Unilever Global Nutrition & Ice cream portfolio assessment against 6 Nutrient Profiling Models (NPMs) and our own NPM

Introduction

At Unilever, we want to help people enjoy healthier, affordable and nutritious diets. To achieve this, we use a Nutrient Profiling Model (NPM) to assess and report the nutritional quality of our food and beverage portfolio, to inform how we reformulate our products, and to inspire our product innovation programmes. As a global business with a presence in over 190 countries, we have used – for more than 20 years – one NPM to do this. This NPM is now called Unilever's Science-based Nutrition Criteria (USNC), which is a Unilever-developed model based on Global WHO dietary guidance. As a leader in this space, we have more than doubled the proportion of our products meeting our criteria over the last decade, and we are committed to continue to improve the nutritional quality of our products.

USNC is a rigorous and effective NPM. Nevertheless, we recognise that it is not the only one. In fact, there are dozens of NPMs currently in use worldwide. Importantly, since different NPM's use different methodologies to assess the nutritional make-up of food, they often arrive at different conclusions about the healthiness of the same product which can be confusing. NPMs are often based on local dietary requirements and consumption habits and developed for different purposes than reformulation such as marketing restrictions and front of pack labelling. Each NPM has their own strengths and weaknesses in their methodology.

In October 2022, we set an example in nutrition transparency to be the first company disclosing our portfolio against six externally endorsed NPMs from different geographies next to our own NPM. We have chosen to do this for our global food and beverage portfolio and for our top 16 markets, based on both volume and value sales. We are now the first company to publicly disclose the performance of the product portfolio against 6 NPMs and our own NPM for 3 consecutive years.

We believe that by taking this approach, we will provide greater transparency to our consumers and stakeholders about the progress we are making and call on the wider industry to follow.

Assessment of portfolio

The assessment of Unilever's foods, ice cream and beverage portfolio, against the different NPM's, was based on the audited 2022 and 2023 dataset used to report Unilever's nutrition commitment to reduce salt, sugar and calories reported in Annual Reports of Accounts. The NPMs in scope of the assessment are: High Fat Sugar Salt (HFSS), NutriScore, Health Star Rating, Chile warning logo, Choices 5 level criteria, Healthy Choice Symbol Singapore. The characteristics of the different NPMs can be found at the end of this document.

Unilever product groups were mapped to the product groups defined in each NPM, and the scoring rules of the individual NPMs were applied to determine the "healthiness" scores of the products. This process resulted in more than 1.2 million data points being assessed.

The results are based on the percentage "healthiness" score per NPM at a global level and for 16 markets, based on volume in tons sold as well as turnover and presented together with the 2021 data which were previously published.

The assessment shows a large diverging outcome in "healthiness" scores to the different NPMs, which is related to the nature of the algorithm as explained in the characteristics of the NPMs. Continuous progress is observed in the assessment based on volume sold between 2021 and 2023. The assessment on turnover is more of a mixed picture where we observe steady values of "healthiness" in 2021 and 2022, and a decline in 2023 for most NPMs. This is due to the fact that price and commodity costs inflation, especially those of vegetable oils used in our dressings' portfolio, have a big impact. This demonstrates that measuring progress in compliance of "healthiness" in volume in tons or servings sold is a better indicator for what people buy and consume than turnover. Therefore, all Unilever's nutrition commitments are always based on volume measurements.

Looking to the future

There is currently no globally aligned approach to set a harmonised "healthiness" score for food and beverage products. We call on the industry and stakeholders to work together to create an industry-wide standard for measuring "healthiness" of portfolios that every company in the food industry can use to incentivize reformulation at scale to enhance the impact on public health.

Nutrient Profile Models
Assessment of Unilever portfolio

	Year	Non-HFSS	A+B	>3.5	No Chile Warning Labels	T1 + T2	Meet HCS criteria	Compliant
Volume								
Global	**2023**	**38%**	**19%**	**19%**	**45%**	**65%**	**44%**	**67%**
	2022	**36%**	**19%**	**18%**	**45%**	**65%**	**44%**	**64%**
	2021	**35%**	**19%**	**17%**	**43%**	**63%**	**43%**	**63%**
Australia & New Zealand	2023	48%	14%	15%	46%	78%	43%	67%
	2022	50%	15%	13%	46%	79%	47%	74%
	2021	53%	15%	14%	50%	83%	49%	75%
Belgium	2023	82%	11%	11%	80%	84%	75%	83%
	2022	80%	12%	10%	79%	84%	73%	83%
	2021	78%	13%	10%	77%	81%	71%	80%
Brazil	2023	18%	17%	17%	17%	37%	11%	88%
	2022	16%	15%	14%	15%	43%	15%	88%
	2021	14%	12%	12%	13%	42%	10%	86%
China	2023	10%	9%	9%	9%	37%	10%	69%
	2022	13%	12%	3%	12%	46%	15%	68%
	2021	13%	12%	3%	12%	31%	12%	68%
France	2023	72%	13%	13%	72%	80%	68%	84%
	2022	73%	8%	8%	73%	82%	68%	82%
	2021	72%	9%	9%	71%	81%	66%	80%
Germany - Austria - Switzerland	2023	42%	13%	13%	39%	66%	39%	57%
	2022	45%	8%	7%	42%	70%	40%	55%
	2021	47%	7%	5%	44%	70%	43%	56%
India	2023	62%	61%	61%	61%	73%	62%	70%
	2022	55%	54%	54%	53%	66%	53%	58%
	2021	55%	53%	53%	51%	62%	50%	58%
Indonesia	2023	31%	30%	30%	30%	44%	4%	42%
	2022	42%	34%	33%	34%	51%	4%	80%
	2021	4%	4%	4%	4%	20%	4%	86%
Italy	2023	36%	12%	12%	32%	62%	33%	59%
	2022	34%	11%	10%	32%	64%	31%	54%
	2021	32%	12%	11%	29%	60%	25%	48%
Mexico	2023	34%	30%	30%	43%	72%	17%	77%
	2022	34%	28%	26%	42%	70%	17%	75%
	2021	32%	27%	25%	39%	68%	16%	69%
Netherlands	2023	67%	16%	20%	63%	75%	50%	70%
	2022	63%	17%	16%	61%	76%	48%	71%
	2021	63%	17%	17%	61%	72%	47%	68%
Philippines	2023	16%	11%	11%	17%	54%	10%	56%
	2022	29%	25%	24%	30%	75%	22%	62%
	2021	22%	21%	19%	21%	62%	17%	58%
South Africa	2023	64%	52%	53%	56%	69%	55%	82%
	2022	66%	55%	55%	59%	74%	60%	86%
	2021	66%	55%	55%	60%	74%	59%	83%
Turkey	2023	50%	3%	3%	50%	82%	48%	62%
	2022	56%	8%	8%	55%	85%	54%	67%
	2021	56%	9%	9%	56%	86%	54%	68%
United Kingdom - Ireland	2023	37%	13%	13%	34%	56%	33%	60%
	2022	33%	12%	11%	34%	58%	34%	59%
	2021	31%	15%	15%	34%	59%	33%	56%
United States	2023	29%	22%	21%	51%	73%	59%	73%
	2022	24%	20%	19%	46%	66%	53%	63%
	2021	23%	20%	20%	46%	68%	53%	64%

