

HE-02-1

Minister of Health



Ministre de la Santé

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K9

SEP 10 2012

Regional Municipality of Peel  
Office of the Regional Chair

SEP 17 2012

RECEIVED

Mr. Emil Kolb  
Regional Chair and Chief Executive Officer  
The Regional Municipality of Peel  
10 Peel Centre Drive  
Brampton, Ontario L6T 4B9

Dear Mr. Kolb:

Thank you for your correspondence of March 22, 2012, concerning trans fats and sodium in food. I regret the delay in responding.

Our government is working to provide consumers with the information they need to make informed healthy choices for their families. We took action through the Trans Fat Monitoring Program, which has shown we have made real progress in reducing trans fats in Canada. Almost 75 percent of prepackaged foods met the targets.

Health Canada is working with the Food Expert Advisory Committee (FEAC), composed of health professionals, industry, patient and consumer groups, and has engaged industry stakeholders to assess how best to meet its public health objectives with respect to trans fat. Please be assured that Health Canada continues to assess the most effective ways to reduce Canadians' consumption of trans fat.

Tools such as Canada's Food Guide and the Nutrition Facts table provide Canadians with the information they need to make informed choices about the amounts of trans fats and sodium in their foods. Mandatory nutrition labelling for most prepackaged foods came into full effect in 2007, which requires almost all prepackaged foods to include a Nutrition Facts table that must list sodium and trans fats (along with 12 other nutrients).

Health Canada has developed information material on nutrition labelling, including material on the Nutrition Facts table and the % Daily Value (% DV). The % DV helps consumers to compare products and assess if there is a little or a lot of a nutrient in a food, with 5% being a little and 15% or more being a lot. Advice on choosing foods lower in sodium or prepared with little or no added salt can be found in *Eating Well*

REFERRAL TO \_\_\_\_\_  
RECOMMENDED \_\_\_\_\_  
DIRECTION REQUIRED \_\_\_\_\_  
RECEIPT RECOMMENDED \_\_\_\_\_



| LEGISLATIVE SERVICES           |             |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| COPY TO:                       | FOR: .../2  |
| Chair                          | ✓ Committee |
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| Corporate Services             | Council     |
| Public Works                   | Oct 11 2012 |
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| Health Services                | ✓ File      |
| Human Services                 |             |
| Peel Living                    |             |

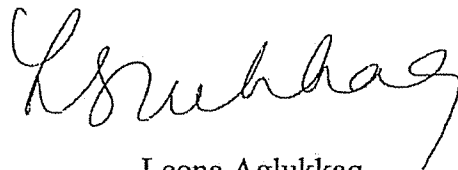
with *Canada's Food Guide*, which is available at <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/order-commander/index-eng.php>, and more information and advice on sodium intake can be found on the Department's website at <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/iyh-vsv/food-aliment/sodium-eng.php>.

In 2010, my provincial and territorial colleagues and I endorsed the goal of reducing the average daily sodium intake of Canadians to 2,300 mg per day by 2016. Sodium reduction will be achieved through a joint voluntary effort by individual Canadians, the food industry, governments and health care organizations. In February 2012, I co-hosted a Summit on Healthy Weights to build partnerships for collaborative action to reverse the rising trend of childhood overweight and obesity. During the Summit, I announced that the Government of Canada will provide \$4 million for new activities under the Government's Healthy Eating Awareness and Education Initiative, which will encourage consumers to reduce their intake of food and drinks high in calories, fat, sugar or sodium. Over the past two years, Health Canada has been working on finalizing guidance to help the food industry reduce the amount of sodium in processed food products. This guidance was recently released and can be found at <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/legislation/guide-ld/2012-sodium-reduction-indust-eng.php>.

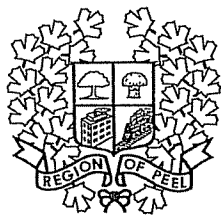
As a consumer, you also have considerable influence over the actions of the manufacturers of the products that you purchase. I encourage you to share your concerns regarding the amount of sodium in food directly with manufacturers.

Thank you for writing.

Sincerely,



Leona Aglukkaq



## Office of the Chair

March 22, 2012

Resolution No. 2012-371

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq  
Minister of Health  
Health Canada  
Brooke Claxton Building, Tunney's Pasture  
Postal Locator: 0906C  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9

Dear Minister Aglukkaq:

Subject: Trans Fat and Sodium in Commercially Prepared Foods in Canada

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I am writing to advise that Peel Regional Council approved the following resolution at its meeting held on March 8, 2012:

"That the Regional Chair, on behalf of Regional Council, write to the Federal Minister of Health to request that Health Canada fulfill its promise to ensure that established trans fat targets for all food categories are met by the food industry;

And further, that the Regional Chair request that a renewed comprehensive trans fat reduction strategy with non-voluntary targets be developed, and transparent monitoring and reporting of food industry progress be provided;

And further, that the Regional Chair request that the Federal Sodium Working Group recommendations be adopted and implemented in full;

And further, that the Regional Chair request that a renewed comprehensive sodium reduction strategy with non-voluntary targets be developed, and transparent monitoring and reporting of food industry progress be provided;

And further, that a copy of the joint report from the Commissioner of Health Services and the Medical Officer of Health, dated February 9, 2012, titled "Trans Fat and Sodium in Commercially Prepared Foods in Canada", be forwarded to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), Peel area MPs, for endorsement of the subject resolution and report."

The amount of trans fat and sodium currently found in commercially prepared foods in Canada is a significant public health concern. High consumption of trans fat and sodium is associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease.

There is an urgent need for federal action to reduce the levels of trans fat and sodium in commercially prepared food by establishing clear, non-voluntary targets and by monitoring and reporting on progress. Only your government is in a position to do this. The pervasiveness of both in commercially prepared foods limits and negates the effectiveness of consumer health education we can do at the local level. It is not enough to educate people to avoid eating something if they have little or no means of doing it.

On behalf of Regional Council, I request that you give consideration to the above resolution. I look forward to your reply. Please quote the Region of Peel's resolution number in your reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Emil Kolb".

Emil Kolb  
Regional Chair and Chief Executive Officer

EK:tr

c: Janette Smith, Commissioner of Health  
Dr. David Mowat, Medical Officer of Health