

PRESS RELEASE

Health claims coming onto the agenda in Latin America says EAS

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The Argentine National Administration of Drugs, Foods and Medical Devices' (ANMAT) newly introduced guidelines on the assessment of health claims in food advertising is an example of a growing trend towards the regulation of health claims in Latin America, an EAS adviser has said.

EAS Food Law Manager Elodie Lebastard said that while health claims themselves are not yet covered by the Argentine food legislation, the country's 'Guidelines for the Presentation and Scientific Assessment of Health Claims for Foods' mark the start of potential future provisions in this area.

The guidelines, which were published at the end of last year, follow the same trend as other countries in the region, with Brazil, Chile and Colombia, already having listed some health claims permitted for foods with conditions of use.

They cover any food advertising intended for the general public, but *not* food labelling and dietary supplements. The *Disposición* that introduces the guidelines also makes provision for the creation of an 'Evaluation Committee for the authorisation of Health Claims for Foods'.

"A key objective in the authority's move to further regulate the use of health claims is improving public health," said Lebastard. "It is too early to predict how many health claims will receive favourable assessments from the Evaluation Committee and how favourably pro-and prebiotics, which were recently integrated into the Argentine Food Code, will be treated."

The guidelines are made up of 15 points, one of which states that human studies to substantiate a health claim will be treated as the priority, while animal and *in Vivo/ex Vivo* studies will only be considered supportive, similar to the assessment criteria of the European Union (EU).

"This requirement is similar to that of the European Union's Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation," said Ms Lebastard, "however, with a different angle – improving public health, rather than the EU's main object of preventing misleading information to the consumer – it will be interesting to see how these guidelines are implemented in practice in Argentina."

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Notes to Editors:

1. EAS provides strategic advice on international regulation on food and nutritional products. It provides companies with regulatory and strategic advice for the marketing and approval of their products in Europe, Asia and Latin America.
2. EAS also advises governments, trade associations and companies on the impact of global policy.
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