, why couldn't it be per the whole product. A lot of small text of which one does not find out anything at all.' (Male, group 3)

'The markings are in a small font, it is difficult to read and it illustrates the information very poorly.' (Male, group 4)

In these groups the understanding of the contents of nutrition labels was slightly weaker than in the occasional user groups. Additives were mentioned significantly less often than in the occasional user groups. Fat turned out to be the most interesting item of all of these.

In the answers turned out that in these potential users' groups even if they knew fairly well what there is on nutrition labels they had aversion towards them. The respondents reacted on percentage marks, small font size and difficult codes and terms.

Also in the occasional users' groups the respondents do not make big difference between product information and nutrition labelling as terms. The reason seems to be that they do not think about the difference and use product information as a general term for all information that can be found on the packages.

Reading Nutrition Labels

The **occasional users** choose their products based on the nutrition labels and read them more thoroughly looking for information about energy, vitamins, fibres and salt as well as fat.

'I choose there between shelves which product I'll buy.' (Female, group 1)

'If there is some new brand that I have not seen before or when there are nowadays many foreign products, I read the information as I want to know what they contain.' (Female, group 1)

They mentioned several products which nutrition labels they use to read:

- ready-prepared foods, i.e. liver pudding,
- light yoghurt and light products in general,
- cheese,
- sausage, liver sausage,
- fast food,
- margarines,
- milk,
- bread

Most of the older respondents said that they look at the nutrition labels at home. This is true in the older occasional users' group where many have problems with reading glasses. But if there is some new product they read the information already in the shop.

'When I bought herring last time, I noticed that there are great differences between the salt amount in different brands.' (Male, group 2)

The younger respondents read the nutrition labels mainly in the stores. This is especially true when the consumer is considering buying some new product.

The occasional users mainly check fat, salt, calories, carbohydrates and proteins. The reasons to read nutrition labels varied a little.

'Mainly fat and salt, I have had by-pass and after that I have looked a little bit closer to what I eat.' (Male, group 2)

'Calories, salt and fat as I want to eat such foods that I can keep my figure.' (Female, group 2)

'I want to know what the food contains, I'm eating, whether it is healthy or not.' (Male, group 1)

Some of the respondents said that they read nutrition labels always. The others said they do so with unfamiliar products. All of them had read nutrition labels within one week.

Also the respondents **in the potential users** groups said they read nutrition labels but it turned out that they mainly want to see what flavours there are or what kind of spice is used. They mainly notice information that is with big font on the front side of the package.

'I looked at them last week when I bought frankfurters without any nitrites. It was there written on the package. So actually I didn't read nutrition labels but only read what was there about nitrites.'

'I look at the yoghurt packages, there is mentioned the amount of fat.'

Reading nutrition labels was not so frequent.

'Very rarely, if I have some guest and I know she does not eat something or I have to know what it contains, then I read, not for other reasons.' (Male, group 3)

'Fairly rarely, as we have certain products which we buy, we don't try any new products. I have once checked the amount of fat and salt, I don't do it after that.' (Female, group 4)

'I'm a bad cook so we use a lot of ready-prepared food. We have the same familiar products and the only surprise is which day we have what. We do eat a lot of meat and sometimes we think about the fat amount and I try to buy something with less fat. Then we think it is important to drink low fat milk, but in other food we are not so interested in fat etc amounts. We do not pay attention to nutrition labels of ready-prepared food and nobody of us is interested in additives.' (Female, group 4)

Also the potential users said that the natural place to read nutrition labels is the store. They said that they sometimes check the amount of fat in some products and choose the product according to that. Products they mentioned were cheese, sausage, bread, spices and ready-prepared foods.

'There are in surprisingly many spices half salt and the rest the spice, I normally look at the salt amount on them.'

'I normally look in bread as there are great differences in amount of fibre and fat amounts.'

Behaviour in regard to nutrition labelling

Products sorting

The respondents were shown some products and asked to sort the products in two categories; one where they read nutrition label and one where they normally don't. The products the respondents sorted were:

Dairy products: a regular yellow cheese (Edam), low-fat milk (skimmed milk), a package of margarine (Flora)

Bread: frozen bread (baguettes) and one loaf of white fresh bread

Frozen products: frozen vegetables and frozen pizza (Oetken)

Drinks: concentrated juice (apple), syrup and water juice (VIP)

Meat: minced beef, pre-packed chicken

Cold Meat: ham, paté (Reindeer), salami

Pasta: dried (Barillo)

Mayonnaise: Kavli mayonnaise

Heinz Ketchup

Candy: Bounty bar, Wine gum, Liquorice (Panda)

Dried powder champion soup (Knorr)

Potato chips: Taffel Chips Original

Cereals: Kelloggs Cornflakes and porridge oats (Eloveena)

The groups chose actually fairly many products where they would read the nutrition labels. The occasional users read between on an average 15 nutrition labels of 25 and the potential users 11,5. The younger respondents chose more products than the older ones. When the older occasional users chose 14 products, the older potential users chose only seven. In both younger groups the respondents chose totally 16 products.

The first group, occasional younger users, would read the nutrition labels of 16 products. The products were evenly chosen from different groups of products. They wouldn't necessarily read nutrition labels on milk, even if some respondents mentioned that they would do so, if it was low-fat milk, but not necessarily if it was non-fat milk. One respondent mentioned that she had read on the milk package about the amount of vitamin D the day before the discussion.

It turned out that they would not read nutrition labels on basic food products like milk, frozen vegetables, pre-packed chicken, dried pasta and porridge oats. These were all products that they believe to contain what they ought to do, and they felt no need to check any nutrition information. Heinz Ketchup is so well known product, and the amount of ketchup the respondents eat is so small, that they do not find it necessary to think about the healthiness of the product.

'Ketchup is ketchup and it shall be salty. It would be smart to look, but I don't.'
(Female, group 1)

'I don't read text on ketchup. You don't use so much and it is the best ketchup and I use it.' (Male, group 1)

The opinions about chips varied. There were a few persons who said they would read the nutrition labeling as they wanted to know the amount of fat. But the others said that everybody knows chips are unhealthy and if one is going to eat them there is no use to read how unhealthy they are.

'I don't read because I'm aware that they contain a lot of fat and if I'm going to buy it why should I look at it. There is no need to worry about it.' (Female, group 1)

The respondents said they would neither read the nutrition label on dried powder champion soup. It is considered a stopgap food and it is rarely eaten.

Group 2, occasional older users, chose 14 products on which they would read nutrition labels. Frozen products, candies and cereals were not included. Fresh bread, pre-packed chicken, pasta or Heinz ketchup was neither included to those products which nutrition labels they would read. The reasons for this were partly same kind as in the first group: if you think that something is junk food, you do not mind to read the nutrition labels. In this group they mentioned candies and pizza. Chicken is a basic foodstuff and the respondents didn't think there is anything extra on it. They also said that chicken is a low fat product and that it is commonly known so there is no need to check that information. Cereals are so well known that there is no need to read the information, except if the respondents consider buying some new product.

The only difference in the list of group 1 and **group 3** was that in the latter group they chose frozen vegetables instead of liquorice. The reason why they would read the nutrition information on frozen vegetables was that some of the respondents had noticed that in some mixed vegetable packages there is also fat included. The reasoning did not differ from the other groups.

Group 4, potential older respondents, chose only seven products. These were cheese, syrup juice, minced beef, cold meat and mayonnaise. The reason for choosing these is that they wish to check the salt, fat and sugar amounts in the products.

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Dairy products				
-Edam cheese	X	X	X	X
-Valio light milk		X		
-Flora margarine	X	X	X	
Bread				
-Frozen baguettes	X	X	X	
-Loaf of white fresh bread	X		X	
Frozen products				
-Frozen vegetables			X	
-Frozen pizza	X		X	
Drinks				
-Concentrated apple juice	X	X	X	
-Syrup juice	X	X	X	X
-Water juice	X	X	X	

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Meat				
-minced beef	X	X	X	X
-pre-packed chicken	0	0	0	0
Cold meat				

-Ham	X	X	X	X
-Reindeer paté	X	X	X	X
-Salami	X	X	X	X
Pasta				
-Barillo spaghetti	0	0	0	0
Kavli Mayonnaise	X	X	X	X
Heinz Ketchup	0	0	0	0
Candies				
-Bounty bar	X		X	
-Wine Gum	0	0	0	0
-Panda liquorice	X			
Knorr Dried powder champion soup		X		
Taffel chips Original		X		
Cereals				
-Kellogg's Corn Flakes	X		X	
-Eloveena porridge oats	0	0	0	0

Totally there are seven products whose nutrition labels interest all the respondents. These were cheese (for fat and salt and energy), syrup juice (for energy and sugar), minced beef (for fat), all cold meat products (for fat, salt and energy) and mayonnaise (for fat).

The products none of the groups would read are pre-packed chicken, pasta, Heinz ketchup, Wine gum and Eloveena porridge oats.

One of the respondents summed up the importance of nutrition labels like this:

'If you use that product a lot. But if I have a dainty day, I don't read anything. I just buy products that look and probably taste good. But it is important in products you use continuously for healthy reasons.'

Nutrition label

Nutrition label is wished for many products as shown in the table above. The respondents mentioned in addition to the products mentioned earlier candies, ready-to eat desserts and non-packed breads where they wished to be a nutrition label. This wish came from the occasional users.

Next, the respondents were asked what is a good nutrition label like and what makes a nutrition label bad.

A good nutrition label ought to be very clear, easy to find on the package and easy to read, written in big font and not containing any difficult terminology. There were different opinions whether the amounts ought to be expressed per 100g or in percentage or even the amount in the whole package. Some potential users wished to have clear codes to tell about healthiness, red for a 'danger' product, blue for a fairly safe product and white for a healthy product. They said that the coding ought to be done on basis of fat, salt and energy. Some respondents wished also some reference values to tell how much one ought to have fat and salt per day.

In a good nutrition label ought to the following information:

- Fat, both saturated and trans fat, hard and soft
- Salt, also nitrites mentioned
- Energy both in joules and in calories
- Protein
- Carbohydrates
- Sugar also lactose amount
- Fibres

The occasional users liked to read this information whereas the potential users were mainly interested in fat and salt amount and calories.

In the next table are shown other good and bad properties of a nutrition label.

Good	Bad
Big font size	Too much text
Easy to find, not under any cover, neither under a price label	Written with small font on dark bottom
Text is in frames	Written in several languages
Per 100 g	Not enough information
Energy expressed both in calories and joules	Mysterious terminology
Expressed in a easy understandable way	

'There should be first fat, salt and energy so you don't have to look for that information.' (Male, group 1)

'There should be all the information clearly in a box.' (Female, group 1)

'There ought to be clearly how much this makes per 100g of the product or to be as percentage, so you can count how much it makes.' (Male, group 2)

'It is good if they tell how much it makes of a normal day's energy need.' (Male, group 3)

'There ought to be reference values so one would know what is much and what is not.' (Female, group 4)

'There should be the useful nutrients in one color and the harmful with another.' (Male, group 4)

It was found that those persons who know less about nutrition wish for very simple and clear nutrition information on the labels. All the consumers are not aware what is the difference between saturated and trans fat, or what are carbohydrates or proteins.

Evaluation of formats

The respondents were shown four different nutrition label formats and they were asked to comment them.

Format I

PIZZA WITH HAM	Nutrition information per 100g
Energy	200 kcal/850 kJ
Fat	11 g
Carbohydrate	13 g
Protein	14 g

In all, the occasional users felt that the information in Format 1 was expressed very clearly and that there wasn't any unnecessary information. On the contrary, they would have liked to know more about e.g. the fats; the quality of the fat in the product, i.e. was it "bad" or "good" fat. A few of the respondents mentioned that the information lacked the amount of salt in the product. Additionally, a few of the respondents suggested that instead of giving the absolute amounts of nutrients per 100 g they should be given per total product. The comments in the potential groups were very similar. In general, Format 1 was evaluated quite positively.

'I would like to know how much this makes in the whole pizza. (Female, group 1)

'I agree, the information per 100g and also the in the whole pizza, and even the share of daily need.' (Female, group 1)

'This is a good basic information.' (group 2)

The potential users evaluated in general Format 1 very positively. They described the format to be concrete, and easy to read. Some of the respondents considered this format to be very easy to understand and convert into per cents, if necessary. It seems that people try to avoid any calculation tasks, as quite a few respondents requested for absolute amounts of nutrients of the total product, not per 100g. Other frequently appearing requests concern salt and fat: the respondents are interested in the salt content and the quality of fat the products contain.

'The pro is that it tells the information per 100g but the con is that it does not tell the amounts in the whole package, even if it is not hard to count.' (Female, group 3)

'There is not too much information, one has the energy to look at it.' (Male, group 3)

'Easy to convert it over to percentages.' (Female, group 4)

Format II (per serving)

PIZZA WITH HAM PACKAGE CONTAINS 4 SLICES	NUTRITION INFORMATION PER TWO SLICES (250 G)
Energy	510 kcal/2140 kJ
Fat	27 g
Carbohydrate	33 g
Protein	35 g

Format 2 was not at all unconditionally accepted. Most occasional users felt that the format was confusing. The confusion resulted mainly from the way the portion was defined: “serving = two slices”. They felt that the definition was very artificial. At least in the case of a pizza, the respondents would have liked to know the total nutritive value instead of the serving because they usually eat the whole pizza. One positive comment related to this format was that the amount of portions in the package was given. However, this was no nutrition information.

‘It is confusing as you have to count. You can’t compare if the next pizza weights 330g and this 250g, it is impossible to compare which one has more fat etc.’ (Male, group 1)

One respondent in the group 2, occasional user, was first very fond of this way to express the information. She found it easy and clear and there is no need to count extra. But when the other members of the group started to comment ‘what about if you eat only one slice or three slices’, she said that perhaps there should be other information available, too.

‘Somehow I like this simple and clear format, but then I wish to have more information, too.’

Format 2 faced quite a lot of critique among the potential users. The respondents wondered why the portion is defined to be consisting of two slices: why couldn’t it be just one slice or the whole product? Most of the comments on Format 2 were negative and described the form as complicated and hard to understand and compared its’ information with another products’ nutrition information.

‘Not at least this, it is so confusing.’ (Female, group 3)

‘There are different size persons in a family, one eats only one slice and the other three slices, how can you count this.’ (Male, group 4)

Format III (per 100g and per serving):

PIZZA WITH HAM PACKAGE CONTAINS 4 SLICES	NUTRITION INFORMATION	
	per 100g	per two slices (250 g)
Energy	200 kcal/850 kJ	510 kcal/2140 kJ
Fat	11 g	27 g
Carbohydrate	13 g	33 g
Protein	14 g	35 g

The occasional users found in format 3 both good and bad. The good in format 3 is that it is fairly clear. It also contains more information and is suitable for persons who wish to see how much one serving is. Format 3 was criticized of being too complicated and confusing. The respondents were still asking for the nutritive values for the whole product so that they would not have to calculate them. This way of expressing nutrition information does neither suit for many products. Few respondents raised a question if the packages have enough room for such an extensive nutrition information. They feared that it would have to be presented in too small size and thus be unreadable.

'In my opinion it is better than the others in the sense that this is both for those who wish the values per serving and for those who need it more accurate. 100 g is anyhow the best way to express the values but this serves those persons who feel it is enough to know how much it is per serving a possibility to find it out.' (Male, group 2)

'That would be good if the values were per the whole pizza, one does not eat just two slices but the whole pizza.' (Male, group 1)

Format 3 divided the potential users into two groups quite evenly: there were opinions for and against this form. The respondents who didn't like the form described it as confusing and complicated. They questioned the need for the same information in two different forms. The group who liked this form considered the double information an advantage: it suits more people. Those against Form 3 preferred the information given in absolute amounts of nutrients per 100 g, the serving information seemed to irritate them as the definition of serving was so artificial.

'This is good in the sense that it could be used in all products and then there are both the familiar per 100g and one serving.' (Female, group 3)

'I wouldn't be interested in reading all that.' (Female, group 3)

'The same information is there twice.' (Male, group 3)

'There is too much text and it is certainly in a small font. It is also confusing.' (Female, group 4)

Format IV (per serving and as percent of recommended daily intake RDI):

PIZZA WITH HAM PACKAGE CONTAINS 4 SLICES	NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING = TWO SLICES (250 G)
Energy	510 kcal/2140 kJ
	% RDI *
Fat	27 g 42 %
Carbohydrate	33 g 12 %
Protein	35 g 46 %

* Percentage of RDI (recommended daily intake) is based on a 2000 kcal diet. Your RDI may be higher or lower depending on your energy needs.

The younger occasional users didn't actually like the format 4. In their opinion it was too complicated. They didn't like the amount of calories to which the RDI was based on as they said that their amount of calories varies between 1200 and 1800 kcal per day (female respondents). They said that this would make the counting very difficult without a calculator. On the other hand few of them were interested in the RDI.

'I don't do anything with any RDI %. As it is based on 2000 calories and I'm having only 1200 calories a day.' (Female, group 1)

'Of course if somebody is really following the amount of calories, then this is OK.' (Male, group 1)

'I think this could be for such a persons who do not follow it so strictly and looks only that if I have this pizza, I can still have something else today.' (Female, group 1)

'When you see this for the first time, you don't understand it well enough. You have to really think what this means. I don't even know what is my RDI.' (Male, group 1)

The older occasional users were more positive towards this format. They liked the information about RDI in percentage. They thought it was useful and interesting to know.

'I think this is the best. It shows clearly which part of RDI it makes. When it is there, it makes it easier to follow RDI. Even if it increases the amount of the text.' (Male, group 2)

'There are both fat and carbohydrates mentioned and RDI in percentage. If I want to follow whether I have got enough different nutrition stuffs per day the RDI is good for that.' (Female, group 2)

Also Format 4 divided the potential users into two separate groups, for and against this alternative. The argument against Format 4 was that it is almost impossible to apply this kind of information for everyone as the daily consumption depends on many things including the persons weight and activity. Additionally the opponents claimed for information given in absolute amounts of nutrients per 100 g, in order to be able to make comparisons. Arguments for this form included the notion that this kind of information could stimulate people to take into account the health effects of food. Still, a precondition for people to make use of this kind of information would be that they know their own consumption, which does not seem to be the case at present.

'I don't find that that information is of any use at all. Every person consumes different amount of calories different days, so where is it compared?' (Female, group 3)

'It confuses a lot. Everybody eats differently and need different amount of food.' (Female, group 4)

'This gives such a values that you know if this is a lot or not. I don't understand so much about calories, I never look at them, but these I could look as they are more understandable.' (Male, group 3)

The best format

Occasional users

	Occasional users (group 1) younger respondents	Occasional users (group 2) older respondents	Occasional users total
Format 1 – per 100g	8	1	9
Format 2 – per portion	0	0	0
Format 3 – per 100g and portion	0	0	0
Format 4 – per portion and % of RDI	2	5	7

From the table above can be seen a difference between the two age group's preferences: the younger respondents preferred Format 1 as the older respondents preferred Format 4. Format 4 was, however, also quite popular among the occasional users, 7 out of 16 respondents chose it as the best alternative. Format 2 and format 3 received no support from the occasional users. To sum up the opinions of the occasional users on the nutrient labelling format: as the above table also shows, the most preferred format was alternative 1, 9 out of 16 respondents preferred it.

'Format 1 is the best as it is the clearest and the information is per 100g.' (Female, group 1)

'It suits to all products.' (Male, group 1)

'It is the most clear to count the daily nutrition. As percentage, fat and others, everything.' (Male, group 2)

Those who preferred format 4 found it versatile and liked the RDI information. It was also expected to help consumers to follow their nutrition daily in a better way.

'Because of this RDI. Very few persons can count it and therefore it would be so much easier for the consumers to know that now I have received enough i.e. proteins for today.' (Male, group 2)

Potential users

	Potential users (group 3) younger respondents	Potential users (group 4) older respondents	Potential users total
Format 1 – per 100g	4	7	11
Format 2 – per portion	1	2	3
Format 3 – per 100g and portion	0	0	0
Format 4 – per portion and % of RDI	4	1	5

As the table above shows, potential users strongly preferred Format 1: 11 out of 19 respondents chose Format 1. The older respondents seem to have preferred Format 1 to other formats, whereas the younger respondents' preferences were equally divided between Format 1 and Format 4. No one in potential user's group voted for Format 3 and also Format 2 received only weak support.

