

Product Nutritional Information Labels

Most of the food that people in Canada eat today is obtained from the local grocery store in attractive convenient packaging. Consumers must understand that food companies want their product to sell and package and label their product to attract the consumer. Unfortunately, the attractive packaging can often mislead or confuse the consumer as to the true nutritive value of the contents found within.

Consumers need to be aware of the nutritional value of the food products they consume to enable them to make healthy and intelligent dietary choices for the rest of their lives. In this activity you will look at the nutritional information found on food labels. Also you will develop an understanding that food companies want their product to sell and package and label their product to attract the consumer.

Procedure (don't slack out with simple, yes or no answers)

1. This report **MUST** be typed. Handwritten work will not be accepted.
2. Obtain three food labels. Thoroughly read all the information given on the packaging to be sure that it includes both the nutritional information and the ingredients. You might have to cut out two labels from the product to get all the information. If you cannot attach the labels to your report, you will have to write down:
 - a) complete ingredients (these are sometimes surprising)
 - b) grams of protein, carbohydrates and fat per serving
 - c) total calories

Complete 3 and 4 for EACH product.

3. For each product, use the Canada Food Guide (http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index_e.html) for eating well to evaluate the nutritional value. Record your observations.
 - a) Does the product seem like a healthy choice?
 - b) Would it be better to eat the product often or occasionally?
 - c) Does the serving size seem reasonable?
 - d) What percent of the total calories is from fat?
4. Make a list of packaging and labeling techniques meant to attract the consumer; classify these appeals into the categories of good taste, low cost, convenience, and health; under the health category determine which health factor is being considered (low in calories, no cholesterol, fiber, no additives, organic, *etc.*)
5. For one of the products, write a business letter to the food company that manufactures the product requesting more nutrition information.