

Antonio Zamora
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Bethesda, MD 20816-1574
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American Heart Association
National Center
7272 Greenville Avenue
Dallas, TX 75231

Re: Product Certification

While doing some research on food labels, I came across "Promise Fat Free Nonfat Margarine" which has the AHA heart-check logo and is listed on the AHA web site as a heart-friendly product. As a chemist, I was intrigued by the fact that a 14-gram serving had only 5 Calories.

After some analysis, I deduced that a serving really has 61 Calories because over 6 grams of monoglycerides and diglycerides with 56 Calories are not reported on the Nutrition Facts under the contention that "fats" are only triglycerides. The mono- and diglycerides constitute 44% of the weight of the product and are responsible for 92% of the calories, but they remain hidden from the consumer.

Chemistry Professor Emeritus Robert L. Wolke, from the University of Pittsburgh, agreed with my analysis and encouraged me to submit a petition to the Food and Drug Administration to clarify the labeling rules. My petition received Docket Number 2004P-0009/CP 1 which I have attached for your review.

I have several questions: 1) When a request for certification of a product is received, does the AHA perform any independent laboratory analysis on the fat, sodium, cholesterol, and other ingredients to make sure that the AHA certification requirements are met? 2) Or, does the AHA base the certification on the analysis provided by the manufacturer? 3) Will the AHA rescind a certification for a product when it finds out that the certification was based on incomplete or deceptive information?

I would like to ask you to review and modify your certification policy which has good intentions, but which is currently flawed by allowing a high-fat food to be passed off as a heart-friendly, low-fat food. This undermines the credibility of your organization and debases the heart-check logo.

Please let me know how the AHA plans to act on this matter.

Sincerely,

Antonio Zamora

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1. Article Addressed to:

American Heart Assn.
7272 GREENVILLE Ave
DALLAS, TX 75231

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