Reasons for preference of format 1 were that it is the basic information it is clear and easy to understand. It also suits most packages.

'It is clear, short and pithy.' (Male, group 1)

'Only a few of us are nutrition experts. We are not aware of these things and here you can see it in the most easy and clear way.' (Female, group 4)

Reasons for preference of format 4 were also fairly similar to those the occasional user mentioned. But in these potential users' groups the respondents stressed of the ease to understand the information, too.

'For me it is very important that if I read this kind of things, I really understand it, too. This is the only alternative that tells me clearly how much fat I'll get if I eat what I eat.' (Female, group 3)

The total preference is shown in the table below.

	Occasional users (group 1) younger respondents	Occasional users (group 2) older respondents	Potential users (group 3) younger respondents	Potential users (group 4) older respondents
Format 1 – per 100g	8	1	4	7
Format 2 – per portion	0	0	1	2
Format 3 – per 100g and portion	0	0	0	0
Format 4 – per portion and % of RDI	2	5	4	1

Evaluation of the lists

The respondents were shown a brutto list where all possible nutrients were shown and they were asked to tell which of them were of interest.

Most of all respondents mentioned fat as one of the important nutrients they wish to have information of. In occasional groups they wished also to have information about the type of fat. The next most often mentioned nutrient was salt. The respondents wished to have salt clearly expressed so that it is easy to find and understand. Both of these nutrients were seen as harmful in big amounts and many of the respondents mentioned that they follow the amount of them for healthy reasons. The problem with fat terms (trans fat and saturated fat, hard fat) was that the respondents did not know which of them are good fats and which are bad fats.

Proteins are fairly unknown for many consumers. There were some comments that there is no need to show on the label protein as it is not understood. Especially in the potential users' group they found protein unnecessary. There were also discussion about need of carbohydrates, are they needed or not on the label.

'The fat is poorly expressed there. Why is there not information about soft fat as well?' (Female, group 1)

'What is actually trans fat? I have never heard.' (Male, group 1)

'People always talk about damages of fat and salt but I have never heard that somebody would speak about that I have too much or too little proteins. What happens if I have too much proteins or too little?' (Female, group 3)

Occasional users said they could leave out of the list fibre and some of them even proteins but all the other was needed and additionally information about soft fat.

The potential users found fat and salt to be the most important and interesting nutrient. They didn't know the difference in types of fat so they were satisfied with the total amount of fat. Proteins were more difficult to understand and there was only one who was interested in carbohydrates and especially of fibre amount.

The respondents were also shown four different lists to clarify what kind of information they wish to have on nutrition labels.

List A (short list * of nutrients):

LIST A
Energy
Fat

*in close proximity to the name of the product,

The occasional users felt that List A is too brief: it does not mediate the needed information. The respondents were interested about the quality of the fat, which this form doesn't reveal either. Positive in this form according to occasional users was that it was very uncomplicated.

'It tells really too little, only energy and fat, there ought to be much more information.' (Female, group 1)

'It does not contain enough information.' (Female, group 2)

'It could be used in some basic food stuff like meat or other very simple product.' (Female, group 2)

The potential users criticized List A of being too brief: it doesn't deliver all the information needed. Positioning of the list in the package was regarded positively, the respondents appreciated the possibility to take a quick look at the list and be able to make some judgements of the products' quality. Still, the information was scarce for every respondent. The difference

between the occasional users' comments and potential users' comments about List A was that the occasional users showed interest towards the quality of the fat whereas among the potential users only one respondent was interested in the quality of the fat.

'It is good if it is close to the name of the product. It is easy to find, but does it contain enough information?' (Female, group 3)

'It is absolutely too short. One needs more information.' (Male, group 4)

List B (Current list of nutrients):

LIST B
Energy
Protein
Carbohydrate
Fat

Occasional users evaluated List B being better as previously shown List A. However, most of them were not satisfied with the list as such: some information was still missing. What they claimed for was the amount of salt. They also wanted to get more detailed information about the fat, what kind of fat was it. Some respondents mentioned that this list was familiar and thus it is quite easy to use in a hurry.

'A basic list, I suppose, but there could be both fats divided and information about salt.'
(Male, group 1)

'It has some information but not enough.' (Female, group 2)

'It would be good to have the salts there, too. Especially if the idea to have similar label on all products, information of salt is needed.' (Male, group 2)

The potential users compared List B to List A and most of them thought that List B contains everything essential in a nutrient list. A few of respondents felt that it lacked the amount of salt. There were few who revealed that they were unfamiliar with the proteins – what are they good for? Therefore they also questioned the importance of proteins in a list. In all, it seemed that potential users were perhaps a bit more pleased with List B than the occasional users. On the other hand they also revealed that some of the terms are not familiar to them. Some of them wondered what carbohydrates are.

'It is good, as this is familiar, but they could remove that protein away, at least I don't need it as I don't know what it is.' (Female, group 3)

'I feel that I paralyse with this list. What are these really, I can't understand that at all.'
(Female, group 3)

This unfamiliarity was also seen in the group behaviour in the way that the respondents who had been talking a lot, now turned silent and few worded.

List C (Longer list of nutrients)

LIST C
Energy
Fat
– hard fat *
Sugars **
Fibre
Sodium (as salt)

* hard fat = saturated fat and trans fat,

** sugars = natural and added mono- and disaccharides

List C received mainly positive comments from occasional users. The overall impression is that they were delighted to get versatile information about the fat, fibres and salt. Some respondents didn't know that sugars and fibre are carbohydrates and therefore requested for information about carbohydrates. Again few respondents required information about proteins.

'Now it is missing proteins.' (Female, group 1) – And carbohydrates.' (Male, group 1)

'A good thing is that the fat is divided.' (Male, group 1)

'I think this is not as good as list B. I prefer proteins to fibre. One has to be careful that there is not too much protein in the daily nutrition. Now you can't follow the proteins.

Everybody knows were to get fibres and it is not that important.' (Male, group 2)

Potential users didn't accept List C as unconditionally as the occasional users did. Potential users criticized the list of being too complicated and containing too much useless information. It also seemed that the respondents lacked knowledge about nutrients, e.g. they were wondering what are natural and added mono- and disaccharides.

'I didn't understand this dividing of sugars at all and what it means.' (Female, group 4)

'There is more information about fats but it is too long, I wouldn't read it.' (Male, group 4)

List D (Extensive list of nutrients):

LIST D
Energy
Fat
– saturated + trans fat
Carbohydrates
– sugars *
– fibre
Protein
Sodium (as salt)

*sugars = natural and added mono- and disaccharides

Occasional users clearly preferred List D to any other alternative, which can be concluded from their comments and seen also from the table below. 15 out of 16 respondents voted for List D. They were content with the way the information was divided, e.g. fat → saturated and trans fat. It seems that extensive list doesn't annoy occasional users as it does the potential users. One explanation might be that the occasional users are already familiar with the concepts used in the nutrition information because they are interested in the contents of the foodstuff. Thus, the occasional users are not confused about the concepts like protein and carbohydrate and also benefit more of the nutrition labelling.

'There is everything one needs.' (Female, group 1)

'If one is interested in these things and wishes to follow them, then she gets the answers to many questions in this.' (Female, group 2)

'It should not be too meticulous but I think this is good. It is not too meticulous.' (Female, group 2)

'It is not too wide. It certainly gives everybody the information they want to have. Not everybody needs all of this information. Everybody finds what she wishes to find and the list is not anyhow too wide.' (Male, group 2)

From the comments of List D it is quite obvious that potential users found the list too wide and confusing. They questioned the need for such an extensive list for healthy people and doubted that they would not have the interest to read such a long list.

'In my opinion there should be instructions how to use that list, what do they really mean?' (Male, group 3)

'I'm scared of all those asterisks, as you have to search for the information in some other place.' (Male, group 3)

'Goes too deep for a normal consumer.' (Female, group 3)

'It is the best but people are not able to understand this kind nutrition information.' (Male, group 4)

'This is more for professionals. I do understand them all but I'm not interested in concentrating in them.' (Female, group 4)

'D and C are almost the same. D is absolutely more difficult to understand. C is much clearer, easier to understand.' (Female, group 4)

Preferences of the lists

	Occasional users (group 1) younger respondents	Occasional users (group 2) older respondents	Potential users (group 3) younger respondents	Potential users (group 4) older respondents
List A	0	0	0	1
List B	0	0	2	2
List C	1	0	7	5
List D	9	6	0	2

As mentioned before the occasional users preferred clearly List D as the most comprehensive and informative.

The above table shows how the votes of potential users dispersed between the four alternatives, they didn't reach as great a consensus as the occasional users. The most popular alternative among potential users was List C: 12 out of 19 respondents preferred List C. Although the potential users didn't first evaluate List C very high, in the end it seemed the best alternative for most of the respondents. Arguments for this alternative were that it provides enough information and is as comprehensive as a nutrient list has to be.

Country report: Norway

Om informantene

- Gruppe 1: Syv kvinner og to menn i alderen 41-55 år - *Occasional users*. Informantene varierte med hensyn til utdanning og jobbsituasjon – i denne første gruppen hadde vi et relativt høyt utdanningsnivå, her var alt fra radiograf, IT-medarbeidere, homøopat og studenter.
- Gruppe 2: Fire kvinner og to menn i alderen 25 – 39 år - *Occasional users*. Denne gruppen hadde et noe lavere utdanningsnivå enn gruppe en. Blant annet var en informant uføretrygdet, en studerende og en var sjåfør.
- Gruppe 3: Fem kvinner og to menn i alderen 40 –55 år - *Potential users*. I denne gruppen hadde vi også et mangfold av informanter mht utdanning og livssituasjon. Også her fantes en uføretrygdet informant, en arbeidsledig, sekretærer og konsulenter.
- Gruppe 4: Syv kvinner og en mann i alderen 24- 40 år. *Potential users*. Her var utdanningsnivået også relativt høyt. Her fantes advokat, informasjonsrådgiver, student, men også en vaktmester og barnehageassistent.

Occasional og potential users

Vi har funnet at gruppene skiller seg noe fra hverandre avhengig om de tilhører *occasional* eller *potential users*. Dette gjelder imidlertid *ikke* gjennomgående, og der hvor det ikke er nevneverdig forskjeller mellom gruppene vil de bli behandlet under ett.

Definisjon av næringsdeklarasjoner

Vi ser av tabellen under at de to grupperinger med *occasional* og *potential users* ikke skilte seg nevneverdig fra hverandre med hensyn til hvordan de så på næringsdeklarasjoner (ND). Det hersket mye uvisshet og forvirring rundt hva som var en næringsdeklarasjon – eller hva *den* hadde til hensikt å fortelle dem. Det kan virke som om informantene assosierte alt som hadde med innholdet i et produkt med en næringsdeklarasjoner, de skilte ikke mellom forskjellige typer av deklarasjoner – som for eksempel tok for seg vareinnholdet. Felles for de aller fleste informantene var at de syntes det var vanskelig tilgjengelig informasjon både med hensyn til skrifttype (som ble karakterisert som for liten) og rent forståelsesmessig, det var vanskelig å forstå, finne mening i det som står på næringsdeklarasjoner.

”Jeg kan jo lese det som står, kanskje best hvis jeg har på meg briller, jeg forstår ordene og bokstavene, men det sier meg ingenting.” (Mann, 53 år)

”Jeg synes det er alt for mange vanskelige ord.” (Kvinne, 35 år)

Hva er en næringsdeklarasjon? – Første assosiasjoner	
Occasional users	Potential users
Etikett på produktet, ingredienser, innhold, sammensetninger av forskjellige komponenter føde, smakstilsetninger, smaksforsterkere, e-stoffer, liten uleselig skrift, prosenttegn, uforståelige forkortelser, mengdeangivelser, “fett, protein og karbohydrater satt opp i en trekant med rekommandasjoner – dagsbehov, sporstoffer, salt, ”staten passer på”, ”forstår ikke hva dette innebærer” – prosentfordeling”.	Fettinnhold, kalorier, “E-vitaminer”, konserveringsmiddel, fett, karbohydrater, råstoffene, tilsetningsstoffene, vanlige vitaminer, proteiner, stivelse, gram el. prosentandel av de forskjellige råstoffer, salt krydder, grunnstoffer som kalsium og kalium, slankehysteri, sukker, søtningsmiddel, kilojoule.

Hvor leses deklarasjoner?

”Jeg leser stort sett sånt når jeg er hjemme, eller forresten det kan godt hende jeg leser det hvis det nye og ukjente produkter og da leser jeg det i butikken.”

For disse informantene finnes det to steder å lese deklarasjoner, i butikken og/eller i hjemmet. Mange sier som informanten over at dersom det er nye og ukjente varer så leses deklarasjoner ofte i butikken. Mens i hjemmet kan det være mer en tilfeldighet når informantene leser deklarasjoner, likevel vi ser at de leses vel så ofte der.

En informant sa det slik:

”Mange ganger leser jeg på pakken av ren kjedsomhet, jeg sitter om morgningen og stirrer på Cornflakesen eller på melken også leser jeg det som står der.” (Kvinne, 25 år)

Occasional users leser i større grad ND i butikken – og ofte ut fra det behovet de har til å vite hva nye produkter inneholder. En årsak kan også være hvis de er på slankekur og teller kalorier på det de spiser. *Occasional users* kan, på spørsmål om når de siste leste en ND huske dette og beskrive varen relativt greit. Med andre ord så ser vi at det ikke er lenge siden de sist leste en ND.

Potential users leser ND i større grad hjemme, rent tilfeldig som kvinnen over. Dette handler om at de gjennomgående ikke er så interesserte i ND, men også fordi de føler at de ikke har bruk for den informasjonen som står på produktene. ND, er i følge disse, ikke noe som angår dem som forbrukere.

”Hvis jeg hadde forstått hva som sto der og det kunne brukes fornuftig så hadde jeg nok lest oftere”. (Mann, 55 år)

Adferd

Informantene ble bedt om å systemtisere et bord med varer av ulike slag. Varene skulle inn i to grupper ut fra kriteriet *leser – leser ikke næringsdeklarasjoner*. Følgende modell oppsummerer informantenes tanker og inndelinger.

Potential users		Occasional users	
Leser	Leser ikke	Leser	Leser ikke
<p>Leser for å sammenlikne for eksempel fettinnhold i påleggs-salater</p> <p>Fordi det står fremme på bordet</p> <p>Ukjente produkter</p>	<p>De mest usunne varene som potetgull, godteri leser ikke ND – skal de ha godteri så er det uavhengig av ND</p> <p>Leser heller ikke på tradisjonelle velkjente sunne varer – slik som grønnsaker</p>	<p>På sunne produkter → får god samvittighet</p> <p>Leser på utenlandske og ukjente produkter</p> <p>Leser på halvfabrikata produkter →</p>	<p>Usunne som godteri</p> <p>Norske, kjente tradisjonelle produkter</p>
<p>Gruppe 1</p> <p>For å sammenlikne like produkter som brukes mye i hverdagen</p> <p>Kunstige produkter v/tvil om fettinnhold eller karbohydrater</p> <p>Majones Kylling Brelett saft</p>	<p>Gruppe 1</p> <p>Klassisk usunne varer og når det handles på impuls</p> <p>Brød og pizza</p> <p>Sunne produkter</p> <p>Tradisjonsrike varer</p>	<p>Gruppe 3</p> <p>Sunt</p> <p>Halvfabrikata/blandingsprodukter</p> <p>Cornflakes Brelett Potetgull Godt og blandet Jubelsalami Kjøttdeig Havregrøt Norvegia Leverpostei Majones Juice Saft ketchup</p>	<p>Gruppe 3</p> <p>Usunt</p> <p>Ferskvare</p> <p>Grandiosa Loff Rundstykker Suppe Kylling Skinke Blomkålblanding Spagetti Melk Pepe lakris</p>
<p>Gruppe 2</p> <p>Det som står fremme når de spiser</p> <p>Cornflakes Appelsinjuice Majones Godteri Bounty Brelett Ketchup Saft Melk Leverspostei</p>	<p>Gruppe 2</p> <p>Det som er sunt</p> <p>Det de tror de kjenner</p> <p>Grønnsaker Brød Pizza Kylling Grøt Kjøttdeig – noen leser, noen leser ikke</p>	<p>Gruppe 4</p> <p>Ukjente produkter v/fokus på fett v/fokus på karbohydrater</p> <p>Utenlandske produkter</p> <p>Nye produkter</p> <p>Cornflakes Lettmelk Kokt skinke Salami Potetgull Smør Ost Saft majones</p>	<p>Gruppe 4</p> <p>Kjente produkter</p> <p>Ikke fokus på på fett</p> <p>Ikke fokus på karbohydrater</p> <p>Norske varer, unntak nye produkter</p> <p>Rundstykker Loff Sjokolade Pep lakris Spagetti Ketchup Grandiosa Suppe Grøt kylling</p>

Adferd

Vi ser av tabellen over at det er visse moment som går igjen på tvers av grupperingene. Det essensielle for informantene i forhold til om de leste næringsdeklarasjoner eller ikke var om varen er **norsk eller utenlandsk, kjent eller ukjent, ferskvare eller halvfabrikata, sunn eller usunn**. Vi ser at når det gjelder *potential users* kommer det også an på *gitte tilfeldigheter* som avgjørende for om de leser ND eller ikke. Her blir det nevnt: *"hvis varen står på bordet så kan det hende jeg leser ND fordi jeg ikke har noe annet å gjøre."*

Hva er en god ND?

Vi ser av tabellene nedenfor at informantene også her, på tvers av grupperingene er opptatt av mye av det samme. Occasional users er noe mer konkret i hva de ønsker at en ND skal være, men vi ser at også potential users er opptatt av at en god ND skal sette det hele i en sammenheng for dem. Med andre ord felles for alle fire gruppene er at de savner mer tydelig informasjon.

Mange informanter hevder at de har lest mange uforståelige og kompliserte ND som de ikke har dratt nytte av. De hevder videre at dersom ND ble skrevet på en brukervennlig måte som gjorde at de konkret kunne relatere det til sin hverdag så ville de brukes en ND atskillig oftere enn i dag.

Næringsdeklarasjon – Potential users	
God	Dårlig
Forståelige for ”vanlige” folk	Fremmed språk/ komplisert
Leselig (skriftstørrelse)	Utydelig
At tallene blir satt i en sammenheng	Uforståelig
Oppgitt pr. 100 gr og pr. Enhet/enkelt vare	Ukjente begrep
Sannferdig	Masse tall
	Forteller ikke sannheten

Næringsdeklarasjon – Occasional users	
God	Dårlig
Større skrift	Uforståelig
Oppgitt i vektrekkefølge	Tall som folk flest ikke kan noe om eller har noe forhold til.
Oppgitt i måleenheter/prosent	For fagdetaljert
Samme oppsett på like produkter slik at det blir sammenlignbart	Usanne
I forhold til volum	
Folkelig oppsummering som kategoriserer produkter i sunt/usunt fett/ hva slags fett?	Det enkle som sier alt for lite
Mer spesifisert i forhold til hva slags type fett og karbohydrater	

Formatene

Informantene ble presentert for fire ulike formater format 1, 2, 3 og 4. Disse vil bli gjennomgått i det følgende:

Format I (pr. 100g):

PIZZA MED SKINKE	Ernæringsmessig informasjon pr. 100 g
Energi	200 kcal / 850 kJ
Fett	11 g
Karbohydrat	13 g
Protein	14 g

Format I

Positiv omtale

Format 1 blir gitt positiv omtale fordi den er grei og oversiktlig.

Negativ omtale

Occasional users synes dette formatet sier for lite.

Potential users synes for det meste dette formatet er greit og oversiktlig, likevel er det også her informanter som sier at dette ikke sier dem mye og at de ikke helt vet hva de skal bruke det til.

