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PaperTitle **Making Healthier Choices Easy: An international, science-based benchmark for front-of-pack labelling**

Main Author **De-Witt Christelle**

Presentor

De-Witt Christelle

Unilever Company Nutritionist 15 Nollsworth Crescent Durban SOUTH AFRICA Christelle.De-Witt@unilever.com

Co-Authors

ABSTRACT

Some food products fit better within a healthy diet than others, but often consumers have difficulty making healthy choices. The less than 10 seconds that consumers typically spend glancing at a product prior to purchase is too short to make judgment on how healthy it is. An opportunity exists for an easily recognisable front-of-pack stamp to enable consumers to make healthier choices.

The 'Choices Programme' aims to help consumers everywhere make better nutritional choices by introducing a front-of-pack stamp on food and beverages that meet certain criteria based on international dietary guidelines.

This programme was first launched in the Netherlands and has been rolled out in USA and Belgium during 2006 and will be extended to cover key countries globally by the end of 2008. To date over 20 countries globally have introduced the Choices stamp. Unilever South Africa will be launching with the logo in September/October this year.

This programme will be governed by the Choices International Foundation consisting of numerous stakeholders, who will be advised by an independent International Scientific Committee. The programme is open to all food manufacturers, retailers and caterers. An international website has also been set up for individuals wanting more information at <http://www.choicesinternational.org/>.