

Minister of Health and the Minister
for the Federal Economic Development
Initiative for Northern Ontario



Ministre de la Santé et Ministre de
l'initiative fédérale du développement
économique dans le Nord de l'Ontario

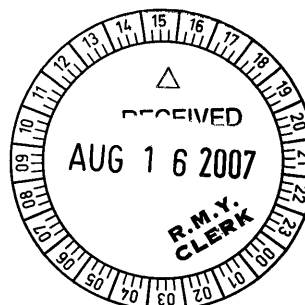
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AUG 10 2007

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K9

Mr. Denis Kelly
Regional Clerk
The Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket, Ontario L3Y 6Z1



Dear Mr. Kelly:

Thank you for your correspondence of May 25, 2007, concerning saturated and trans fats in food.

I recognize that both saturated and trans fats are undesirable components of the diet because they raise LDL-cholesterol which can lead to an increased risk of coronary heart disease.

Health Canada has pursued a multi-faceted approach, including labelling, monitoring of the food supply, and consumer awareness to reduce both saturated and trans fat in Canadian foods. For example, Canada was the first country to introduce a mandatory nutrition label which included the declaration of both saturated and trans fats on most pre-packaged foods. In addition, we permitted a new health claim related to a healthy diet low in saturated and trans fat and the reduced risk of heart disease. As well, the *Food and Drug Regulations* set out defined criteria for nutrient content claims for both saturated and trans fats, such as "low in saturated fat" and "trans fat-free."

In all these nutrition labelling provisions, the two fat types are linked. For example, to make the "trans fat-free" claim, the criteria for the "low in saturated fat" claim must be met, and in the Nutrition Facts table there is a combined percent Daily Value for the sum of the two fats because of the same effect they have on LDL cholesterol.

As you know, I recently announced that Health Canada has adopted the limits for trans fats recommended by the Trans Fat Task Force. I am pleased to report that many food companies have already succeeded in eliminating most of the trans fats from their food products without increasing saturated fats by using blends of vegetable oils or new oil varieties with increased levels of monounsaturated fats.

Thank you for writing.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Clement

Canada