"Denne er for kort, det mangler informasjon om for eksempel salt og du vet heller ikke hvor mye du får i deg i hele pizzaen, det er vanskelig å måtte regne det ut selv".

Mann, 55 år

Flere savner informasjon pr. enhet og nevner muligheten for å oppgi det hele i to kolonner. Også muligheten for å gå inn på en eventuell bra sammensetning av matvarer blir etterlyst.

Format II (pr. porsjon):

PIZZA MED SKINKE Pakke inneholder 4 stykker	Ernæringsmessig informasjon pr. to stykker (250 g)
Energi	510 kcal / 2140 kJ
Fett	27 g
Karbohydrat	33 g
Protein	35 g

Format II

Positiv omtale

Noen få informanter blant *potential users* anså dette formatet som bra, dette begrunnet de i at den sier noe om den porsjonen du eventuelt spiser.

Negativ omtale

De aller fleste var svært negative til dette formatet fordi de syntes det ble forvirrende med porsjonsangivelsen.

"Hva hvis jeg spiser tre stykker da? Skal jeg regne ut det videre da, det blir litt pes."

"Jeg synes dette blir vanskelig med hensyn til å sammenlikne varer."

Flere informanter poengterer også at det vil være vanskelig å porsjonsangi alle varer og at det nettopp det burde være noe av målet, at alle varer har lik ND.

De fleste informantene mener at dette formatet ikke passer sammen med hva de definerer som en god ND.

Format III (per 100g and per serving):

PIZZA WITH HAM Package contains 4 slices	Nutrition Information	
	per 100g	per two slices (250 g)
Energy	200 kcal / 850 kJ	510 kcal / 2140 kJ
Fat	11 g	27 g
Carbohydrate	13 g	33 g
Protein	14 g	35 g

Format III

Dette formatet er informantene svært splittet i sitt syn på, dette gjelder på tvers av grupperingene.

Positiv omtale

Mange mener at dette er det formatet er best og gir mest informasjon relevant informasjon, flere påpeker muligheten til å velge det som de selv har mest nytte av og setter pris på denne valgfriheten.

Negativ omtale

En del informanter, i begge grupperingene, synes det heller burde vært pr. 100 gr og **pr. enhet/stykke, ikke pr. porsjon** → informantene ønsker ikke at noen (eks. Staten) skal fortelle dem hvor mye du skal/bør spise.

En del informanter, spesielt blant potential users, påpeker at det er for mange tall, det hele virker forvirrende og avskrekkende og kan medføre at de ikke ønsker eller orker å lese ND.

Flest informanter blant *occasional users* anser format 3 som en god ND, i tråd med tidligere definisjon

Flest *potential users* ser på dette formatet som en forverring og ikke i tråd med hva de anser som en god ND.

Format IV (pr. porsjon og som prosent av anbefalt daglig inntak ADI) *:

PIZZA MED SKINKE Pakke inneholder 4 stykker	Ernæringsmessig informasjon pr. porsjon = to stykker (250 g)	
Energi	510 kcal / 2140 kJ	
	% ADI *	
Fett	27 g	42 %
Karbohydrat	33 g	12 %
Protein	35 g	46 %

* Prosentdel av ADI (anbefalt daglig inntak) er basert på en kost med 2000 kcal. Din ADI kan være høyere eller lavere avhengig av dit energibehov.

Format IV

Dette formatet var utvilsomt det som vekket mest engasjement og diskusjon, også her på tvers av grupperingene.

Positiv omtale

Informanter, på tvers av grupperinger var positive til at en ND kunne fortelle dem noe som de ikke visste fra før av. De likte tanken på at ND kunne fortelle dem noe om deres dagsbehov og så helt klart en nytteverdi i dette formatet.

Negativ omtale

"Dette er vel fryktelig vanskelig å beregne ut fra – hva er en gjennomsnittsperson og må man da beregne seg selv i forhold til dette gjennomsnittet – det blir vel litt vel slitsomt".

"Dette vil skremme folk mer enn det vil gavne".

"Jeg liker ikke ADI- delen, hvem har rett til å bestemme hvor mange kalorier jeg skal spise hver dag?...(.) det blir for folk som slanker seg og kanskje litt sånn skremselspropaganda".

De negative informantene er som vi ser opptatt av det pedagogiske / opplæringsbiten ved det hele. De synes som vi ser ikke staten bør blande seg inn i hva folk skal spise eller ikke.

Dette formatet vekker mest oppmerksomhet og engasjement både av positiv og negativ art og kan derfor ha mye over seg hvis det blir brukt og formidlet på den rette måten.

Oppsummering

Tabellen oppsummerer hva de ulike informantene mente om formatene. Vi ser at det formatet som er dårligst og best er det samme, format 4. Det formatet som favner flest informanter er format 3, mens format 2 kommer dårligst ut.

Format	Occasional users (Group 1)	Occasional users (Group 2)	Potential users (Group 3)	Potential Users (Group 4)
Format I – per 100 g.	5	0	2	0
Format II – pr. portion	0	0	1	0
Format III – pr. 100 g and portion	4	0	3	2
Format IV – pr. portion and % of RDI	0	6	1	6

Listene

Informantene blir i første omgang presentert for den maksimale liste (liste D) for å gi de et inntrykk av hvor mye en ND kan innehold.

Majoriteten av informantene synes dette maksimale er positiv, men er svært usikker på betydningen av de ulike begrepene. Her er også mange ord informantene ikke har hørt om før eller som de blander med andre ord og synes er vanskelig å finne en mening i.

Eksempler på forvirrende begreper for informantene er:

- Mettet fett og transfett
- Mono- og di-sacarider
- Fiber

De fire listene ble gjennomgått og presentert for informantene og ga følgende tilbakemeldinger:

Liste A (kort liste * over næringsstoffer):

LISTE A
Energi
Fett

* I umiddelbar tilknytting til produktets navn.

Liste A

Positiv omtale

"Kanskje dette kan være aktuelt for noen som ser etter akkurat fettinnholdet"

Informantene mener at dette er rettet direkte mot de som slanker seg og er opptatt av fett og energien de får i seg hver dag.

Negativ omtale

"Altfor kort og ufullstendig"

Gjennomgående synes alle informantene at denne listen dekket for lite. Det var ingen informanter som synes liste A var aktuell å bruke.

"Det blir for mye fokus på fett og det er jo tross alt en del diskusjon om hvor farlig det egentlig er."

Ingen informanter favoriserte denne listen.

Liste B (gjeldende liste over næringsstoffer):

LISTE B
Energi
Protein
Karbohydrat
Fett

Liste B

Positiv omtale

"Dette er vi vant til – så denne er grei og traust å forholde seg til."

Informantene kjenner igjen listen og sier at dette gir dem opplysninger på den måten de er vant til i dag. For mange informanter er dette greit, men det er også mange som svarer ytterligere opplysninger.

Liste B

Negativ omtale

"Denne forbedrer jo ikke verden, jeg lærer ikke noe av denne, hvis det er det som er hensikten".

Vi ser at informantene gjerne ønsker mer informasjon enn det som blir gitt i dag og at det er derfor denne listen får negativ omtale. Den er akseptabel, men er ikke en liste som gir de de søker av tilleggsinformasjon eller opplysninger.

Liste B blir sett på som ok og akseptabel, men likevel ikke ønskelig for fremtiden.

Liste C (lenger liste over næringsstoffer):

LISTE C
Energi
Fett
– hardt fett *
Sukker **
Fiber
Natrium (som salt)

* hardt fett = mettet fett og transfett.

** sukker = naturlige og tilsatte mono- og disakkarider.

Liste C

Positiv omtale

Mange synes denne listen er bedre enn for eksempel liste B, først og fremst fordi den gir mer opplysninger.

"Dette er mye bedre, her begynner det å likne på noe."

Negativ omtale

"Ja, det likner på noe, men det er mye jeg ikke helt skjønner her, hvorfor står det ikke umettet fett og hva er transfett?"

"Hvor er karbohydratene?"

"Dette synes jeg er litt vel rotete terminologi."

Informantene er enige om at liste C gir dem mer opplysninger/informasjon, men er delte i synes på hvor gode de er. Flere hevder at de blir forvirret over begrepsbruken som for mange er ukjent. En forutsetning for bruk av en slik liste vil være at det blir kjent i media hva de ulike begrepene betyr.

Informantene er positive til liste B, men forvirret over begrepsbruken.

Liste D (lang liste over næringsstoffer):

LISTE D
Energi
Fett
– mettet + transfett *
Karbohydrater
– sukker **
– fiber
Protein
Natrium (som salt)

* hardt fett = mettet fett og transfett.

** sukker = naturlige og tilsatte mono- og disakkarider.

Liste D

Positiv omtale

"Dette er klart den beste"

Mange informanter mener at liste D er den beste av de fire listene, men det finnes flere betenkeligheter også her.

"Jeg synes denne er best, men er likevel ganske forvirret over begrepene som blir brukt. For at jeg faktisk skulle brukt dette her så måtte jeg fått skolering eller kunnskap om hva begrepene betyr og hva de eventuelt ville bety for meg."

Informantene savner informasjon, flere hevder at den beste formidlingskanal for slik type informasjon er TV, for eksempel Statens informasjonstjeneste eller HelseRefleks NRK og lignende.

Liste D blir best likt av informantene, men trenger ytterligere presisering og utadrettet informasjonsarbeid.

Oppsummering

Tabellen under oppsummerer informantenes behov og umiddelbare reaksjoner på de ulike presenterte lister. Vi ser at de listene som gir informantene mer informasjon enn i dag blir best likt.

List	Occasional users (Group 1)	Occasional users (Group 2)	Potential users (Group 3)*	Potential users (Group 4)
List A – short list	0	0	0	0
List B – current list	1	0	2	3
List C – longer list	1	0	3	0
List D – extensive list	7	6	1	5

* En informant kunne ikke svare

Fremtidens informasjon

Informantene ønsker seg mer informasjon om næringsinnhold på varer, men det er imidlertid ingen som er villige til å gå på egne kurs for å lære mer.

Informantene anser det som avgjørende at de får mer informasjon og foreslår følgende informasjonskanaler:

- Brosjyrer i butikken
- Skriv på helsestasjon, legesenter og apotek
- Informasjonssnutter på TV (eks Statens informasjonstjeneste)
- Innslag i helseprogram

Country report: Denmark

Analysens indhold

Detailanalysen gennemgår i detaljer respondenternes holdninger til og brug af næringsdeklarationer og belyser samtidig deres opfattelse af fire forskellige nye formater og lister til en fremtidig næringsdeklaration.

Først gennemgås kort demografiske betragtninger i forhold til de rekrutterede respondenter, herefter belyses respondenternes vanskeligheder med at adskille næringsdeklarationer fra varedeklarationer.

Afsnit tre behandler respondenternes adfærd i forhold til næringsdeklarationer, herunder, hvordan næringsdeklarationer læses, hvilke informationer respondenterne efterspørger samt, hvilke fødevarer respondenterne finder relevante i forhold til informationssøgning i næringsdeklarationer.

Afsnit fire og fem gennemgår respondenternes vurdering af Projektgruppens forslag til henholdsvis nyt format for en fremtidig næringsdeklaration samt fire forskellige forslag til lister over næringsdeklarationer.

Demografi

Indledning

I dette afsnit præsenteres gruppernes karakteristika og den terminologi, som benyttes i forbindelse hermed.

Lejlighedsvis og potentiel

I undersøgelsen skelnes mellem potentielle og lejlighedsvis brugere af næringsdeklarationer. De **lejlighedsvis** brugere er rekrutteret efter, at de skal læse næringsdeklarationer min. en gang om måneden.

De **potentielle** brugere er rekrutteret udfra et krav om, at de skal læse næringsdeklarationer min. to gange og max. fire gange om året. Disse er ligeledes delt op i en yngre og en ældre aldersgruppe.

Såvel de lejlighedsvis som de potentielle brugere har vi i samråd med Projektgruppen delt efter følgende alderssplit, en yngre gruppe 23-40 år og en ældre gruppe 41-60 år.

De **potentielle** brugere kan på baggrund af resultaterne inddeles i yderligere to undergrupper:

- De som giver udtryk for, at de stort set ikke læser næringsdeklarationer og ikke finder noget incitament for at gøre det – herefter kaldet **de uinteresserede**. De uinteresserede giver dog udtryk for at de læser næringsdeklarationer min. to gang årligt, jvf. vores rekrutteringskriterier.
- De som sjældent læser næringsdeklarationer, fordi de mener, at de i forvejen har tilstrækkelig viden om produkterne – herefter kaldet de **selvsikre**.

De **lejlighedsvis brugere** deler sig ikke helt så skarpt, at der er tale om deciderede undergrupperinger.

Hyppigheden hvormed respondenterne læser næringsdeklarationen siger ikke noget om deres generelle interesse i fødevarer og sundhed. Gennemgående giver respondenterne udtryk for viden om og interesse for fødevarer.

Læsning – mænd og kvinder

Undersøgelsen viser endvidere, at mænd og kvinder søger de samme oplysninger i næringsdeklarationer, således har de samme motiver i deres informationssøgning.

Unge og ældre Der synes at være en svag tendens til, at de ældre respondenter er mere interesserede i næringsdeklarationer end de yngre, men det er ikke en markant tendens, hvorfor rapporten ikke fokuserer yderligere på dette. Tendensen viser sig ved, at de ældre grupper har en mere nuanceret holdning til næringsdeklarationen end de yngre. ACNielsen AIMs Market*Monitor viser, at interessen for helse og helserigtig kost øges i takt med alderen uanset køn, hvilket bakker tendensen fra grupperne op.

Definition af næringsdeklaration

Indledning I dette afsnit behandles respondenternes holdning til information på varen generelt, dvs. såvel vare- som næringsdeklaration og viden om forskellene mellem disse.

Forskel på næringsdeklaration og varedeklaration Umiddelbart skelner respondenterne ikke mellem varedeklarationen og næringsdeklarationen, men ser informationerne som et hele, de selv betegner ”en varedeklaration”. Det helt gennemgående krav fra respondenterne er, at informationen skal gøre produktets indhold **gennemskueligt**, så de ved, hvad produktet indeholder.

Informationen, respondenterne forventer at finde, på produkterne har både en **overordnet** og **konkret** karakter, som nedenstående figur illustrerer.

Alle oplysninger går i retning af gennemskuelighed i forbindelse med fødevarernes sammensætning. De overrodede oplysninger er på et mere overordnet plan, og de konkrete oplysninger, som f.eks. holdbarhed og tilberedning er på et mere håndgribeligt plan.

Forventninger Ønsket om gennemskuelighed udspringer af respondenternes forventning om at blive **forsikret** om, hvad en fødevarer indeholder. Respondenterne ønsker så vidt muligt at have overblik over, hvad fødevareren indeholder, og hvordan den er produceret, for at kunne føle sig trygge, når de køber ind. Da det er **forventninger** og ikke deciderede krav, fortæller det os, hvordan respondenternes indstilling til at læse information på varen generelt er; nemlig at forbrugeren har relativt veldefinerede forventninger, men diffuse **krav**.

Respondenterne har altså som udgangspunkt en bred opfattelse af, hvad vare-/næringsdeklarationen indeholder. Når de i fokusgrupperforløbet præsenteres for definitionen på en næringsdeklaration, viser det sig, at de kender næringsdeklarationen, men ikke normalt fokuserer på den som en særskilt enhed. Alle oplysninger på varen går for de fleste respondenter under betegnelsen varedeklaration.

Behov for at læse næringsdeklarationer

Respondenterne har forskellige behov for at læse næringsdeklarationer. Disse illustreres i figuren herunder:

Næringsdeklarationer bliver brugt som en vejledning i forhold til købet. Ved køb af en ny vare afsøges informationer om produktets indhold og energifordeling, og næringsdeklarationen kan derfor være afgørende for den endelige købsbeslutning. Holdningen er dog gennemgående hos såvel lejlighedsvis som potentielle selvsikre brugere, at de godt ved, hvad de oftest indkøbte produkter indeholder, og de føler derfor ikke behov for at søge yderligere informationer på disse produkter.

Især for de potentielle brugeres vedkommende afgøres læsning af næringsdeklarationen i høj grad af, om det er et nyt produkt, eller om man er på slankekur eller f.eks. har en allergiker på besøg, som der skal tages hensyn til.

Ligeledes gør en markant prisforskel på beslægtede produkter respondenterne mistænksomme over for produktets indhold, og de forsøger at bruge næringsdeklaration til at af- eller bekræfte denne mistanke. Det vil typisk være en mistanke om, at fedtindholdet er størst i den billige vare.

Behovet for at læse næringsdeklarationen opstår altså primært, når respondenterne møder et nyt produkt, og når de sammenligner to produkter. I disse tilfælde har respondenterne brug for næringsdeklarationen for at kunne gennemskue sammensætningen af produktet.

"Jeg bruger næringsdeklarationen til sammenligning. For det meste er det fedtenergiprocenter jeg vælger efter, hvis jeg skal vælge mellem to produkter" Mand, 46 år

Hvornår læses næringsdeklarationen?

Næringsdeklarationen eftersøges endvidere på **forarbejdede** fødevarer. Formålet med at læse næringsdeklarationen på disse produkter er at finde ud af, hvor meget fedt der er i to produkter af samme type, som f.eks. to slags grillpølser.

Hovedparten læser næringsdeklarationen i forretningen, når varen tages ned fra hylden, enkelte læser det derhjemme i forbindelse med tilberedningen, eller når de spiser det.

Fokus på fedt og sukker

Gennemgående fokuserer respondenterne mest på fedt og sukker. Det er nærliggende at antage, at de seneste årtiers fokus på danskernes sundhed og tiltagende overvægt er medvirkende til dette. Man kan groft sagt se, hvordan fokus har skiftet i de seneste 15 år, når der tales om "synderen" i folkesundheden og omkring overvægten. Tidligere fokuseredes mest på det usunde i for meget sukker, nu er fedt det egentlig farlige. Respondenterne fokuserer stort set ikke på, at kulhydrat er sukker, og der er kun ringe fokus på kulhydrat generelt, og protein er endnu et forholdsvis ubeskrevet blad.

"Jeg har brugt næringsdeklaration meget i forbindelse med slankekur. Ved bare at kigge på fedtprocenten har jeg tabt 20 kg". Kvinde, 49 år

Adfærd i forhold til næringsdeklarationer

Indledning

I dette afsnit belyses respondenternes adfærd i forbindelse med næringsdeklarationen på forskellige fødevarekategorier. Afsnittet vil afdække og belyse, hvilke kategorier forbrugerne finder det relevant at læse næringsdeklarationer på, og hvilke de ikke finder relevante i forhold til informationssøgning i næringsdeklarationer.

I fokusgruppeforløbet gennemførtes en sorteringsøvelse, hvor respondenterne sorterede forskellige fødevareprodukter. Formålet var dels at få respondenterne til at forholde sig helt konkret til, hvilke fødevarer de eftersøger næringsdeklarationen på, dels at belyse hvilke fødevarekategorier de finder relevante i forhold til nærings- og fødevaredeklarationer.

Til øvelsen udvalgte forskellige produkter, som repræsenterer de forskellige fødevarekategorier i form af de mest almindelige fødevarer. Vi har således tilstræbt at finde et produkt for hver kategori, som kan repræsentere kategorien f.eks. hakket oksekød og en frossen kylling for kød, cornflakes og havregryn for cereals etc.

Forskel i oplysninger

Der er forskel på, hvilke oplysninger der søges på de forskellige produktkategorier. Der læses generelt ikke næringsdeklarationer på basisvarer, som kun indeholder én ingrediens, f.eks. havregryn. Med basisvarer af denne karakter føler respondenterne sig overbevist om produktets sammensætning og har derfor ikke behov for at søge yderligere information.

Samtidig ser vi, at respondenterne ikke læser næringsdeklaration på en kylling, altså en indikation af, at produkter som er helt "rene" er der ikke behov for at læse på. Årsagen er, at respondenterne føler sig sikre i forhold til dette fødevareprodukts indhold og føler, at de kender det. Samtidig er der produkter, som opnår karakter af at være et basisprodukt, selvom det ikke er tilfældet, et eksempel er pasta, som respondenterne føler, de kender så godt, at de ikke har behov for at læse yderligere.

