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July 6, 2004

Docket Clerk
US Department of Agriculture
Food Safety and Inspection Service
300 12th St SW
Room 102 Cotton Annex
Washington, DC 20250

NATIONAL
FOOD
PROCESSORS
ASSOCIATION

[Docket No. 03-026P] Uniform Compliance Date for Food Labeling
Regulations
69 Federal Register 24539; May 4, 2004.

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Dear Sir or Madam:

The National Food Processors Association (NFPA) submits the following comments on the docket referenced above.

The National Food Processors Association (NFPA) is the voice of the \$500 billion food processing industry on scientific and public policy issues involving food safety, food security, nutrition, technical and regulatory matters and consumer affairs. NFPA's three scientific centers and international office (Bangkok, Thailand), its scientists and professional staff represent food industry interests on government and regulatory affairs and provide research, technical assistance, education, communications and crisis management support for the Association's U.S. and international members. NFPA members produce processed and packaged fruit, vegetable, and grain products, meat, poultry, and seafood products, snacks, drinks and juices, or provide supplies and services to food manufacturers.

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NFPA strongly supports the proposal of the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) to establish a uniform compliance date of January 1, 2008 for new food labeling regulations that are issued between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2006. Additionally, NFPA strongly supports FSIS's intention to establish a sequence of uniform compliance dates for food labeling regulations that is harmonious with the system of uniform food labeling compliance dates utilized by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

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National Food Processors Association

Docket No. 03-026P

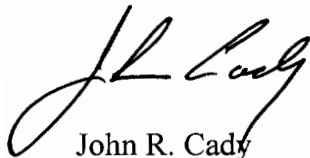
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Many NFPA members process both FSIS-regulated and FDA-regulated food products. Consequently, they appreciate the ability to coordinate label changes for meat and poultry products with label changes for other foods. With the prospect of coordinated rulemakings for FSIS and FDA on several food labeling subjects – ranging from nutrient content claims to revisions of Daily Values – NFPA and its members commend the establishment of labeling rule compliance dates that are coordinated between FSIS and FDA.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John R. Cady". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being particularly prominent.

John R. Cady
President and CEO