

# Nutri-Score and health claims: a comparative analysis of the nutrient profile of foods making health claims in supermarkets in Ireland

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Regulation (EC) 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims (NHC) made on foods provides for the establishment of nutrient profiles (NP) to restrict the use of NHC on foods high in sugar, salt and/or fat<sup>(1)</sup>. The European Commission (EC) Farm to Fork strategy commits to proposing harmonised mandatory front of pack labelling (FoPL) and NP for restricting the use of NHC on foods<sup>(2)</sup>. Stakeholder feedback from an EC consultation on FoPL and NP indicated a preference for the same model to be used for both purposes. Nutri-Score is an evaluative and interpretive FoPL system which gives food a colour coded score from A to E where A and B are green, C is yellow, D is amber, and E is red<sup>(3)</sup>. To date the nutrient thresholds used to calculate Nutri-Score have not been used as an NP for restricting NHC made on food. The Food Standards Australia New Zealand-Nutrient Profiling Scoring Criterion (FSANZ-NPSC) is an NP designed to restrict the use of NHC made on food<sup>(4)</sup>. Foods with a FSANZ-NPSC of >4 are not permitted to make NHC. The aim of this study was to determine the agreement in the classification of foods using the FSANZ-NPSC and Nutri-Score. Food label information from a convenience sample of products which commonly make NHC was collected, using the CLAS-IRE food composition and labelling information system, across three supermarkets in Dublin from January–March 2022. The declared nutrition composition per 100 g and NHC were recorded from product images and entered into Microsoft Excel. The FSANZ-NPSC and Nutri-Score values for each product was determined and compared. Of the 200 products (yogurts and yogurt-alternatives (n = 100), savoury snacks (n = 50) and breakfast cereals (n = 50)), 81.5% (n = 163) made an NHC. There was 80% agreement in the classification of foods using the FSANZ-NPSC and Nutri-Score. All products with a Nutri-Score of A (n = 66) or B (n = 44) had a FSANZ-NPSC of <4. All products with a Nutri-Score of D (n = 18) or E (n = 2) had a FSANZ-NPSC of >4. Of the food products with a Nutri-Score of C, 45% (n = 15) had a FSANZ-NPSC >4 and 55% (n = 18) had a FSANZ-NPSC of <4. Twice the amount of yogurt and yogurt-alternatives with a Nutri-Score of C had a FSANZ-NPSC of <4 than >4 (n = 6 vs n = 3). Both Nutri-Score and FSANZ-NPSC were adapted from the UK Food Standards Agency Nutrient Profile Model. This is reflected in the agreement in the classification of the majority of food products by both models. Since the NP system behind both models is the same, the FSANZ-NPSC could offer an approach for interpreting Nutri-Score for the restriction of NHC made on food.

The use of Nutri-Score as an NP for restricting NHC made on food requires further investigation.

## References

1. European Commission Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods.
2. European Commission (2020) Farm to Fork Strategy.
3. Sante Publique France (2022) Nutri-Score Frequently Asked Questions scientifique\_et\_technique.
4. Food Standards Australia New Zealand (2016) Short guide for industry to the Nutrient Profiling Scoring Criterion.