Motiv for at læse næringsdeklaration

I nedenstående figur illustreres, hvilke motiver respondenterne har for at læse næringsdeklarationer:

Kategorier der læses næringsdeklaration på

Der læses altså ikke entydigt på bestemte fødevarekategorier, men på produkter inden for de forskellige kategorier, som har bestemte karakteristika. Inden for de specifikke fødevarekategorier læses på den del af fødevareråprodukterne, hvor respondenterne har en følelse af, at der er oplysninger, de skal tjekke, og hvor næringsindholdet kan være forskellig på to slags produkter af samme type.

Således læses sjældent på mælk, fordi det er et af de fødevareprodukter, der læses på, når en ny variant kommer på markedet og derefter ikke. F.eks. fortæller en respondent, at hun én gang har konstateret, at skummetmælk har lavere fedtindhold, og at hun derfor husker dette.

Sortering

I de to figurer herunder illustreres de fire grupperes sortering: på de skraverede felter ses de udvalgte fødevareprodukter som respondenterne valgte imellem. Cirklerne repræsenterer hver gruppe af respondenter, og i midten ses fællesmængden af de fødevareprodukter, som respondenterne i henholdsvis den lejlighedsvis og potentielle gruppe læser næringsdeklarationen på.

Lejlighedsvis

Potentielle

Alle deltagerne fokuserer på forarbejdede produkter (kyllingevinger m. barbecue, paté, mayonnaise og miracel whip), på sukker- (saft) og på fedtindholdet i bl.a. ost og hakket kød. Desuden fokuserer de på produkter, hvor de ønsker at *sammenligne* med andre varer.

Lejlighedsvis og potentielle brugere

De unge potentielle læser på flere varer end de ældre potentielle. Formentlig et tegn på at de unge føler sig mere usikre, når de sættes i en valgsituation. De ældre potentielle føler til gengæld, at de har så stor erfaring med fødevarerprodukter, at de ikke længere behøver at orientere sig på produkterne, men anvender deres baggrundsviden.

Argumentet, for ikke at læse på f.eks. chips, smør og chokolade, er, blandt de lejlighedsvis brugere, at disse varer i respondenternes bevidsthed har højt fedtindhold og er usunde. Holdningen er, at når man vælger den type produkter, accepterer man, at de har højt fedtindhold.

"Når man er ude på den der (chokolade) er det lige meget." Mand, 28 år

Det er en ganske udbredt holdning, som ACNielsen AIM ofte konstaterer i forskellige undersøgelser omkring fødevarer: når forbrugeren først har bestemt sig for at "synde", ved han godt, at det er fedt og ser ingen grund til at læse yderligere om det, da det vil medføre en øget dårlig samvittighed.

De potentielle unge vælger at læse på mælk og smør ud fra begrundelsen, at de læser på et nyt produkt.

I forlængelse af dette ligger de produkter, som måske ikke er basisvarer, men som er en så indarbejdet del af respondenternes forbrugsmønster, at de ser det som en nødvendighed, og derfor vælger ikke at tage stilling til næringsindholdet. F.eks. ketchup

"Ketchup skal man jo have." Mand, 40 år

"Ketchup spiser man så lidt af, at det ikke er nødvendigt." Kvinde, 48 år

Fyldest- gørende næringsdekla- ration

Kravene til en god næringsdeklaration er ens for alle grupper. Helt enkelt drejer det sig om, at respondenterne efterspørger en *enkel og gennemskuelig* næringsdeklaration, som er nem at forstå, og som er standardiseret fra føde- vare til fødevarer. Respondenterne skelner umiddelbart ikke mellem de for- skellige kategorier af fødevarer og tager altså ikke højde for den forskel, der kan ligge i, at det er forskellige oplysninger, der eftersøges. I nedenstående figur ses de krav som respondenterne stiller til en god næringsdeklaration – inden de er blevet præsenteret for de nye formater.

God ☺	Dårlig ☹
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tydelig • Overskuelig • Nem at finde på varen • Oplysninger pr. skive er lettere end pr. 100 g. • Gennemskuelig for almindelige forbrugere • Viser hvad fedtet består af 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Står i for meget tekst • Svær at finde • Svært at forholde sig til de oplysninger tallene giver • Når fedtprocenten ikke stemmer med virkeligheden * • Hvis der ikke er fedt og kulhydratangivelse • Svær at læse

* Her efterspørges fedtenergiprocenten

Kompleksitet Kravene til en god henholdsvis dårlig næringsdeklaration illustrerer, at respondenterne eftersøger gennemskuelighed og enkelthed. Samtidig skal næringsdeklarationen være nem at finde og nem at afkode. Det nævnes f.eks., at det er svært at forholde sig til de oplysninger, tallene giver, hvilket viser at respondenternes kundskaber mht. at afkode informationerne ikke er særlig gode.

Forslag til forbedring En følge af ovenstående dilemma udtrykkes ved, at respondenterne efterspørger f.eks. standardiserede farvediagrammer, som ville gøre dem i stand til hurtigt at kunne afkode næringsindholdet af varen.

Respondenterne foreslår således, at næringsdeklarationen illustreres med farver, således at man hurtigt kan se, om balancen mellem farverne er ernæringsmæssig rigtig. F.eks. hvis rød altid er fedt, kan man hurtigt se, om indholdet er for højt i forhold til ADI.

Muligheden for sammenligning mellem forskellige produkter spiller en ikke ubetydelig rolle, fordi man gerne hurtigt vil kunne sammenligne to produkters næringsindhold.

Formater

Indledning

I dette afsnit behandles respondenternes holdninger til de fire nye formater, og argumenterne for og imod det enkelte format belyses.

Respondenterne har udfyldt individuelle bedømmelser af hvert format. Disse besvarelser kan ses grafisk afbilledet i bilag A. De to lejlighedsvis grupper ses under et i diagrammerne, og det samme gør de to potentielle.

Foretrukne format

Det foretrukne format i hver gruppe ses i skemaet herunder. Fordeling af stemmer kan være forskellig i forhold til bilag A, da bilag A er lavet på baggrund af de individuelle bedømmelser, mens nærværende er vurdering foretaget i plenum. Ligeledes viser bilag A ikke differentiering på alder, da vi vurderer, at overblikket i færre diagrammer og differentieringen lejlighedsvis – potentiel er mere væsentligt.

De lejlighedsvis brugere foretrækker format 4, mens de potentielle brugere foretrækker format 1 og 3.

Når vi anbefaler format 4 er det fordi dette format set i et fremtidsperspektiv har størst mulighed for at tilfredsstille forbrugerne.

Format	Lejlighedsvis brugere (gruppe 1)	Lejlighedsvis brugere (gruppe 2)	Potentielle brugere (gruppe 3) *	Potentielle brugere (gruppe 4)
Format 1 - pr. 100 g	3	0	7	4
Format 2 - pr. portion	2	0	0	0
Format 3 - pr. 100 g og pr. portion	0	1	0	6
Format 4 - pr. portion og % af ADI	5	4	2	0

* En potentiel bruger har ikke svaret.

Afkodning De potentielle brugere kan ikke afkode formaterne lige så godt som de lejlighedsvis, fordi de har ikke forudsætningerne, og de føler, som vi har set, formentlig heller ikke samme behov.

Således bemærker en respondent ved diskussion af format 1:

"Den siger mig ikke så meget, fordi den ikke bliver sat i kontekst, og jeg ved ikke så meget om proteiner." Kvinde, 23 år

De lejlighedsvis brugere, ikke blot læser hyppigere, de har også større udbytte af oplysningerne end de potentielle brugere. Sidstnævnte gruppe vil også gerne have mange oplysninger, men forstår dem ikke altid helt.

Enkelhed og sammenligning

Når de forskellige formater diskuteres i gruppeforløbet, er der to gennemgående elementer, som respondenterne efterlyser:

Enkelthed – oplysningerne skal være nemme at forstå og anvende

Sammenlignelighed – man skal kunne sammenligne på tværs af forskellige produktkategorier.

Respondenterne foretrækker enkelhed i næringsdeklarationen – det må ikke tage for lang tid at læse næringsdeklarationen, og oplysningerne skal være så umiddelbart anvendelige som muligt. Umiddelbart anvendelig betyder, at respondenterne ikke skal foretage yderligere omregninger af næringsdeklarationens tal. Pointen er, at jo færre udregninger respondenterne selv skal foretage jo bedre.

Et vigtigt element i diskussionen af næringsdeklarationer er, at fødevarerne skal kunne sammenlignes – både på tværs og inden for fødevarerkategoriene. Det er altså også en efterlysning af en standardiseret næringsdeklaration.

Formater

De fire forskellige formater er kendetegnet ved at have forskellige udregningsmetoder.

Format 1 er udregnet pr. 100 g af varen

Format 2 er udregnet pr. to stykker

Format 3 er udregnet pr. 100 g og pr. to stykker

Format 4 er udregnet pr. to stykker og angiver næringsværdien i forhold til anbefalet daglig indtagelse (ADI)

Format 1. Overordnet

Format 1 roses for at have oplysninger om det mest basale i produktet, og for at informere klart og tydeligt. Det er et overskueligt format, som respondenterne føler er nemt at læse. Kort sagt lever format 1 op til kravet om enkelhed.

Format 1 vækker genkendelighed, og de fleste respondenter føler, de kender det i forvejen, derfor får format 1 kommentarer, som er forholdsvis neutrale. Den er tilgængelig og letlæselig for de fleste af respondenterne.

Format 1 (pr. 100g):

PIZZA MED SKINKE	Ernæringsmæssig information pr. 100 g
Energi	200 kcal / 850 kJ
Fedt	11 g
Kulhydrat	13 g
Protein	14 g

Format I	Lejlighedsvis	Potentielle
Positivt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oplyser det basale Informerer tydeligt Overskuelig 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let læselig og overskuelig Viser det, den skal Jeg får det, jeg har brug for
Negativt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oplyser ikke omregning til fedtprocent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virker for kedelig i opsætningen Kræver nærlæsning

De lejlighedsvis brugere efterlyser lidt flere oplysninger, som f.eks., hvilken slags fedt der er i. Denne efterlysning markerer, at denne gruppe respondenter har tilstrækkelig viden til at læse en mere udbygget næringsdeklaration, samt at de ikke føler, at deres informationsbehov helt bliver opfyldt med format 1. Et andet ønske i den retning er at få oplyst en norm for produktet. Denne norm skal angive, hvordan næringsværdien normalt er fordelt i et produkt, og hvordan det aktuelle produkts energifordeling er i forhold til dette.

"Hvad er normen for en pizza med skinke?"

Mand, 44 år

Format II. Overordnet

Format 2 får overordnet ros for, at informationen er angivet pr. to stykker, fordi det er nemt at regne med, når det handler om fødevarer, der kan deles i stykker. Omvendt kritiseres format 2 for, at energi pr. 100 g. ikke kan ses, hvorfor den ikke duer til sammenligning på tværs af fødevarer og kategorier.

Respondenterne kan godt lide format 2, fordi den opgiver den ernæringsmæssige information pr. to stykker, og dermed **umiddelbart** er nemmere at forholde sig til specifikt i forhold til produkter, hvor det er logisk at foretage en udregning i styk.

Format II (pr. portion):

PIZZA MED SKINKE	Ernæringsmæssig information
Pakke indeholder 4 stykker	pr. to stykker (250 g)
Energi	510 kcal / 2140 kJ
Fedt	27 g
Kulhydrat	33 g
Protein	35 g

Format II	Lejlighedsvis	Potentielle
Positivt	Man kan forholde sig til "portionen" man spiser Overskuelig – deklarationen er til ca. halvdelen af varen (til ca. 1 person) Letlæselig	Der står antal på Regnestykket er gjort meget nemmere
Negativt	Mangler omregning til fedtprocent Pr. to styk, hvorfor ikke pr. 1?	Der er forvirrende, fordi man er vant til 100 g. Der er ikke relateret til en anbefalet daglig mængde.

Udregning i stykker

Respondenterne er positivt indstillet over for en udregning, som er mere konkret. Men de har nogle forbehold omkring udregningen af energifordeling på to stk. Forbeholdene er:

- Ulogisk er regne det ud pr. to stykker
- Hvad er den totale vægt af pizzaen?

Det virker ulogisk at regne næringsindholdet ud pr. to stykker i stedet for pr. et stykke - et stykke er nemmere at regne med. Således har en udregning på to stykker altså ikke elimineret behovet for yderligere at regne ud, hvor mange kalorier, der er i et eller flere stykker. Respondenterne synes, at to stykker er for snævert – et stykke er bedre, fordi det er et let udgangspunkt for den videre udregning, når der blot skal ganges op.

Derudover ønskes en opgivelse af totalvægten på hele pizzaen, fordi det er ønskværdigt at finde ud af, hvad hele pizzaen indeholder.

”Hvorfor er det pr. to stykker? Hvorfor ikke et eller hele pakken? Jeg vil hellere have udspecificeret, hvad hele pizzaen indeholder.” Kvinde, 40 år

Sammenligning af fødevarer

Respondenterne påpeger, at udregningen pr. to stykker er svær at bruge, når det handler om forskellige produktkategorier. Derimod passer 100 g. på alle produkter uanset om det er pizza eller saftvand, og man kan ikke relatere udregningen til saftvand. Således siger en respondent:

”Den er dårlig fordi næringsindholdet er oplyst pr. 2 styk, og ikke for eet stykke. Man skal hellere bibeholde pr. 100 g. for ellers kan man ikke sammenligne.” Kvinde, 42 år

Når respondenterne læser næringsdeklarationer er de traditionelt vænnet til at fokusere på pr. 100 g., denne udregning ligger derfor udtalt som den oprindelige næringsdeklaration blandt respondenterne.

Format III. Overordnet

Gennemgangen af format 3 fokuserer på, hvad respondenterne synes om at få begge informationer samlet på én næringsdeklaration. Format 3 har både udregningen pr. 100 g og pr. to stykker, og har derfor i udgangspunktet samme fordele og ulemper som format 2.

Fordelen og ulempen ved format 3 er således to sider af samme sag:

- **Fordelen** ved format 3 er, at respondenterne godt kan lide at få begge udregninger, specielt fordi de så kan bruge ”100 g” til at sammenligne.
- **Ulempen** er, at format 3 risikerer at forvirre forbrugeren med det større antal oplysninger.

”Det kan meget hurtigt blive indviklet. Så enkelt som muligt er nu det bedste.” Kvinde, 43 år

Format III (pr. 100g og pr. portion)

PIZZA MED SKINKE Pakke indeholder 4 stykker	Ernæringsmæssig information	
	pr. 100g	pr. to stykker (250 g)
Energi	200 kcal / 850 kJ	510 kcal / 2140 kJ
Fedt	11 g	27 g
Kulhydrat	13 g	33 g
Protein	14 g	35 g

Format III	Lejlighedsvis	Potentielle
Positivt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Man kan forholde sig til portion og samtidig sammenligne med andre fødevarer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Den beholder det vante og fortæller noget nyt
Negativt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forvirrende, fordi det kun skal være pr. 100 g. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alt for forvirrende Overflødigt med to stykker, for meget at læse

Tendensen er, at når udregningen er af *to* stykker, hvor det samlede totalindhold er *fire* stykker, forvirres respondenterne. Oplysningerne er de samme som på format 1, men i kombination med oplysningerne om 100 g. bliver det en smule mere forvirrende.

"Det er dobbeltkonfekt både at have for 100 g. og for to stykker. Jeg vil hellere have anden information, og jeg mangler stadig ADI." Kvinde, 29 år

Kombinationen af oplysninger på format 3 kan være for forvirrende for respondenterne, som føler sig en smule overvældede af al denne information, og derfor vender tilbage til at understrege vigtigheden af, at næringsdeklarationen er **enkel** frem for alt.

"Den sidste information gør mig forvirret – det med to stykker". Mand 46 år

"Så enkelt som muligt er vigtigt." Kvinde 43 år.

Således kan vi konkludere, at **mængden af informationer** kan virke hæmmende for respondenternes afkodning af næringsdeklarationen. Respondenterne fokuserer i værste fald mere på mængden af informationerne end informationen i sig selv og bliver derfor demotiverede i deres informationssøgning.

Format IV. Overordnet

Format IV er det format, som er sværest for respondenterne at forstå. Det modtages positivt, at ADI er opgivet. Denne oplysning er efterlyst af flere respondenter i forbindelse med de øvrige formater. Den negative kritik handler om, at næringsdeklarationen bliver for uoverskuelig, og respondenterne forvirres.

Format 4 er det format, som de fleste respondenter blandt de lejlighedsvis brugere bedst kan lide, men respondenterne generelt har ikke forudsætningerne for at afkode informationerne. De lejlighedsvis brugere er lidt bedre til at læse format 4 og har bedre forståelse af det, end de potentielle brugere.

Svagheden ved format 4 er, at respondenterne er nødt til at forklare hinanden, hvordan næringsdeklarationen skal tolkes. Det er en svaghed, fordi indkøb som regel foretages alene og næringsdeklarationen derfor læses alene.

Respondenterne har ikke hinanden at støtte sig til i en indkøbssituation, og derfor skal næringsdeklaration være umiddelbart let at afkode. For få respondenter har reelt udbytte af format IV.

Format IV (pr. portion og som procent af anbefalet daglig ind- tagelse ADI) *

PIZZA MED SKINKE Pakke indeholder 4 stykker	Ernæringsmæssig information pr. portion = to stykker (250 g)	
Energi	510 kcal / 2140 kJ	
	% ADI *	
Fedt	27 g	42 %
Kulhydrat	33 g	12 %
Protein	35 g	46 %

* Procentdel af ADI (anbefalet daglig indtagelse) er baseret på en kost med 2000 kcal. Din ADI kan være højere eller lavere afhængigt af dit energibehov.

Format IV	Lejlighedsvis	Potentielle
Positivt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Den har ADI oplysninger • Tilbyder mere information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Den er en hjælp til slankekur • Energi indtagelsen for daglig kost er medtaget
Negativt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mangler oplysninger om 100 g. • Uoverskuelig, er svær at sammenligne med andre varetyper – kræver kendskab til området • Teksten om ADI er forvirrende 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeg skulle have forståelse / forudsætninger for at forstå og dermed få glæde af oplysningerne om ADI • Uoverskuelig alt for megen tekst

De potentielle brugere har ikke forudsætningerne for at få fuldt udbytte af oplysningerne på format 4 og føler, at formatet bliver meget uoverskueligt. Disse respondenter vil ikke føle format 4 som incitament til at søge yderligere informationer og vil ikke gøre dem i stand til at foretage et oplyst valg.

Udregningen af ADI er som nævnt blevet efterspurgt i grupperne, men tendensen er, at udregningen forvirrer mere end den gavner. De lejlighedsvis brugere har en ide om, hvordan man bruger disse oplysninger. F.eks. er der uklarhed om, hvorvidt de 42% ADI for fedt betyder, at man har fået 42% af dagens samlede fedtindhold, eller om man har fået for meget (42% i forhold til de anbefalede 30%).

Følgende ordveksling mellem to respondenter illustrerer, hvilken tvivl der opstår:

"Det kan være relevant nok at have oplysninger, der forholder det til kroppen, men det skal være mere overskueligt." Mand, 28 år, potentiel

"Hvad for en krop? Skal en stor og en lille mand have det samme?"

Kvinde, 40 år, potentiel

Det er primært angivelserne i procent og fodnoten, der forvirrer.

Lister

Indledning

I dette afsnit gennemgås lister over næringsstoffer A-D. Først gennemgås den fuldstændige bruttoliste (hvis indhold er identisk med liste D) og derefter en positiv og negativ kritik til hver enkelt liste.

Respondenterne har udfyldt individuelle bedømmelser af hver liste. Disse besvarelser kan ses grafisk afbilledet i bilag A. Begge målgrupper er slået sammen til en.

Bruttoliste

Energi

Fedt

– mættet + transfedt *

Kulhydrater

– sukker **

– fibre

Protein

Natrium (som salt)

Gennemgående fokuserer respondenterne på fedt og sukker, og således også ved modtagelsen af listerne. Ved diskussion af bruttolisten vurderer respondenterne derfor fedt som det vigtigste næringsstof, der skal oplyses om, og herefter prioriteres sukker højest, efterfulgt af fibre og protein.

