



July 17, 2023

Dockets Management Staff (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
Department of Human and Health Services
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

Comment on Docket No. FDA-2023-N-0155 for “Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposed Collection; Comment Request; Quantitative Research on Front of Package Labeling on Packaged Foods.”

To Whom It May Concern:

Trust for America’s Health (TFAH) is grateful for the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) procedural notice on “Qualitative Research on Front of Package Labeling (FOPL) on Packaged Foods.”¹ TFAH applauds FDA’s initiative to conduct consumer research to help develop a front-of-package labeling (FOPL) nutrition scheme.

TFAH is a non-profit, non-partisan public health policy, research, and advocacy organization that promotes optimal health for every person and community and makes the prevention of illness and injury a national priority. TFAH advances evidence-based policy recommendations to strengthen the nation’s public health system and envisions a nation that values the health and well-being of all and where prevention and health equity are foundational to policymaking at all levels. One of TFAH’s longstanding policy priorities is chronic disease and obesity prevention, including through improving equitable access to healthy nutrition.

In 2022, TFAH submitted a letter in support of advancing FDA’s FOPL work in response to the Center for Science in the Public Interest’s Citizens Petition.² Research has shown that FOPL systems have the potential to significantly enhance consumers’ understanding of nutritious food options, encourage healthier diets, and improve the quality of the national food supply.³ Currently, only 41 percent of adults in the United States consistently utilize the existing Nutrition

¹ Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission for Office of Management and Budget Review; Comment Request; Quantitative Research on Front of Package Labeling on Packaged Foods. Federal Register. 2023. <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/06/15/2023-12820/agency-information-collection-activities-submission-for-office-of-management-and-budget-review>

² Trust for America’s Health, Comment Letter to FDA (Oct. 17, 2022). https://www.tfah.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/TFAH_FrontPackageLabeling_Comments.pdf

³ Center for Science in the Public Interest. “Front-of-Package Nutrition Labeling: Leveraging food labels to inform consumers and promote public health.” https://www.cspinet.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/FOPNL%20Fact%20Sheet_1.10.23_final.pdf. Accessed July 12, 2023.



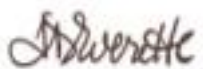
Facts panel as a means to select their food purchases.⁴ TFAH therefore encourages FDA to prioritize the ability of the research participants' to correctly interpret the nutritional profile of the product as the primary outcome of the proposed research.

As detailed in TFAH's most recent *State of Obesity* report, structural racism, discrimination, poverty, and other social and economic determinants contribute to major disparities in rates of obesity among people with lower incomes and lower levels of education.⁵ TFAH urges the FDA to conduct focused research on the effectiveness of various FOPL approaches for people with lower levels of education, limited literacy, and limited English proficiency. This research is particularly important because utilization of the current Nutrition Facts label is positively correlated with higher education and income levels.⁶

To further ensure the FOPL schemes are easy to understand, TFAH appreciates FDA incorporating recognizable imagery into the FOPL schemes that will be tested, like the magnifying glass. TFAH also encourages additional testing of attention-grabbing icons, such as traffic lights, caution signs, and stars, that have the potential to effectively communicate the healthiness of food choices to a broader set of consumers.⁷

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and express our support for the FDA's commitment to researching front-of-package nutrition labels. We look forward to supporting and engaging this important work to advance health equity. Please contact Madison West, Associate Government Relations Manager, at mwest@tfah.org with any questions or for additional information

Sincerely,



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⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Trust for America's Health. "The State of Obesity: Better Policies for a Healthier America." September 2022. <https://www.tfah.org/report-details/state-of-obesity-2022/>

⁶ Christoph, Mary J., Larson, Nicole, Laska, Melissa N., et al. "Nutrition Facts Panels: Who Uses Them, What Do They Use, and How Does Use Relate to Dietary Intake?." *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, 118(2): 217–228. January 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jand.2017.10.014>

⁷ Center for Science in the Public Interest. "Front-of-Package Nutrition Labeling: Leveraging food labels to inform consumers and promote public health." https://www.cspinet.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/FOPNL%20Fact%20Sheet_1.10.23_final.pdf