



NSSA newsbits

Legislation on salt content in processed foods

New legislation to reduce salt content in processed foods came into effect on 30 June 2016. The regulations relating to the reduction of sodium in certain food stuffs and related matters were published in the Government Gazette in March 2013. A three-year implementation period was granted to allow time for manufacturers to experiment with reformulation and produce lower salt products that are still acceptable to consumers. The legislation imposes maximum salt level targets for a basket of commonly consumed foods. Foods affected include bread, breakfast cereal, all fat and butter spreads, savoury snacks, potato crisps, processed meats and sausages, soup and gravy powders, instant noodles and stocks. Each of these food categories has an individual target to be achieved by 30 June 2016, and another stricter limit that needs to be met by 2019.

It has been estimated that a reduction of salt from breads, margarine, soup and seasonings will amount to a 0.85 gram daily reduction per person. The calculated expected health impact of this level of salt reduction is estimated to result in 7 400 fewer cardiovascular deaths and 4 300 fewer nonfatal strokes every year (Bertram, et al., SAMJ 2012;102:743-745).

Christelle Crickmore is the NSSA's representative of Salt Watch, a multi-sectoral coalition led by the Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa (HSFSA), which is a nongovernmental, nonprofit organisation that was established in 1980. Salt Watch is mandated by the National Department of Health to implement the national salt reduction awareness campaign. For more information visit www.heartfoundation.co.za and www.saltwatch.co.za.

FAO/NSSA Technical Consultation on the preparation of National Food Based Dietary Guidelines and Nutrition Education for Promotion of Healthy Diets

The Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and the NSSA hosted a Technical Consultation on the preparation of National Food-Based Dietary Guidelines (FBDGs) and Nutrition Education for Promotion of Healthy Diets in May 2016. The aim of the workshop was to equip African countries to develop FBDGs and transfer it to Nutrition Education Material for consumer use; these countries were: Botswana, Cameroon, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The advisory groups and speakers were from the FAO, NSSA, WHO, SA, USA, Thailand, Latin America, Sierra Leone. The workshop was structured in the form of presentations followed by work groups per country planning their strategies on how to approach the FBDGs for their countries. The topics covered during the workshop were linked and included:

- The need for FBDGs in Sub-Saharan Africa
- FBDGs Processes and Countries' Experiences
- Information Needs for Preparing FBDGs
- Developing the FBDGs, Food Guides and Messages
- Multi-sectorial Implementation of FBDGs and Nutrition Education
- Linking Nutrition Education and Communication with FBDGs
- Monitoring and Evaluation of FBDGs

NSSA invited keynote speaker, Nutrition Congress 2016

Professor Barrie Margetts is NSSA's invited keynote speaker at the 2016 Nutrition Congress. Prof Margetts is Emeritus Professor within Medicine at the University of Southampton. In the early 1990s, Professor Margetts developed training and support to strengthen capacity in nutritional epidemiology which subsequently led on to developing public health nutrition. In 1997, he published (with Michael Nelson) the text book *Design Concepts in Nutritional Epidemiology*. In 2004, he co-published the text book *Public Health Nutrition*. In 2010, with Roger Hughes, he co-published a textbook, () *Practical Public Health Nutrition*, in which the rationale, processes and tools that can be used to assess population needs, analyse problems and develop effective interventions at a community level are described. Prof Margetts was elected as first president of the World Public Health Nutrition Association, formed in 2008. Prof Margetts has done consultancies for the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the World Bank as well as various development agencies and national governments. Prof Margetts founded the journal *Public Health Nutrition* in 1998 and was editor-in-chief until 2007. He serves on the editorial board for the journal *World Nutrition*. Professor Margetts was awarded an honorary doctorate from The North West University in South Africa in 2009 for his work on building research capacity in nutrition in South Africa.

NSSA invited speaker, ARP Walker session, Nutrition Congress 2016

Professor Shane Norris is NSSA's invited speaker for the ARP Walker session at the Nutrition Congress. Prof Norris is the Director of the SAMRC/Wits Developmental Pathways for Health Research Unit (DPHRU) situated in the Department of Paediatrics in the School of Clinical Medicine at Wits. DPHRU investigates genetic, physiological, psycho-social, and lifestyle determinants of growth and development, obesity and risk of cardiometabolic disease, and healthy ageing through innovative multi-disciplinary methodologies across the lifespan. DPHRU forms a unique research platform with substantial infrastructure and equipment, extensive longitudinal data from the Birth to Twenty cohort, and well-established links with the urban and rural South African communities.