Læsning af næringsdeklARATIONER

Det skal tages i betragtning, at respondenterne er vant til at læse en næringsdeklARATION, der indeholder stoffer fra liste B, og disse stoffer er derfor mere genkendelige og antages derfor som grundlæggende mere vigtige. Således kan vi se, at respondenterne primært fokuserer på de næringsstoffer, de kender. Respondenterne fokuserer altså ikke på f.eks. protein, fordi de ikke har forudsætningerne for det.

Liste	Lejlighedsvis brugere (gruppe 1)	Lejlighedsvis brugere (gruppe 2)	Potentielle brugere (gruppe 3)	Potentielle brugere (gruppe 4)
Liste A – kort liste	0	0	0	0
Liste B – gældende liste	1	0	5	0
Liste C – længere liste	0	0	0	2
Liste D – omfattende liste	9	5	4	9

Liste D mest populær

Tre grupper vælger liste D som den bedste liste. Kun gruppen af ældre potentielle vælger liste B. Listen har flest muligt oplysninger, og holdningen synes at være, at så kan forbrugeren vælge de oplysninger, som han finder mest nyttige. Liste D har udspecificerede fedttyper og sukker, hvilket har været efterspurgt blandt respondenterne.

Valget af liste D skal ses i lyset af, at det, respondenterne bruger næringsdeklarationen til, er dels at undersøge fedt og sukker, dels at sikre sig gennemskuelighed i fødevarerproduktet. Altså at sikre sig så stor viden om produktet som muligt.

Respondenterne ser negativt på fodnoter (*) og betegnelser, de ikke forstår. Således henter de ikke nogen brugbar viden ud af, at sukkersammensætningen er mono- og disakkarider.

Liste A

Listen anses for at være **mangelfuld**, fordi den er så kort, og ønsket om gennemskuelighed opfyldes ikke på denne liste. Således siger en respondent:

"Den er ikke informativ. En lykkepose"

Mand, 40 år

Ved liste A efterspørges specielt protein og kulhydrater.

Liste A (kort liste * over næringsstoffer):

LISTE A
Energi
Fedt

* I umiddelbar nærhed af produktets navn.

Liste B

Gennemgående indeholder liste B det respondenterne betragter som **standard**oplysninger, og de mest **væsentlige** oplysninger. Ved Liste B er respondenterne mere tilfredse end ved A, men mangler yderligere opdeling af fedt og sukker. Samtidig udtrykkes det gennemgående dilemma som mange af respondenterne står i, når det gælder listerne. Nemlig, at de ønsker mange oplysninger, men ikke altid ved, hvad de skal bruge dem til.

"Umiddelbart ville jeg tænke, at jeg skulle vide alt, men om jeg kunne bruge dem til noget, ved jeg ikke."

Kvinde, 29 år

Alligevel efterspørger især deltagerne fra de lejlighedsvis grupper at få stofferne mere udspecificeret.

"Den udspecificerer ikke for sukker, fibre etc., og det er måske lidt problematisk, at vi ikke får oplyst alle næringsstoffer."

Kvinde, 23 år

Liste B (gældende liste over næringsstoffer):

LISTE B
Energi
Protein
Kulhydrat
Fedt

Liste C Ved liste C begynder respondenternes krav langsomt at blive opfyldt. De udspecificeres, hvilken slags fedt og sukker produktet indeholder. Kritikken drejer sig om stjernerne (*), som giver yderligere forklaring til listens indhold.

Liste C (længere liste over næringsstoffer):

LISTE C
Energi
Fedt
– hårdt fedt *
Sukker **
Fibre
Natrium (som salt)

* hårdt fedt = mættet fedt og transfedt.

** sukker = naturlige og tilsatte mono- og disakkarider.

Terminologi-forståelse Respondenterne efterlyser kulhydrater og protein, hvilket er bemærkelsesværdigt i forhold til, at de ikke tidligere har fokuseret på dette. Mange af respondenterne forstår ikke, hvad mono- og disakkarider er. Så i liste C illustreres netop det, at forbrugeren får mange oplysninger, som han ikke nødvendigvis ved, hvad han skal bruge til. Det viser os, at selvom respondenterne ikke nødvendigvis bruger disse oplysninger aktivt, så har de dog en bevidsthed om, at oplysningerne er vigtige.

Liste D Hovedparten af respondenterne foretrækker som sagt liste D, fordi den har flere oplysninger. Fordelen ved liste D er, at alle behov for oplysninger bliver dækket. Ulempen kan være, at respondenter, som ikke er så trænede læsere af næringsdeklamationer, dybest set ikke får udbytte af oplysningerne.

Liste D (omfattende liste over næringsstoffer):

LISTE D
Energi
Fedt
– mættet + transfedt *
Kulhydrater
– sukker **
– fibre
Protein
Natrium (som salt)

* hårdt fedt = mættet fedt og transfedt.

** sukker = naturlige og tilsatte mono- og disakkarider.

Liste D forvirrer f.eks. med sine oplysninger om typer af kulhydrater

"Der er for mange navne på. Kulhydrater kan godt undværes"

Kvinde, 26 år

Generelt efterlyses det at få flere oplysninger inden for "rammen", fodnoter er generende og kan være med til at forhindre, at respondenterne læser hele næringsdeklarationen.

Oplysningerne om type af fedt, som mange respondenter har efterlyst, gives i liste D, men det kommer nemt til at forvirre. Respondenterne har for en dels vedkommende viden om, at der er forskel på mættet fedt og transfedt, men når de står med oplysningerne foran sig, bliver de i tvivl om, hvad betegnelserne står for. De respondenter, der nævner to typer af fedt, taler primært om mættet og umættede fedtsyrer. Pointen er, at de er bevidste om, at der er forskellige typer af fedt, og at de er gode og dårlige, men derudover kan de ikke anvende denne viden.

"Liste D er måske lidt begrebsforvirrende."

Mand, 36 år

Ved diskussionen af liste D illustreres det atter, at de potentielle brugere primært læser næringsdeklarationer, når de møder et nyt produkt.

"På et nyt produkt jeg ikke kender, ville jeg med interesse læse om mættede og umættede fedtsyrer."

Kvinde, 51 år

Fremtidig oplysning

Indledning

Diskussionen af muligheder inden for fremtidig oplysning - altså hvordan man sætter forbrugeren bedre i stand til at læse næringsdeklarationer - blev ikke gennemført i alle grupper, pga. tidsmangel. Derfor er det ikke muligt at give bud på, hvad respondenterne i alle fire grupper mener.

En gruppe af lejlighedsvis brugere og en gruppe af potentielle brugere nåede dog at vende spørgsmålet. De to grupper mente entydigt, at oplysningen bør være på niveau med en brochure eller med undervisning i skolens hjemmekundskabstimer. Respondenterne har ikke tiltro til, at en mere omfattende oplysning vil virke, et kursus er alt for massivt for almindelige forbrugere.

Country report: Sweden

Demografi

32 respondenter deltog i undersökningen, därav 21 kvinnor och 11 män. Respondenterna var i åldrarna 23-60 år.

En blandning av yrken var representerade i undersökningen, däribland; tapetserare, verkstadsarbetare, produktchef, kriminolog, chaufför, kulturarbetare, lärare, sjukskötare, studeranden, försäkringsmäklare, vårdare, säljare, fritidspedagog, neuropsykolog.

Vidare kom respondenterna från olika förorter kring Stockholm, samt från innerstaden.

I grupperna med *Occasional Users* representerade respondenterna väl rekryteringskriterierna. De läser näringsdeklarationer regelbundet, och har någon eller god kunskap om vad som bör ingå i näringsdeklarationer.

När det gäller *Potential Users* fanns en märkbar skillnad mellan de två åldersgrupperna. I den yngre gruppen var kunskapen om näringsdeklarationer mycket låg, vilket väl speglade det faktum att de mycket sällan använder dessa. I den äldre gruppen var kunskapen däremot mycket hög, mer jämförbar med grupperna med *Occasional Users*. Kanske är kunskapen om näringslära högre bland äldre generellt, eller uppger äldre att de läser deklarationer mer sällan än vad som faktiskt är fallet, kanske för att de känner att de *borde*. Eftersom endast en grupp genomförts med denna profil kan dock inga slutsatser dras om huruvida den höga kunskapen är typisk för denna målgrupp.

Definition av näringsdeklaration

I princip är grupperna överens om vad en näringsdeklaration är:

“En näringsdeklaration uppger näringsvärdet i en matvara.”

“Den uppger hur nyttig maten är.”

Däremot när det gäller kunskap om, och intresse för näringsdeklarationer skiljde sig grupperna åt.

Naturligt nog var *Occasional Users* mer intresserade och mer medvetna om vad en näringsdeklaration är och vad som bör ingå. Men även den äldre gruppen *Potential Users* var intresserade och hade relativt hög kunskap. En hypotes är att de äldre är generellt bättre bevandrade i näringslära, och har med sig en grundläggande kunskap, även om de inte idag brukar läsa näringsdeklarationer. På grundval av denna undersökning kan dock ingen generalisering göras, det är osäkert om detta är typiskt för denna målgrupp.

Occasional Users och Äldre Potential Users

Kunskapen om näringsdeklarationer är i dessa grupper god, man kunde väl ange vad som ingår i en näringsdeklaration:

- Fett
- Kolhydrater
- Protein
- Kalorier / energi

Som övriga poster, men som inte finns med på alla varor, nämns;

- Vitaminer
- Mineraler

I grupperna finns ett tydligt intresse av näringsinnehållet i matvaror;

“Det handlar om välbefinnande.”

“En hälsofråga.”

“Det handlar om det som är nyttigt i en matvara.”

Yngre Potential Users

Den yngre gruppen av *Potential Users* var den med minst kunskap. Gruppen blandade lätt ihop näringsdeklarationen med innehållsdeklarationen. Det rådde osäkerhet kring vad som ingår i en näringsdeklaration. Man uppgav kalorier och fett som säkra alternativ. Vidare gissade man på diverse ämnen; järn, fosfor, kalcium, vitaminer.

Denna grupp pratar om näringsdeklarationer i andra termer, jämfört med övriga grupper:

“Tråkigheter på förpackningar.”

“Helt ointressant.”

“Tråkig och ointressant.”

“Det är vilseledande marknadsföring.”

“Små bokstäver och liten text.”

Användande av deklarationer

Näringsdeklarationer används främst i jämförande syfte. Man vill välja en vara med lagom mycket eller lite innehåll.

Oavsett målgrupp används näringsdeklarationen på samma sätt. Det som skiljer målgrupperna åt är kunskapen. I grupper med användare har man större kunskap om hur mycket t.ex. fett eller protein en speciell vara bör innehålla. Grupperna med potentiella användare får istället i högre grad lita till den jämförelse de gör i butik.

Näringsdeklarationer anger hur nyttig maten är, vilket också Nyckelhålet anses vara ett mått på. Är en vara märkt med Nyckelhålet anses det ofta vara nog, speciellt bland *Potential Users*, men även bland *Occasional Users*. Man behöver inte läsa på varan, eftersom den redan är stämplad som nyttig.

Occasional Users anger att de läser näringsdeklarationer mellan någon gång i månaden och ett par gånger i veckan. Det vanliga är att när man vill pröva någon ny vara tittar man på deklarationen för att jämföra med den man brukar köpa. När det gäller ost och vissa mejerivaror tittar man på fetthalten endast, för att snabbt kunna välja önskvärt alternativ.

“Jag gör det när det kommer nyheter. Om det är flingor till barnen till exempel, då vill jag veta om dom är lika nyttiga som dom jag brukar köpa.”

“Jag vill kunna välja, det finns så otroligt mycket på hyllorna nu.”

“Jag tittar alltid på färdiglagad mat, jag är skeptisk där, jag vill vara säker på att det finns proteiner.”

Potential Users tittar ytterst sällan på näringsdeklarationer. Om man gör det är det vanligen för att kontrollera fettinnehåll i mejeriprodukter eller ost, eller för att kontrollera kaloriinnehåll i färdiglagade matvaror. I båda fallen vill man gärna ha något att jämföra med, eftersom den generella kunskapen är låg.

Den yngre gruppen är mer ointresserad och mer okunnig.

“Jag minns inte när jag tittade sist... jo, det är när jag försöker gå ner i vikt.”

“Nej det är bara för dom som sportar extremt mycket.”

“Jag vet att jag kan åka skidor en hel dag på havregryn, och att chips och godis är onyttigt. Jag behöver inte mer.”

I den äldre gruppen är kunskapen högre. Anledningen till att de trots intresse, ändå inte tittar ännu oftare, är att de för det mesta känner till innehållet på de varor de köper.

“Man har ju kommit in i vanor, jag köper mest samma saker, och jag vet ju ungefär vad de innehåller.”

Beteende och vanor när det gäller näringsdeklarationer

Diskussionen om beteende och vanor inleddes med en segmentering av ett antal olika matvaror. Gruppen fick anvisningen att sortera varorna efter hur de är intresserade av att läsa näringsdeklarationen.

Occasional users

För Occasional Users avser listningen vilka varor de läser näringsdeklarationen på idag, respektive vilka varor de inte läser på idag:

<i>Läser</i>	<i>Läser inte</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pizza• Frukostflingor• Soppa• Ost• Äppeljuice, koncentrerad samt utspädd• Majonnäs, vanlig samt fettsnål• Havregryn	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Smör• Salami• Kött• Godis (vingummi, Bounty)• Smörgåspålägg, skinka• Grönsaker, frysta• Kyckling• Spagetti• Mjölk• Chips• Ketchup

Varor där man tittar på näringsdeklarationen

Varor där det finns många alternativ

Ger möjlighet att jämföra innehållet mellan varorna. Leta efter det mest fettsnåla eller kanske proteinrika alternativet, beroende på behov.

Exempel på varor är frukostflingor, smörgåspålägg, mejerivaror.

“Jag tittade på frukostflingorna härom dagen, det är intressant, för det visar sig att dom man tror är nyttigast inte alls är det. Det kan vara viktigt att titta på dom först innan man köper dom.”

Varor där variationen är stor mellan alternativen

Mejerivaror och ost är typexempel, variationen i fetthinnehåll är stor, en jämförelse ger möjlighet att välja eller välja bort, främst beroende på fetthinnehåll.

“Jag tittar alltid på grädden innan jag köper den, det finns så otroligt många alternativ att välja på.”

“Majonnäsen här till exempel, det finns både lätt och vanlig, då måste man titta, och avväga. Är fettigt viktigt, eller smaken.”

Varor som innehåller en mängd olika ingredienser

För varor med många ingredienser är det viktigt att veta näringsvärde. Vid köp av färdiglagade rätter till exempel bör man kunna se näringsinnehåll, och därmed avgöra hur “nyttig” maten är.

“Köper jag en pulversoppa till exempel vill jag titta först så att jag vet att den innehåller någonting mer än kalorier. Annars står man sig inte till middagen.”

“Det finns så mycket ingredienser i färdiglagad mat, man kan inte veta om det är nyttigt eller inte.”

Varor med högt vitamininnehåll (eller mineraler)

Vet man att varan innehåller vitaminer, främsta exemplet är juicer, vill man gärna välja alternativet med de flesta vitaminerna. Därför tittar man gärna på juicer, oavsett om de är färdigblandade eller koncentrerade.

Varor man inte tittar på näringsdeklarationen

Basvaror

Basvaror såsom kyckling, kött och spagetti tittar man sällan på. Anledningen är att variationen är liten. Innehållet i en kyckling är lika vilken kyckling man än köper. Det finns ingen jämförande funktion. Vidare vet man att kyckling är ett nyttigt alternativ, jämfört med andra sorters kött. Samma gäller för spagetti, ris, gryn etc. Innehållet anses vara mer eller mindre samma för de alternativ som finns på hyllan.

Varor man redan känner till innehållet för

Mjölk, smör och andra mejerivaror tittar man inte heller på. Det vill säga när man köper det man alltid köpt. Man vet redan vad de olika sorterna har för fetthalt, och vilket smör man föredrar. Ska man däremot pröva ett nytt alternativ hör mejerivaror till de man vill titta på.

Godis, chips

Godis och chips är man mindre intresserad av. Det är onyttigt från början. Ska man äta godis vet man redan att inte är nyttigt. Valet är gjort, och graden av hur mycket fett de innehåller är ointressant.

Grönsaker

Med samma princip som för chips och godis vet man redan att grönsaker är nyttiga. Köper man grönsaker är det ett hälsosamt val, och den exakta nivån av näringsinnehåll är mindre viktig.

Potential users

Potential users läser näringsdeklarationerna sällan, och då av olika anledningar. Sorteringen genomfördes därför inte med avseende på vilka varor de läser och inte, utan på vad de *skulle kunna vara intresserade* av, respektive inte.

<i>Skulle kunna vara intressant</i>	<i>Ointressant</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pizza• Frukostflingor• Soppa• Bröd• Godis (vingummi, Bounty)• Majonnäs• Chips• Ost (äldre grupp)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paté• Salami• Skinka• Kyckling• Kött• Juice• Mjölk• Spagetti• Havregryn• Smör• Grönsaker• Ketchup• Ost (yngre grupp)

Trots att Potential Users tittar mer sällan på näringsdeklarationer än Occasional Users, är det liknande principer som råder, och samma saker man är intresserad av; en jämförelse mellan olika varor, med målet lagt i fett och kalori.

Potential users anser långt fler varor vara ointressanta, med motivet “det köper jag ändå”.

“Det är ingen idé att titta på allt det man använder varje dag, det köper man ju ändå.”

“Ost och smör använder man varenda dag, det gör jag oavsett, jag bryr mig inte om vad det står på etiketten.”

En ytterligare skillnad mellan grupperna är att Potential Users kan titta på “onyttiga” varor bara av nyfikenhet. Många i grupperna var intresserade av att veta hur många kalorier som fanns i en chipspåse eller en Bounty. Samtidigt som detta inte skulle påverka valet av godis/chips, utan bara stilla nyfikenheten.

Behovet av information

Eftersom behoven är samma för Occasional Users och Potential Users redovisas de gemensamt nedan. Följande principer diskuterades främst i Occasional Users grupperna, men bekräftades alltså i Potential Users grupperna. Skillnaden mellan de två målgrupperna är främst hur ofta / sällan de läser på näringsdeklarationerna, samt att kunskapsnivån i gruppen med Yngre Potential Users var påtagligt lägre.

Behovet av information varierar beroende på vilken typ av vara man köper.

Fett

Fett är främst av intresse där det finns många alternativ till varan, samt ofta att fett är viktig del av varan. Exempel är mejerivaror och ost. För att kunna välja den mjölk, grädde, smör, creme fraiche eller ost man vill ha, kontrollerar man först fetthalten.

Detta är intressant för de flesta, och även de som inte läser näringsdeklarationer kontrollerar ofta fetthalten i dessa produkter före köp. Speciellt om man köper en vara man inte köpt förut, eller på sällanvaror. Fetthalten jämförs mellan de olika alternativen och därefter väljer man vara.

I barnfamiljer är det viktigt att mejerivaror innehåller fett, medan det för övriga är intressant att hålla fetthalten nere.

Kalorier

I färdiglagade rätter, eller i varor som ersätter en måltid, vill man ofta titta på kaloriinnehållet. Exempel är alla frysta och färska färdiglagade rätter, färdiga smörgåsar, yoghurt etc.

Kaloriinnehåll är främst intressant för de som försöker hålla vikten under kontroll eller som försöker minska i vikt.

Det är vanligast i grupperna med occasional users, medan potential users ofta äter det de vill ha, och säger sig veta ungefär vad som är nyttigt och onyttigt ändå.

Protein

Proteiner är intressant i basvaror, till exempel frukostflingor, men också i färdiglagade maträtter.

Proteininnehållet är intressant främst för Occasional Users.

För basvaror är målet att varan innehåller så mycket proteiner som möjligt. För färdiglagad mat är det viktigt att jämföra mellan olika alternativ, ju mer protein desto bättre. Innehåller rätten inget protein anses det inte vara en fullgod måltid.

Kolhydrater

Kolhydrater är främst intressant för de som sportar, och då främst i kombination med protein. För att orka och för att kunna prestera i idrotten, vare sig det är på regelbunden basis eller tillfälligt, är det viktigt att äta hälsosamt.

Det är Occasional users som tittar efter kolhydrater, eller undantagsvis någon Potential User, men då vid speciella tillfällen.

Varor man saknar näringsdeklaration på är färsk frukt, färska grönsaker, detta främst eller endast för vitaminernas skull. På samma sätt som man är intresserad av vitamininnehållet i juicer, är man det av den färska frukten.

Vidare saknar man näringsdeklaration på bröd som köps i lösvikt. Främst Occasional Users, som är mer angelägna om att jämföra sina varor, önskar kunna jämföra innehållet i bröd, även om det inte är förpackat.

En bra näringsdeklaration

På frågan vad som utmärker en bra respektive en dålig näringsdeklaration anger man:

<i>Bra</i>	<i>Dåligt</i>
<p>DE FLESTA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Innehåller fett, kalorier och protein</i> • <i>Per 100 gram</i> • <i>Lätt att hitta på förpackningen</i> • <i>Lätt att förstå, tydlig</i> • <i>Enhetlig med övriga varor</i> <p>NÅGRA FÅ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Innehåller vitaminer och mineraler</i> • <i>Skiljer mellan mättat och fleromättat fett</i> • <i>Per portion</i> • <i>I förhållande till dagsbehov</i> 	<p>DE FLESTA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>För små bokstäver</i> • <i>Otydligt skrivet</i> • <i>För mycket information, svårt att hitta</i> <p>NÅGRA FÅ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Per portion</i> • <i>Förkortningar</i>

Tydlighet och *Enkelhet* är det viktigaste när det gäller deklarationerna. Om man tittar på deklarationen gör man det i butik, och ofta i jämförelse med andra varor. Man behöver därför hitta informationen, och kunna tyda den, snabbt.

För *mycket text* krånglar till och försvårar när man vill hitta snabbt. Likaså för liten text eller gömd text.

Vidare är det avgörande att näringsdeklarationen är angiven i ett *format* som gör det möjligt att jämföra mellan varor, till exempel per 100 gram.

För de mycket intresserade, eller för de som tycker det är intressant att ibland fördjupa sig, vill man ha *mycket information* i deklarationen, förutom fett, kalorier och protein även: vitaminer, mineraler, mättade/omättade fetter.

Även om den detaljerade informationen är intressant för några, är den allmänna uppfattningen att det försvårar när man letar den information man främst är intresserad av.

De fyra formaten

Format I (per 100 g):

PIZZA MED SKINKA	Näringsvärde per 100 g
Energi	200 kcal / 850 kJ
Fett	11 g
Kolhydrat	13 g
Protein	14 g

Attityderna till Format I är positiva. Formatet anger näringsvärdet per 100 gram. Formatet är lätt att förstå, och tillåter jämförelse mellan olika produkter.

Båda målgrupperna är överens om att angivelsen per 100 gram är den viktigaste. Övriga angivelser kan vara mer eller mindre intressanta, men bara förutsatt att per 100 gram också finns angivet.

I stort sett finns inga nackdelar med deklarationen. Inte för vardagligt bruk. I vissa situationer kan man önska mer information, till exempel innehåll per bit, men Format 1 väljs ändå som favorit, eftersom det är det *enklaste och mest överskådliga* alternativet. När mer information är inkluderad blir det svårare att hitta det viktigaste, det man oftast är ute efter.

Occasional users:

"Enkel och tydlig."

"Inget tjafs, det jag vill veta står klart och tydligt. Per 100g."

"Kortfattad, koncentrerad information. Den är lättöverskådlig och ger tillräcklig information."

Potential users:

"Något man känner igen."

"Lätt att förstå. Att jämföra blir lätt."

"Enkel och bra, begränsad mängd information. I affären har man inte tid eller ork att sätta sig in i hur en komplicerad information är uppbyggd."

Format II (per portion):

PIZZA MED SKINKA Förpackningen innehåller 4 bitar	Näringsvärde för två bitar (250 g)
Energi	510 kcal / 2140 kJ
Fett	27 g
Kolhydrat	33 g
Protein	35 g

Attityderna till Format II är relativt negativa. Vissa uppger det som en fördel att angivelsen är per portion. Men man är överens om att det inte får vara på bekostnad av information per 100 gram.

Vidare säger man att angivelse per portion kan vara intressant för pizza, dvs. det exempel som togs upp i formatet, men att det inte är intressant för andra varor. Ska man köpa flingor, spaghetti,

eller ris, är en portion mycket individuell. Vissa vill ha större, andra mindre, portioner. Att ange per portion för den typen av varor anses inte relevant.

Occasional users:

"Den är fortfarande tydlig, men jag vill ha med per 100g. Annars är den tydlig, lagom med text."

"I de fall produkten är uppdelad i bitar är informationen bra, ej vid beräknade portioner."

Potential users:

"Mycket enkel och tydlig information. Går ej att missförstå."

"Bra att det framkommer antal bitars näringsvärde, men det saknas vad 100g innehåller. Så här går det ju inte att jämföra med andra varor."

Format III (per 100 g och per portion):

PIZZA MED SKINKA Förpackningen innehåller 4 bitar	Näringsvärde	
	per 100 g	för två bitar (250 g)
Energi	200 kcal / 850 kJ	510 kcal / 2140 kJ
Fett	11 g	27 g
Kolhydrat	13 g	33 g
Protein	14 g	35 g

Format III har fördelen att innehålla informationen både per 100 gram och per portion. Det är möjligt att läsa både hur mycket den enskilda biten innehåller, samt jämföra med andra produkter om man vill.

Däremot bör beaktas att informationen per portion bara är intressant för varor förpackade i färdiga bitar eller portioner. Och inte för beräknade portioner på till exempel ris eller frukostflingor.

Format 3 är tydligt uppställt, och man kan enkelt hitta den information man vill. Den tydliga layouten gör det möjligt att snabbt hitta rätt.

Occasional users:

"Lite mycket text. Vill bara ha med per 100g."

"Bra information men för mycket."

"Lite bra med information om 2 bitar."

Potential users:

"100g per portion är med och den är lättolkad."

"Lätt att förstå, både 100g och 250 gram, det är bra."

"Informationen "går in" direkt. Man behöver ej tänka två gånger."

Format IV (per portion och som procent av rekommenderat dagligt intag, RDI):

PIZZA MED SKINKA Förpackningen innehåller 4 bitar	Näringsvärde per portion = två bitar (250 g)
Energi	510 kcal / 2140 kJ
	% RDI *
Fett	27 g 42 %
Kolhydrat	33 g 12 %
Protein	35 g 46 %

* Procent av RDI (rekommenderat dagligt intag) baseras på en kost som ger 2000 kcal. Ditt RDI kan vara högre eller lägre beroende på ditt energibehov. I beräkningar används 55 E% för kolhydrater och 15 E% för protein.

Formatet ratas främst av två anledningar; dels innehåller det inte informationen per 100 gram, dels är layouten otydlig. Layouten gör att det blir svårt att hitta den information man söker, den är till och med så otydlig att man blir osäker på vilket information som finns med över huvud taget.

Vidare är det en stor nackdel att angivelse per 100 gram saknas. Återigen är jämförelse mellan produkter ett huvudmål när man läser näringsdeklarationer.

Fördelen med formatet är RDI. Att få veta näringsinnehållet i förhållande till RDI är intressant, eller kan åtminstone vara det vid vissa tillfällen. Man saknar dock en förklaring till hur RDI är uträknat, och om det behöver anpassas individuellt.

RDI är främst intressant för färdiglagade maträtter och yoghurt. Varor som utgör en måltid, och man är intresserad av hur mycket eller lite av RDI det innehåller. Här saknar man dock vitamininnehåll. Vitaminer är ett av de främsta områden där man önskar veta om man uppfyller det dagliga behovet.

Occasional users:

"För plottrig, onödig text, som jag inte behöver veta. Jag förstår ingenting."

"För mycket text. Inte intresserad av RDI."

"Allt för mycket information."

Potential users:

"För mycket information. Orkar ej ta in alla siffror."

"RDI finns med, det är bra men den är för rörig."

"Jag är även intresserad av RDI - främst vad gäller vitaminer och mineraler. Kanske mindre vad gäller fett och kolhydrater."

En jämförelse mellan formaten

Vid en jämförelse av formaten är Format 1 det starkaste förslaget. Format I är enkelt och tydligt, vilket är en förutsättning för att man skall kunna hitta sin information. Vidare anges näringsvärden per 100 gram, vilket är en förutsättning för att man ska kunna göra en jämförelse mellan olika varor.

Även om det finns vissa varor där man bara vill försäkra sig om protein eller kaloriinnehåll (främst färdiglagad mat) är det sällan man läser näringsdeklarationer utan att jämföra mellan varor.

Format II accepteras, med tanke på att exempel produkten var pizza. Intresset för angivelse per portion för annat än stycke varor är mycket litet.

Format III uppskattas för sin tydliga layout, och återigen accepteras angivelsen per portion på grund av varan. När respondenterna rankade förslagen (se nedan) tog man inte hänsyn till att den testade näringsdeklarationen gällde pizza, varför formatet rankades lågt.

Format IV blev ratat av alla. Detta på grund av två saker; den otydliga layouten och avsaknaden av angivelse per 100 gram.

Det optimala formatet är i princip Format 1, eller möjligen layouten från Format 3, men med angivelsen per portion utbytt mot RDI.

En ranking av de fyra formaten gav:

	<i>Occasional Users 23-40 år</i>	<i>Occasional Users 41-60 år</i>	<i>Potential Users 23-40 år</i>	<i>Potential Users 41-60 år</i>	<i>Totalt</i>
<i>Format I</i> – per 100 g	6	7	1	3	<i>17</i>
<i>Format II</i> – per portion	1	0	0	2	<i>3</i>
<i>Format III</i> – per 100 g och per portion	1	1	7	1	<i>10</i>
<i>Format IV</i> – per portion och % av RDI	0	0	0	2	<i>2</i>

De fyra listorna

Lista A (kort lista * över näringsämnen):

LISTA A
Energi
Fett

* I omedelbar anslutning till livsmedlets beteckning

Lista A är för kort. Främst är det proteininnehållet som saknas. Protein är tillsammans med energi och fett det man främst söker på en näringsdeklaration. Inte ens Potential users ansåg Lista A vara tillräcklig.

De varor där Lista A möjligen kan vara tillräcklig, är de varor där man *endast* söker fett eller kaloriinnehåll. Exempel är om man vill jämföra olika margarinsorter, eller andra mejeriprodukter. För övriga produkter anses alltså listan vara otillräcklig.

Occasional users

"För kort."

"Den är inte komplett."

"Väl kort och innehållslös."

Potential users

"För innehållsfattigt!"

"Det är ingen mening att läsa en lista som inte innehåller någon information."

Lista B (gällande lista över näringsämnen):

LISTA B
Energi
Protein
Kolhydrat
Fett

Lista B är den mest uppskattade listan. Den innehåller den information man främst söker, och den är enkel och tydlig att förstå. Man kan hitta det man vill, men det är ingen onödig information eller text som försvårar letandet.

Möjligen säger man att ytterligare information kan vara intressant för vissa varor eller vid vissa tillfällen. Men man vill hellre ha en kortare förteckning för alla varor än en för lång för alla varor.

Occasional users

"Enkel men ändå heltäckande."

"Kort och koncis. Allt som behövs står med".

"Kortfattad och snabböverskådlig"

"Kort, lagom information."

Potential users

"Tillräcklig information, lättläst, lagom."

"Enkel information, inget som man ej känner till."

Lista C (längre lista över näringsämnen):

LISTA C
Energi
Fett
– hårt fett *
Sockerarter **
Kostfiber
Natrium (som salt)

* hårt fett = mättat fett och transfett

** sockerarter = naturliga och tillsatta mono- och disackarider

Lista C är ett mellanting mellan Lista B och Lista D. Men i jämförelse med Lista B är den inte lika lättöverskådlig, och den innehåller inte protein. Likaså står den sig kort i en jämförelse med Lista D. Vill man nu fördjupa sig i informationen får man mer i Lista D, samt man saknar återigen proteinangivelsen. För de mindre intresserade börjar informationen bli så omfattande att man inte längre vet vad allt i deklarationen är. Vad är hårt fett, är det nyttigt eller onyttigt? Sockerarter likaså, alla är inte säkra på vad mono- och disackarider är för något, och huruvida det är nyttigt eller onyttigt.

Den fördel som nämns med listan är att den skiljer på det hårda fett i angivelsen (främst Occasional Users). Det finns inga varor man skulle vilja se Lista C på.

Occasional Users

"Allt som behövs finns inte och grötig."

"För mycket information för allmänheten och rörig."

"Lite mittemellan enkel och för mycket."

Potential Users

"Rätt komplett men saknar t ex protein."

"För mycket information."

"Hårt fett, vad är det? Det känns påhittat."

Lista D

LISTA D
Energi
Fett
– mättat + transfett
Kolhydrater
– sockerarter *
– kostfiber
Protein
Natrium (som salt)

* sockerarter = naturliga och tillsatta mono- och disackarider

Lista D är uppskattad för sitt kompletta innehåll. Den information som anges i Lista D kan vara intressant, även om inte vid alla inköp.

Speciellt för varor med flera ingredienser, eller för varor där variationen mellan varianterna är stor.

Men även om man tycker informationen är intressant kan den vara i längsta laget. Nackdelen med listan är att den myckna informationen försvårar när man ska leta efter den information man behöver.

Även Potential users, och de som inte riktigt vet vad allt betyder på Lista C, säger att den kan vara intressant. Åtminstone är det en fördel om den här informationen finns *när man behöver den*.

En förklaring till de olika begreppen skulle vara en fördel. Även om man inte vill ha den på förpackningen. (Se vidare under rubriken Framtida information nedan.)

Occasional users

"Allt som behövs står med men den är lite grötig."

"Innehåller för mycket ointressant."

"För mycket, man behöver förklaring, vad är sockerarter och transfett."

"Man måste vara dietist eller expert för att ha användning för alla fakta."

Potential users

"Tungläst men ändå mycket bra information."

"Lättfattlig, mycket information om t ex fetter och sockerarter."

"Mest "fullständig", skulle gilla att ha det så på varor."

En jämförelse mellan listorna

Vid en jämförelse av listorna faller Lista A och Lista C ut, och valet står mellan Lista B och Lista D.

Lista A ger inte den information som behövs. Det gör inte heller lista C, som istället ger onödig information, som försvårar läsandet.

Lista B anses vara den optimala. Eftersom den uppfyller de behov man *oftast* har när man läser näringsdeklarationer. Lista D uppskattas också, eftersom den innehåller information man skulle kunna vara intresserad av *ibland*.

När respondenterna väljer, är det Lista B som blir favoriten. Men många säger att en kombination av B och D, där B är markerad och tydlig, med stor text, och Lista D är ett mindre komplement, skulle vara den optimala lösningen. Om det får plats på förpackningen...

En ranking av listorna gav följande resultat.

	Occasional users 23-40 år	Occasional users 41-60 år	Potential users 23-40 år	Potential users 41-60 år	Totalt
Lista A Kort lista	0	0	0	0	0
Lista B Nuvarande lista	5	4	6	0	15
Lista C Lång lista	1	2	1	2	6
Lista D Omfattande lista	2	2	1	6	11

Framtida information

Det finns ett visst intresse för vidare information om näringsinnehållet i matvaror. Lista D väcker vissa frågor. Vad är skillnaden på fetterna? Och sockret? Vad är nyttigt och inte?

Information som är relaterad till vardagen är den mest intressanta. Information om vad som är bra eller mindre bra att äta vid olika tillfällen till exempel. Om man ska träna, vad är viktigt? Om man vill få snabb energi? Finns långtidsverkande energi?

Begreppet RDI väckte visst intresse i grupperna. Frågor fanns; hur är det uträknat? Kan man anpassa det efter egna behov?

Den viktigaste kanalen för näringsinformation anses vara skolan, i alla fall som en mycket viktig grund.

För egen del vill man kunna söka upp informationen när man behöver den. Att kunna läsa en broschyr man hämtat i butiken, eller att söka upp informationen på en hänvisad internetsida är bra.

Det finns inget intresse för att engagera sig i frågan. Kurser eller föredrag är uteslutet. Intresset för information via TV är också mycket litet.

Den information man tar till sig är mer spontan och sporadisk, till exempel från en slumpmässigt upplöskad broschyr eller baksidan på en mjölkförpackning. Framförallt vill man välja själv när man får informationen.

Country report: Iceland

The moderator found the composition of the four groups excellent and quite fortunate.

Group 1, users, 23-40 years, had 10 participants: 4 men and 6 women aged 27-39 years.

Group 2, users, 41-60 years, had 7 participants: 5 men and 2 women aged 43-53 years.

Group 3, non-users, 41-60 years, had 9 participants: 6 men and 3 women aged 44-60 years.

Group 4, non-users, 23-40 years, had 9 participants: 6 men and 3 women aged 24-38 years.

There was a rather sharp difference in the discussions of users and non-users to the extent of non-users finding it more difficult to answer questions and orient themselves to the subject, as well as to form opinions on things they had hardly considered. However, the moderator's attention was caught by how dissimilar the two groups of different ages in the non-user segment were, where the older participants initially had serious problems conversing on nutritional values and their labeling. In fact, in the two participant groups using nutritional labeling there was little difference in the discussions, so age seems no prerequisite for participants to speak about the topic in a dissimilar way.

It must be mentioned that many participants at first confused ingredient lists with nutritional labels, besides many seeming to judge formats for nutritional labeling by the content of the list and the list by its appearance, i.e., every point seemed to influence the discussion in some way even though the moderator made every effort to clarify this as well as possible and correct various misunderstandings that presented themselves.

Nutritional labeling in general

Where, when, on what?

The participants had various ideas when the moderator mentioned nutritional labeling, most of them naming some nutrients such as fat, carbohydrates and protein. Also, calories, recommended daily intake, vitamins and the so-called e-substances were frequently mentioned, with some people naming all these items and others only one of the above. Many participants spoke a great deal about vitamins, finding them an important factor in nutritional labeling, even though they were not supposed to be discussed here. This reveals that when nutritional labels were spoken of, many participants did not fully realize what was included in such labeling, thinking vitamins and additives were part of them. It awakened the attention of the moderator that one participant in the younger group not using nutritional labels thought of "RDI" when nutritional labeling was mentioned despite not knowing what the abbreviation stood for.

Among the older participants not using nutritional labels it is obvious that many were unsure what the nutrients were. In fact, it may be said that a certain lack of acquaintance with general information on nutrition and nutrients appeared in both of the groups not using information on nutritional value. For example, one woman in the younger group did not know what protein was and another did not know what kcal stood for. Some declared that it stemmed from their having been at school so long ago that this information had long been forgotten, and disinterest in the subject doubtless contributes to this situation.

Participants' knowledge and use of nutritional labeling was thus vastly different; some of those observing nutritional labels read them on numerous categories of goods they are buying, others on few, although it may be said that most of them read labels on a few types of goods, above all on milk products and processed goods such as sausages and sandwich trimmings. It was also noted that most of them read the labeling on cereals (often while eating breakfast) and on meat products. The participants reading nutritional labeling read it both when shopping at the store and at home. *"At home – a person reads the back of the carton when eating yoghurt in the morning."* Those reading in the store stated they mostly read labels on goods there if they are buying something unfamiliar or if a new good is involved, as well as when a choice has to be made between two goods. Non-users read labels mostly on cornflakes, Cheerios, yoghurt and

processed foods, if they read nutritional labels at all, and many of them were for example unable to answer this question.

The difference between frequent users and non-users might be said to be above all that non users generally do not read them because of actual interest, as those do who read more often. They rather "*glance over them*" (non-user 23-40 years old), by chance such as when sitting at their morning cereal with a Cheerios box right in front of them.

When is nutritional labeling necessary?

Younger as well as older users of nutritional labeling found labels on nutrient values always to be important and applicable to nearly all goods; however, every group declared that labeling was particularly important if the good was processed or treated in some way. "*If I started reading some it would rather be on imported, processed food products. I trust them less*" (non-user aged 41-60 years). "*I frequently miss tables being on processed goods*" (user aged 23-40 years). Many participants reading nutritional labels agreed on the table usually being absent on various goods where they felt it should be: "... it is not where it most ought to be, for instance on sweets and foodstuffs that aren't quite so good" (user aged 23-40). Users also stated that quite often nutritional labels were missing on meats, carbonated beverages, products to put on bread, and bread itself, especially bread from bakeries and breads specially packed for low-price stores. These participants brought up that they are often annoyed by the absence of the table of nutritional values on goods.

The participants in both groups not using nutritional labeling thought such labeling mattered for them for and that they might start reading them if they had little children at home, if they wanted to improve their eating habits, if they wanted to lose weight, if they would be exercising and building up muscles, or when somebody in the home would suffer from some food allergy or illness. Therefore, the outstanding distinction between users and non-users may be perceived as the users finding labeling important all the time and on nearly all goods, while non-users associate nutritional labels primarily with special or more specific situations.

Why do participants read or not read nutritional labels?

In the younger as well as the older groups, users said they read nutritional labels out of interest in knowing what they are consuming, out of curiosity and out of the health movement and discussion which seems to have become a definite part of Icelandic culture: "... *finally it's just this huge opening-up, this culture that is going on now*" (user aged 23-40). Older participants who never or very seldom read nutritional labeling said they almost never *had* to read about the nutritional value of foodstuffs. Several participants said they do not think about what they are consuming and for that reason do not think of reading about the nutritional value of goods. Other reasons arising for why it was unnecessary to read labeling were the following: "*If I have a young child in the home, I buy whole milk because I know young children need fat*" (non-user aged 41-60), "*Although one doesn't read that, one feels one knows something about it, for instance that skyr (an Icelandic milk product) is rich in protein ...*" (non-user aged 23-40), "... *a person has already formed opinions, regardless of whether they are right or not*" (non-user aged 41-60), "*One trusts that they aren't selling something nasty to a person*" (non-user aged 41-60). It also came out that there was a certain laziness in not reading such labeling. Older participants (aged 41-60) usually not reading nutritional labeling said they generally did not have or take the time to read nutritional labels while shopping in the store, although one may wonder how far this explanation holds. One member of this group described occasionally reading nutritional labels if a new food product was involved to see what it was composed of. These participants said that if and when they read nutritional labeling they are mostly seeking to determine the fat content as well as what sort of fat it is, besides examining the product's sugar content and number of calories. According to the participants, the above indicates that interest in food and in what is consumed, along with having enough time, are definite prerequisites for reading nutritional labels.

Behaviour concerning nutritional labels

Cheese, milk, the Icelandic milk product *skyr*, and cake were among the goods they had read labeling on last, although those usually reading nutritional labels thought reading nutritional value was a rather unconscious act, so that many had difficulty stating when they had last read such labels or on what good, knowing only that it must have been recently and probably on one of their last shopping trips. Participants who seldom or never read nutritional labels said they had last read them on for instance a Cheerios box, milk carton, yoghurt and the new fat-free sauce associated with the prominent man "Gauji litli," and that they did this while they were consuming the goods. One might assume by this that those seldom or never reading nutritional values on goods do it by chance when sitting to eat.

The moderator had the participants divide certain categories of food products into two sorts, one a sort of goods they would read the labels on and the other a sort of goods on which they would not read labels. The group had to be fairly unanimous on the sorting, and it may be said that the division provides clear indications as to what categories of goods the participants read or would possibly read nutritional labels on.

Group 1: Users aged 23-40

<u>Would read on:</u>	The drink Frissi Fríski, mayonnaise, cornflakes, beef hamburger, packaged soups, cheese, meat spreads, ham, butter
<u>Would not read on:</u>	Oatmeal, frozen vegetables, snack chips, ketchup, pizza, the standard discount bread Heimilisbrauð, chicken breasts, all sweets, salami, Trópi orange juice, garlic bread, spaghetti

Group 2: Users aged 41-60

<u>Would read on:</u>	The drink Frissi Fríski, mayonnaise, beef hamburger, cheese, meat spreads, ham, butter, salami, Trópi orange juice, the standard discount bread Heimilisbrauð
<u>Would not read on:</u>	Oatmeal, frozen vegetables, snack chips, ketchup, ready-mixed sauces, pizza, garlic bread, chicken breasts, all sweets, cornflakes, spaghetti

Group 3: Non-users aged 41-60

<u>Would read on:</u>	Mayonnaise, butter, ham, meat spreads, snack chips, cheese
<u>Would not read on:</u>	Oatmeal, frozen vegetables, ketchup, pizza, the standard discount bread Heimilisbrauð, chicken breasts, all sweets, salami, Trópi orange juice, the drink Frissi Fríski, beef hamburger, cornflakes, garlic bread, ready-mixed sauces, spaghetti

Group 4: Non-users aged 23-40

<u>Would read on:</u>	Beef hamburger, ham
<u>Would not read on:</u>	Oatmeal, frozen vegetables, ketchup, pizza, the standard discount bread Heimilisbrauð, chicken breasts, all sweets, Trópi orange juice, the drink Frissi Fríski, salami, cornflakes, garlic bread, meat spreads, snack chips, cheese, butter, mayonnaise, ready-mixed sauces, spaghetti

The tables above show a stark difference between users and non-users of nutritional labeling. Those never or seldom reading nutritional labels mentioned only a few types of goods they would conceivably read labels on. Younger non-user participants named only two types of goods they believed they might possibly read labels on: beef hamburger and ham, saying they look for the fat content in beef hamburger. The older non-users included slightly more types of goods –

mayonnaise, butter, ham, meat spreads, snack chips, and cheese – but felt they would not read labels on beef hamburger like the younger group.

Obviously one can derive a certain pattern from this sorting. The moderator noted that users believed they read labels on only about half the goods offered and that these goods were nearly the same in both age groups: products to put on bread such as butter, cheese, meat spreads, salami and ham, along with mayonnaise, beef hamburger, the standard discount bread Heimilisbrauð, ready-mixed sauces, and the mixed fruit drink Frissi Fríski. Generally these are goods frequently used in most homes. All kinds of spreads and products for putting on bread are usually rather fatty and fruit drinks often high in sugar, so it in fact comes as no surprise that people conscious of their eating habits read about the nutritional value of such goods. Among people who to some degree read the nutritional value of foodstuffs and want to purchase healthy goods, it might be bread, hamburger and ready-mixed sauces that they are possibly examining and comparing to select what brands should be bought.

While participants were sorting the food products, the discussion brought out that although they had sorted the products in this fashion there was nothing absolute in such matters. Whereas some said they did not read labels on mayonnaise since it was known to be entirely unhealthy, others declared that was exactly their reason for doing so. Although most users had decided to place the mixed fruit drink Frissi Fríski in the sort they would read labels on (to check how sweet it was), some explained they would not read labels on it because they assumed that it was healthy and thus had an acceptable nutritional composition. Many stated they read oatmeal since it was common knowledge how healthy it is. It was notable that no participants thought they would read labels on frozen pizza, despite it being said later in the discussion that having nutritional labeling on processed and ready-made products was very important. "*Pizza is just pizza – you know it's maybe not the healthiest thing*" (user aged 41-60). It may also be considered worth noting that nutritional composition was said to be lacking on sweets, even though only one participant wished to categorise sweets among the products on which they believed they would read labels, the reason being the thought that "*sweets are simply sweets*." Consumers stated they would not be irritated by not having nutritional labels on chicken breasts or vegetables, since they were unprocessed goods. On dairy products, participants said they were mainly looking for the number of calories and fat content, as well as carbohydrate content, for instance to see how sweet yoghurt is. As for products to put on bread, participants examine primarily how salty and how watery they are. the labels on such juices and milk products while they are consuming them at the table. It also came out that it was unnecessary to read labels on

Good and bad labeling of nutritional values

The participants had an extremely difficult time discussing what constitutes good and bad nutritional labeling.

<i>Good</i>	<i>Bad</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Large, readable labeling</i> • <i>Including analysis of fat and carbohydrates</i> • <i>Detailed yet not too complicated</i> • <i>Not too much extra text</i> • <i>Including RDI</i> • <i>With criteria on what it is desirable to eat</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Impossible to compare with other labels</i> • <i>Tiny fonts</i>

Formats

The table below shows what formats participants chose as best and set in first place.

	Younger users (group 1)	Older users (group 2)	Older non-users (group 3)	Younger non-users (group 4)
Format I per 100 g	2	0	1	0
Format II per serving	0	0	0	1
Format III per 100 g and serving	6	1	0	0
Format IV per serving and % RDI	2	6	8	8

For better explanation, each format and related comments of the participants are presented.

Format I (per 100 g):

PIZZA WITH HAM	Nutritional value per 100 g
Energy	200 kcal/850 kJ
Fat	11 g
Carbohydrates	13 g
Protein	14 g

In all, only three participants found Format I the best offered, including two younger users and one older non-user. The comments given to Format I by younger users were among others that it was simple and easily understandable, and included the main information. Generally, basing the nutritional value on 100 g was found to be an advantage, although it was also said that the nutritional value per serving was missing. Non-users also thought the format was clear and definite, but that information on RDI and nutritional value per serving was lacking. In addition, the point was made that the format did not grab one's attention on small containers, and that it would be great to make the format graphical somehow.

Format II (per serving):

PIZZA WITH HAM Each pack contains 4 slices.	Nutritional value per serving = two slices (250 g)
Energy	510 kcal/2140 kJ
Fat	27 g
Carbohydrates	33 g
Protein	35 g

Only one participant (a younger non-user) put Format II in first place. While users said Format II was simple and that it was easy to calculate calories by the serving, it was mentioned that this was complicated and hard to comprehend, because it is difficult to compare based on 250 g. It was better to have nutritional values based on 100 g in order to be able to compare products. Another point was that information on volume was confusing and that there was too much text

(compared to Format I), rendering the labeling hard to read. Many participants in the group of those not reading nutritional labels mentioned that Format II was sufficient, but that the nutritional value of 100 g was still missing, since one serving varied among people. For example, one person ate one pizza slice and another three, leaving it difficult to calculate the nutritional value. In addition, non-users heavily emphasized the lack of RDI on the labeling, it seeming to be a very significant item for them.

Format III (in 100 g and per serving):

PIZZA WITH HAM Each pack contains 4 slices.	Nutritional value	
	per 100 g	Per serving = two slices (250 g)
Energy	200 kcal/850 kJ	510 kcal/2140 kJ
Fat	11 g	27 g
Carbohydrates	13 g	33 g
Protein	14 g	35 g

It is notable that only users, 7 people, selected Format III as best, while no non-user accounted Format III good enough to merit first place. It is clear that the need for nutritional labeling is starkly distinct between users and non-users; obviously, users prefer detailed information while non-users do not want things too complicated. Participants' comments firmly support this. Users noted that the form was simple even though there were two references, which was good, so that it thereby fulfilled demands for exactness and people could better comprehend the nutritional value of the serving they were consuming. "*Getting just about perfect*" (user aged 41-60). Non-users, in contrast, were of another opinion, many finding Format III for instance "*awkward and confusing*" and too complicated, and thinking it contained too much information: "*People don't read so much on one package,*" "*unnecessary to repeat the information.*" Once again, non-users repeated that they find it necessary for RDI to be included in labeling.

Format IV (per serving and as a ratio of recommended daily intake; RDI):

PIZZA WITH HAM Each pack contains 4 slices.	Nutritional value per serving = two slices (250 g)	
Energy	510 kcal/2140 kJ	
	% of RDI*	
Fat	27 g	42 %
Carbohydrates	33 g	12 %
Protein	35 g	46 %

* The ratio to RDI (recommended daily intake) is based on a 2000-kcal diet. Individual calorie needs vary and can be both greater and less than these 2000 calories. The standard is that 55% of the energy comes from carbohydrates and 15% from protein.

Format IV was selected as the best of those discussed, by 24 out of 35 participants, including 8 users and 16 non-users. This division supports what was said above about RDI seeming to be a determining factor for non-users. They feel they do not know enough about nutritional labeling nor what quantity of nutrients they need, but RDI tells them about their daily requirement and through that they feel they are closer to understanding. The format's presenting nutritional values

by serving appeared to be totally insignificant for non-users, with above all RDI determining their choice. The approach of arranging nutritional values by servings connects to non-users' wanting simple labeling; they observed that servings fit well with normal consumption and correspond to the nature of the product, as one serving is not the same for all goods.

The suggestions arising among users regarding Format IV are among others that the inclusion of RDI in labeling is good, but that the potential for comparison offered by 100 grams is missing. It was also declared unnecessary to have the exact explanation of RDI in small font and needless to present energy content separately. Someone said the label had become overly large and for example the appearance of a small tin would make little impression with such a label, since it would nearly cover the tin. Moreover, it was stated that such a label had to be read at home, because it was too "*troublesome to read it in the store.*" Although non-users mentioned, among other things, that Format IV was clear, definite and sufficient for providing information, many people, non-users as well as users, said the label would be still better if nutritional value were also given per 100 grams.

Lists

The table below shows what lists participants chose as best and put in first place.

	Younger users (group 1)	Older users (group 2)	Older non- users (group 3)	Younger non-users (group 4)
List A Short list	0	0	0	0
List B Present list	2	0	1	0
List C Longer list	0	0	3	1
List D Extensive list	8	7	5	8

For better explanation, each list and related comments of the participants are discussed.

List A (short list * of nutrients):

LIST A
Energy
Fat

* in close proximity to the name of the product.

To put it briefly, participants found List A, with the short nutrient list, not at all sufficient, with no one giving it a point as the best table. It was pointed out that the table was fine for those examining fat content, but that many were rather examining other nutrients than fat. In general, participants found the list provided too little information, saying almost nothing since two principal nutrients are absent: "*What are they hiding?*" (User aged 23-40). Minimal information can clearly awaken such questions among people.

List B (current list of nutrients):

LIST B
Energy
Protein
Carbohydrates
Fat

Three participants including two users chose Table B, the current nutrient list, as best, which shows the present list of nutrients does not seem to fill the demands of participants when choosing between this list and the one with more detailed information. Comments users expressed about this list were that it was accessible and simple to read, but needed more detailed analysis of nutrients. Moreover, several users mentioned that salt content were missing from the list and even that the order of the nutrients was not good or "right." This nevertheless demonstrates that participants want to have the traditional order of nutrients, besides how attentive participants were, taking care with the assignments they were given in the conversation. Nor were non-users fully satisfied with Table B as the list they most wanted to see on food products, although some had said it was fine.

List C (longer list of nutrients):

LIST C
Energy
Fat
– hard fat *
Sugar **
Fibre
Sodium (as salt)

* hard fat = saturated and tran fat

** sugar = natural and added mono- and disaccharides

Only four participants chose List C as the best, considering it sufficient for their needs. All of those choosing List C as best were in the group not using nutritional labeling. What participants criticized above all was the lack of information on protein content: *"Yes, I think it's needed – protein is the building block of the body"* (non-user aged 41-60). They also preferred having the traditional division of carbohydrates rather than "sugar" with a long asterisked text below, which was in addition hard to understand. Participants did not understand why sugar was being asterisked especially when there was no analysis on the label: *"Since they're doing this anyway they ought to do it well"* (non-user aged 23-40). The participants mentioned that they were not much enthused about such asterisks and seldom read the given texts. It was mentioned as positive about Table C that it distinguished hard fat in particular: *"This is the first time we see 'including hard fat,' which is terrific"* (user aged 23-40).

Participants, particularly the users, evidently want to have detailed lists even if the truth is perhaps often similar to what one participant wrote on the task sheet: *"I believe I won't read overly precise information except during a special health effort"* (user aged 23-40). Non-users stated it would be worth more to view a more adequate analysis of carbohydrates and to have protein and water on the list instead of for instance fibre. However, several non-users did not notice the lack of protein on the list, saying it was getting rather long.

List D (extensive list of nutrients):

LIST D
Energy
Fat
– saturated + trans fat *
Carbohydrates
– sugar **
– fibre
Protein
Sodium (as salt)

* hard fat = saturated fat and trans fat

** sugar = natural and added mono- and disaccharides

List D was chosen by 28 participants, including 15 users and 13 non-users, as the best of the four nutrient lists under discussion. The participants talked about the list being exact, with many in the group of non-users considering it unnecessarily exact and too much to read, even though they had selected it as best: *"Good for people with problems"* *"Perhaps unnecessarily precise for the general populace"* (non-users aged 41-60). Naturally, it may be termed a certain contradiction that non-users think they want a detailed list, yet not too detailed. The moderator felt as though the non-users did not know what they wanted and perhaps never saw the middle road suiting them in the lists offered to choose from.

Users said among other things regarding List D that the division of fat was weird and incomprehensible: "*Saturated and polyunsaturated tell me nothing*" (user aged 23-40). As before, they preferred a division of sugar and fat into healthy and unhealthy (i.e., hard and soft fat along with added and natural sugar) while non-users restricted themselves to wanting to see water content in the nutritional values of products "... *whether water is a nutrient or not.*" The question also arose of people's understanding of the list; in this manner, we have once more arrived at one of the reasons for the rare reading of nutritional labeling. In the group of non-users, participants found that a lack of information and of knowledge about nutrients work to some extent as a barrier to their reading nutritional labels. Also, the group spoke of asterisked supplements as boring and incomprehensible.

Information for the future

The participants said a pervasive, deep lack of knowledge existed in society about every aspect of nutrition, with many in the non-user group stating it was a long time since they were in school, so that it was no surprise that they knew too little about these matters. Those not reading nutritional labels considered precisely a lack of information often to be a barrier to their reading labels – they simply did not understand what was printed on them. Maybe this is also why they have no interest in knowing what they are consuming. Interest and information may be said to coincide to some extent, so if the information were available it might conceivably excite some interest in a few people, leading them to begin reading nutritional labeling or read it more often. Still, it was mentioned that "*it's no trouble to find this if a person is interested in getting to know it*" (non-user aged 41-60). In general the participants do not use the website of the Icelandic Nutrition Council to search for information, considering that too time-consuming and out of the way.

The participants would like to see a definite awakening of consciousness concerning the nutritional value of goods and to obtain information at as many places as possible in society. This should in their opinion start with thorough teaching in elementary school, "*if cooking is being taught anyhow,*" and then by reinforcing the information out among the adults in society: "*This has to be right in front of you every day*" (user aged 23-40). It was mentioned in every group that information on nutritional value, nutrients, recommended daily intake, and more related to how people can inform themselves on the nutrition of ordinary consumers could reach the public very well on milk cartons. Moreover, the institutions supervising these affairs in Iceland, such as the Nutrition Council and Environmental and Food Agency, were said to need to pursue this closely, keeping a stream of information running through society. Besides providing information on milk cartons, it was said likely to be successful to print facts on a magnet for refrigerators, publish an almanac with facts, put information on bus stop shelters, broadcast educational programs on television and advertise in the papers: "*Television is probably most forceful.*" It was also considered a fine idea to have a stand in the grocery store with general, accessible information on the principal nutrients and a favourable combination of them for the day.

Participants declared that the discussion about nutritional labeling had excited a certain curiosity, and some mentioned they would in all likelihood subsequently start reading such labeling or read it more frequently, which implies how little is needed to waken some sort of interest among people, hopefully resulting in at least some of them examining nutritional labels on food products more often.

Results

Discussion

The following chapter is a discussion based on the detailed analyses of data from the five countries and it should be considered the basis of ACNielsen AIM's recommendations.

It must be noted, that there are small differences in the material tested:

In Finland and Norway, on Format 4, the last sentence in the footnote has not been tested (*"In calculations, the recommendations 55 E% for carbohydrates and 15 E% for protein is used"*).

On list D there are two foodnotes (concerning fat and sugar) in Denmark, Norway and Iceland. In Finland and Sweden one of the notes (about fat) is missing.

It is our opinion that these small differences have not influenced the test.

Knowledge about nutrition labels

The focus group interviews started with a discussion about the definition of nutrition labels. The respondents generally did not distinguish between product information and nutrition label, which can be seen from their suggestions and associations (in alphabetical order):

- Advice about cooking
- Calories
- Carbohydrates
- Chemistry
- Color
- Composition
- Contents
- E-substances
- Energy
- Fat
- Flavor additives
- Guarantee of being ecological
- Health
- How beneficial is the food product
- Illegible
- Incomprehensible abbreviations
- Ingredients
- Information
- Knowledge about health
- Label
- Lactose
- Minerals
- Overview
- Place of production
- Protein
- Quantity specification
- RDI
- Storage
- The contents of the food product
- Vitamins

The notions about what a nutrition label in fact contains are, as the list suggests, rather diverse. The answers indicate that this target group, that does not have specialized knowledge or other privileged tools for understanding nutrition labels (e.g. due to illness), lack a clear knowledge about what is considered standard information on nutrition labels and on product information respectively.

Use of nutrition labels

Below is a table of answers from respondents in the various countries when asked about their use of nutrition labels, and what they find interesting.

The table shows that the respondents check the individual nutrients, i.e. the actual content – often focusing on the fat content in the product. All the countries also consider it more relevant and interesting to read nutrition labels on prepared or semi-prepared products. We consider their strong focus on this as a sign that consumers wish to be able to see through, and know what they eat.

Nutrition labels are interesting in relation to:	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Finland	Iceland
Fat content, sugar content, protein, salt	+	+	+	+	+
Comparing two products (content and price difference)	+	+	+		
New or foreign products	+		+	+	+
Processed or prepared products	+	+	+	+	+

Nutrition labels are also used for checking new or foreign products and comparing the goods. As can be seen in the discussion about the formats, it is obvious that respondents in all five countries are interested in comparisons. The respondents' use of nutrition labels is apparently influenced by the current general look of nutrition labels (i.e. per 100 g) and they use it to the extent that they are capable of, and to the extent that this format makes possible.

Occasional and potential users

Naturally, the distinction between occasional and potential users of nutrition labels is based on how often they read them, cf. the criteria for recruitment. In addition, the motivation behind reading the nutrition labels (see the above figure) seems to be the same for groups with occasional and potential users. The difference is simply that the potential users read less frequently.

The potential users tend to read the nutrition label at home, whereas the occasional users tend to do it in the store. Due to their lower interest in nutrition labels, the potential users often read it, say, when taking the product out of the fridge or when eating. Put differently, the potential users are not sufficiently interested in the labels to spend time reading them in the store – but they do read them and are thus open to their message.

Good and bad nutrition labels

In spite of the fact that the respondents seemed unable to give a clear definition of nutrition labels initially (this is given to them later by the moderator), they have great demands for a good nutrition label. Generally, nutrition labels are associated with a text written in tiny letters and hard to read. Below follow demands for a good nutrition label based on respondents from all five countries and ordered thematically:

A good nutrition label should be:

which means:

Well-arranged

Clear, simple, easy to find, easily understood, large legible text, detailed but not complicated, not too much text

Instructive

Comparable with other products, RDI, indicates desirable nutrients and quantities, gives a general picture

Easily understood

Per unit, per 100 g

Information about nutrients

Documentation of the kinds of fat the product contains. Analysis of fat and carbohydrates

Nutrients and energy

It must contain information about fat (saturated and trans fat, hard and soft fat), salt, energy, nitrate, protein, and carbohydrates. Large letters must be used for calories and kilojoules

A bad nutrition label

Difficult to read and understand

Too small letters, not clear, different languages, lacks information, hard to find, unknown concepts, specifications unknown to most people.

Difficult to use the information

Hard to use for comparisons, hard to understand the information – too specialized lingo

The respondents demand simplicity and accessibility, and they obviously do not feel that these demands are currently met. The demands are based on a frustration over not understanding nutrition labels when they choose to read them. Therefore, the respondents (Denmark and Finland) suggest the use of color codes indicating the content of certain nutrients, e.g. giving fat one color and carbohydrates another, thus making it easy and quick to understand. To summarize, the respondents lack concrete knowledge but are conscious of which information they need (about nutrients). Likewise, they know that they should use the information, but they are not sure for what. We interpret this as a need for instructions about how to read nutrition labels and for making them more accessible.

The scope of information on nutrition labels

The scope of the nutrition label is a complex issue because the respondents demand clear and accessible information on the one hand, yet for the most part choose format 1 and 4 plus List D on the other.

Still, this choice should be seen as a consequence of the respondents' desire for detailed but not complicated information. Also, many respondents know which elements a nutrition label should contain (see 'Demands for a good nutrition label'), and their choice reflect that.

The respondents' focus

The five Nordic countries have in common that the main focus is fat and sugar.

	Denmark	Sweden	Norway	Finland	Iceland
Fat	+	+	+	+	+
Sugars	+				+
Carbohydrates		+	+		
Protein		+			
Fiber					
Salt					

In the table above, we use either the "carbohydrate" terminology or the "sugar" terminology depending on what the individual countries have used. As can be seen, fat and sugar elicit most interest in all the five countries. The focus on these two nutrients is probably due to the fact that the consumers know more about them than they do about the others, and are aware of them being unhealthy in too large quantities. The consumers know of the other nutrients but are unable to use the information about them. E.g., they do not discuss protein very much, probably because they lack knowledge about the relation between this nutrient and health.

Naturally, the respondents' use of nutrition labels is based on their previous knowledge – they use them to the extent that their knowledge allows.

Products whose nutrition label is most frequently read

Every single country has sorted various food products and then asked the respondents on which kinds they read the label and on which they do not. There is not a total correspondence between the five different countries: e.g., although the majority does not check the label on oats, there are in fact two groups that do. And although the majority do not check the label on chicken, there is still one group that does.

However, the ordering of the food products primarily serves to identify whether the consumers distinguish between different categories of food products and the relevance of nutrition labels in relation to these. Put differently: on which kinds of products do the respondents read the nutrition labels and on which do they not?

The most important thing is that the reasons they give for reading the nutrition label on certain food products are similar. This is why we use **motives** and **reasons** rather than concrete products as a basis for our analysis. The nutrition labels on the following products are usually studied:

Is read	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products with many alternatives in the same category (e.g. cheese) • Products with many kinds of ingredients, or processed products • Products traditionally seen as fatty (butter, cheese, mayonnaise, ready-prepared sauce) • Products with moderate to large sugar quantities
Is not read	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic products – few varieties, no need for comparison (chicken, frozen vegetables, dry pasta, oats) • Products whose content people already know (or think they know) • Vegetables
Both...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products people eat regardless of contents (e.g. butter) • Candy and chips • Products traditionally seen as unhealthy

Formats

As a conclusion of the group discussions, we asked the respondents to "vote" for their preferred format by raising their hand. The vote was meant as a "comment" on the previous discussion by making the respondents take a stance.

The five tables below show the choices of the groups in the five countries when they hierarchized the four formats

- 7 groups preferred format 1
- 4 groups preferred format 3
- 9 groups preferred format 4

Regarding format I and IV: In a single group, the same number of people preferred format I and format IV.

Denmark	Occasional younger	Occasional older	Potential younger	Potential older
Format I	0	3	4	7
Format II	0	2	0	0
Format III	1	0	6	0
Format IV	4	5	0	2

Finland				
Format I	8	1	4	7
Format II	0	0	1	2
Format III	0	0	0	0
Format IV	2	5	4	1

Sweden				
Format I	6	7	1	3
Format II	1	0	0	2
Format III	1	1	7	1
Format IV	0	0	0	2

Norway				
Format I	0	5	0	2
Format II	0	0	0	1
Format III	0	4	2	3
Format IV	6	0	6	1

Iceland				
Format I	2	0	0	1
Format II	0	0	1	0
Format III	6	1	0	0
Format IV	2	6	8	8

The tables clearly indicate that the respondents prefer format I and IV, whereas only very few choose format II and III.

Format I

The respondents explain their choice of format 1 as being based on recognition and familiarity. Their previous experience with reading nutrition labels largely stems from reading labels similar to format 1. They choose it because it is familiar and accessible – the respondents feel that they know what they get. The indications per 100 g are easy to use and suitable for comparison (which we have shown to be important in several countries).

Another of our findings was that there is a tendency to read nutrition labels on new and unfamiliar products. In this case, format 1 is also easy to use.

When the respondents use the nutrition label for comparison and for new products it also means that the format does not require further calculations.

Format II

Format 2 uses indications per serving. In none of the groups Format 2 got a majority of the votes although the indication per serving is regarded as something positive. Format 2 offers the consumers something that is easily accessible and concrete. The reason why format 2 is still relatively unpopular is that information per serving is regarded as too narrow. The consumers simply feel that there are too many products which are not suitable for the indication per serving – this counts for all kinds of products, irrespective of whether they are processed or basic.

The indication of nutritional values per serving is also problematic, said some of the respondents, because a serving varies according to people's size. In the case of pizza, one serving equals a whole pizza for some, whereas others only need a slice.

The respondents also think that the definition "250 g = a serving" makes it harder to compare with other products. Especially if these products do not use the same definition of a serving but another number of grams instead.

Format III

In principle, format 3 should be satisfactory because it meets both the demand for indications per 100 g familiar to the respondents and simultaneously gives room for focusing on the particular information most relevant for the individual. This is in fact how some people see it – they are pleased with the choice (e.g. in Sweden and in Iceland, where they feel that the demand for precision is met). Yet generally, the respondents think that there is too much information, which causes more confusion than clarification (non-users in Iceland and potential users in Finland).

The reason why format 3 does not really hit the target is probably that it is basically just a combination of format 1 and 2. This causes the respondents to think that they are not being presented with something genuinely new and different which is capable of increasing their understanding.

Format IV

As mentioned above, format 4 is the one that the majority of groups chose as their favorite, along with format 1. The reason why the respondents chose format 4 is its indication of RDI. The respondents do not have a thorough understanding of what RDI really means. There was also a discussion about whether a calculation based on 2000 calories could be used for everybody, and if not, then how should it be calculated individually. Note that the responses from Finland and Norway, where there was a sentence lacking in the footnote, do not differ significantly from the other countries.

Regardless of whether they are potential or occasional users, the respondents have a notion of what a nutrition label should contain. Even though they lack concrete knowledge about the meaning of the various concepts, they still have a general idea. E.g., the concept “recommended daily intake” is easy to relate to. This is why format 4 corresponds with several more or less explicit expectations among the respondents.

The groups appreciate information such as RDI and indications of norms for a product’s nutritional values. This kind of information would give the consumers a feeling of increased value.

Generally, information about RDI is regarded as positive. This gives the respondents a kind of guidance. Based on these findings and those of the group processes in general, we estimate that format 4 should be used as the primary inspiration when designing nutrition labels. Just the word “recommended” gives the consumer a sense of being guided and instructed about wholesome and less wholesome nutrition. In contrast, format 1-3 are simply descriptive and the respondents miss more instructive information.

Lists

As a conclusion of the group discussions, we asked the respondents to “vote” for their preferred list by raising their hand. The vote was meant as a “comment” on the previous discussion by making the respondents take a stance. The tables below indicate which lists the groups in the individual countries preferred.

They show that:

- 4 groups preferred List B
- 3 groups preferred List C
- 13 groups preferred List D

List A

As mentioned in the discussion of format 4, the respondents have a general idea about the kinds of information a nutrition label should contain, but they are unable to specify it. List A is rejected as being too short and attractive only if one is interested in fat. One could have assumed that the preference for clear and accessible information would make List A popular, but, as already mentioned, it is considered too short and, as one respondent in Iceland put it: if it only indicates the fat content, the consumers might fear that somebody is trying to hide something.

- List B** List B is considered familiar, just like format 1, and many think that this is a good list which is easily read. In many ways, list B meets the more or less explicit expectations that the respondents have to a nutrition label. Still, it is important to remember that these expectations are influenced by the previous design of nutrition labels.
- The reason why no more than four groups prefer List B is that List C and D are more detailed. It is a logical mechanism to choose the list that gives as much information as possible. We interpret the respondents' choice of List B as a way of achieving clarity – something that they think they will obtain by choosing the list with the most information.
- List C** The respondents have a relatively positive reaction to List C, but they are confused by the fact that it has more and different indications. Their general attitude is that information is good, but too much information can be confusing. As seems natural, they compare the indications on List C with those on List B. Doing that, the respondents (e.g. in Finland and Sweden) find it confusing that List B, contrary to List C, informs about fiber but not protein, and that it uses the concept “sugars” and not “carbohydrates”.
- The reactions to List C illustrate that the respondents do not fully understand the lists. The occasional users are naturally better equipped than the potential users. E.g., the occasional users in Finland like getting varied information, for instance about fat, fiber and salt. The problem with List C is that it is not as short and concise as List B, but also not as detailed as List D. Although the respondents may lack a precise idea about nutrition labels, they feel that something is missing.
- List D** List D is the list containing the most information about and indications of nutrients. Quite a few potential users find it confusing and unnecessarily precise (e.g. in Iceland). Others (in Finland, Iceland and Denmark) think that the asterisks outside the frame are confusing. The respondents find it hard to apply the information written in this footnote, because they lack the necessary previous knowledge. Writing asterisked information, i.e. writing outside the frame, is problematic because it signals the presence of extra information that the reader needs to handle. This makes the asterisk work as an inhibitor rather than as an extra piece of information. Nutrition labels using footnotes risk being discouraging to the very reader it in fact is intended to enlighten.
- List D has an educational aspect intended to ensure that the consumers get the ultimate benefit of the information. The problem with this list is that it can be hard for the consumers to find the exact piece of information they are looking for.
- Still, we recommend that the Project Group listens to the respondents' wish and uses List D as a basis for future nutrition label design. This is partly because the respondents' preference for this list is so clear, partly because they generally express a need for information and knowledge. Consequently, we consider List D the right choice for future nutrition label design.

Conclusions and recommendations

This section contains the conclusions we have drawn based on the focus group processes, and the ensuing recommendations from ACNielsen AIM.

The respondents' knowledge

The study shows that the respondents' knowledge about nutrition labels is rather limited. The criteria for recruiting the respondents to this study were that they must not have any special background that facilitated their understanding of the nutrition labels. Put differently: the respondents in the study were relatively ordinary consumers.

It becomes obvious that the respondents' use of nutrition labels is not very sophisticated. Often the information on nutrition labels functions just like the numbers in a piece of math: they indicate values which the reader must then apply and calculate him-/herself. Generally, this is not something that the consumers' are equipped to do.

Use of nutrition labels

The respondents' use of nutrition labels is thus often an attempt to figure out what a given product contains at all (e.g. processed goods), which specific nutrients there are in a given product (e.g. salt in Finland) and what the products contain compared to each other.

Occasional and potential users

The study shows that the potential users are more prone than the occasional users to feel confused and consider the information unintelligible.

Regardless of being potential or occasional users, the respondents have a general idea about what a nutrition label should contain, although they are unable to be very precise about it. An example could be protein or RDI. The respondents have seen these concepts on nutrition labels and thus recognize them. This makes them consider the concepts necessary and important. Put differently, the consumers feel a need for information, but they do not necessarily have the ability to understand it without further instructions.

Recommendation

Consequently, ACNielsen AIM recommends to the Project Group that they use Format IV and List D as their primary models in their future work. This does not necessarily mean that the models should retain their current form. Our recommendation is based on two things: 1) The fact that Format IV and List D were preferred by the focus groups. 2) The fact that the complete data from the group processes indicate a preference for the kind of information that a combination of Format IV and List D would give. More specifically, this is information of a more instructive kind. In connection with Format 4, the respondents were pleased with the information about RDI (although one may doubt whether they fully understand the concept RDI). In any case, the decisive factor for our recommendation is that the respondents feel guided and instructed when informed about RDI.

Having established that the respondents' previous knowledge enabling them to understand the nutrition labels is not very extensive, and seeing that they choose Format IV, we conclude that there is a need for instruction and guidance. *By guidance we mean the kind of information that assesses whether the contained quantity of a certain nutrient is large or small in relation to RDI.* An example could be to indicate that a product has a particularly high level of fat content compared to RDI.

If the indication of RDI is to maintain its current form, it is necessary to add further explanations, which will increase the text quantity on the label even more.

The aim is to design a format that the respondents can use just like they have done previously, but which simultaneously deepens their understanding. In Format II and III, the respondents are given concrete information but no instructions. Yet especially with regard to RDI there is a need for both information and instructions about how to decode it.

The respondents are used to nutrition labels very similar to Format I. Hence, this format feels familiar to them and ends up functioning as a kind of *standard* for nutrition labels. This is why we recommend the use of Format I (combined with Format IV) as a model for the future nutrition label. The advantage is an immediate recognition in the consumers when reading the future label. This will encourage them to read on and, in a longer perspective, get a deeper understanding of the information. If they are presented with a completely unfamiliar label design, there is a risk that they are discouraged from even trying to read it. By using a familiar form, we hope to encourage a continuous use of the labels and eventually the use of the new part too.

Reader-friendly nutrition labels

The respondents' notion of the elements contained in a nutrition label is a mixture of different kinds of information. This is why it is important that the choice of information on the future label is easily understood and applied. When we ask the respondents what characterizes a good and bad nutrition label respectively, the theme "difficult to understand and use" is recurring. Likewise, the general reaction during the group processes to asterisks is that they cause more confusion than clarification. Therefore, we recommend that they be removed. Asterisks and footnotes signal the presence of additional information necessary for understanding the nutrition label, and this is not conducive to continued reading of the label. We recommend that the asterisked information be integrated in the general text.

Often, the footnotes contain information about fat or sugars. The respondents know that there are different kinds of fat and they would like information about the distribution of those. But often they do not understand terms like saturated fat, unsaturated fat or trans fat. This is why it is necessary to educate them in a very accessible manner. A possibility is to replace the traditional indication with a symbol signaling whether it is healthy or unhealthy fat.

Appendix A: Formats and lists tested in the consumer study

Format I (per 100g):

PIZZA WITH HAM	Nutrition information per 100g
Energy	200 kcal / 850 kJ
Fat	11 g
Carbohydrate	13 g
Protein	14 g

Format II (per serving):

PIZZA WITH HAM package contains 4 slices	Nutrition information per two slices (250 g)
Energy	510 kcal / 2140 kJ
Fat	27 g
Carbohydrate	33 g
Protein	35 g

Format III (per 100g and per serving):

PIZZA WITH HAM Package contains 4 slices	Nutrition Information	
	per 100g	per two slices (250 g)
Energy	200 kcal / 850 kJ	510 kcal / 2140 kJ
Fat	11 g	27 g
Carbohydrate	13 g	33 g
Protein	14 g	35 g

Format IV

(per serving and as percent of recommended daily intake RDI):

PIZZA WITH HAM Package contains 4 slices	Nutrition information per serving = two slices (250 g)	
Energy	510 kcal / 2140 kJ	
	% RDI *	
Fat	27 g	42 %
Carbohydrate	33 g	12 %
Protein	35 g	46 %

* Percentage of RDI (recommended daily intake) is based on a 2000 kcal diet.

Your RDI may be higher or lower depending on your energy needs.

List A (short list * of nutrients):

LIST A
Energy
Fat

* in close proximity to the name of the product

List B (current list of nutrients):

LIST B
Energy
Protein
Carbohydrate
Fat

List C (longer list of nutrients):

LIST C
Energy
Fat
– hard fat *
Sugars **
Fibre
Sodium (as salt)

* hard fat = saturated fat and trans fat

** sugars = natural and added mono- and disaccharides

List D (extensive list of nutrients):

LIST D
Energy
Fat
– saturated + trans fat *
Carbohydrates
– sugars **
– fibre
Protein
Sodium (as salt)

* hard fat = saturated fat and trans fat

** sugars = natural and added mono- and disaccharides

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Lisco bok- och pappershandel
Skarpansvägen 25, Box 8, 22101 Mariehamn
Tel +358 (0)18 17 177 Fax +358 (0)18 19 771
info@lisco.fi