Nutrient Profile Models
Assessment of Unilever portfolio

	Year	Non-HFSS	A+B	>3.5	No Chile Warning Labels	T1 + T2	Meet HCS criteria	Compliant
Turnover (excluding Pepsi-Lipton Join Venture Portfolio)								
Global	**2023**	**27%**	**22%**	**22%**	**25%**	**54%**	**17%**	**55%**
	2022	**30%**	**26%**	**24%**	**29%**	**59%**	**23%**	**55%**
	2021	**30%**	**26%**	**24%**	**29%**	**57%**	**23%**	**55%**
Australia & New Zealand	2023	17%	14%	14%	14%	56%	4%	34%
	2022	12%	12%	10%	8%	50%	8%	40%
	2021	20%	17%	15%	16%	59%	7%	38%
Belgium	2023	30%	17%	18%	28%	41%	9%	37%
	2022	43%	26%	21%	42%	59%	30%	49%
	2021	34%	19%	13%	30%	43%	13%	34%
Brazil	2023	11%	9%	10%	9%	36%	3%	73%
	2022	9%	7%	7%	7%	42%	5%	75%
	2021	9%	8%	7%	7%	44%	4%	73%
China	2023	16%	15%	15%	16%	52%	15%	62%
	2022	18%	17%	4%	17%	60%	18%	60%
	2021	22%	22%	7%	22%	42%	21%	64%
France	2023	14%	10%	10%	14%	44%	8%	52%
	2022	25%	20%	19%	25%	54%	17%	49%
	2021	28%	21%	20%	26%	55%	17%	47%
Germany - Austria - Switzerland	2023	17%	11%	11%	15%	46%	11%	33%
	2022	17%	11%	10%	16%	48%	10%	26%
	2021	16%	11%	9%	15%	45%	10%	27%
India	2023	79%	78%	78%	79%	85%	78%	83%
	2022	80%	78%	78%	80%	87%	79%	81%
	2021	81%	79%	79%	81%	86%	79%	82%
Indonesia	2023	39%	38%	38%	38%	56%	10%	54%
	2022	48%	48%	47%	48%	69%	18%	79%
	2021	10%	10%	10%	10%	33%	10%	82%
Italy	2023	11%	9%	9%	8%	49%	8%	34%
	2022	13%	11%	10%	10%	55%	8%	31%
	2021	13%	11%	9%	10%	51%	6%	29%
Mexico	2023	41%	36%	36%	38%	69%	5%	68%
	2022	41%	36%	33%	39%	66%	6%	65%
	2021	39%	34%	31%	37%	65%	6%	59%
Netherlands	2023	34%	22%	30%	27%	50%	8%	40%
	2022	24%	19%	18%	22%	48%	8%	41%
	2021	30%	22%	21%	28%	46%	7%	40%
Philippines	2023	25%	25%	25%	25%	59%	9%	72%
	2022	23%	22%	22%	24%	62%	8%	59%
	2021	21%	21%	19%	20%	54%	13%	59%
South Africa	2023	56%	54%	56%	40%	51%	36%	72%
	2022	56%	56%	57%	40%	51%	41%	79%
	2021	61%	59%	60%	46%	57%	44%	73%
Turkey	2023	12%	5%	6%	11%	77%	3%	28%
	2022	25%	19%	19%	24%	80%	18%	39%
	2021	30%	23%	23%	29%	81%	21%	41%
United Kingdom - Ireland	2023	29%	24%	24%	24%	40%	21%	44%
	2022	25%	21%	19%	30%	46%	28%	42%
	2021	29%	25%	24%	32%	52%	31%	44%
United States	2023	12%	7%	6%	9%	49%	6%	54%
	2022	17%	12%	10%	15%	52%	11%	53%
	2021	19%	15%	14%	16%	59%	11%	54%

The characteristics of the six NPMs in scope

The six NPMs which we have assessed our portfolio against use different algorithms to determine a food product's "healthiness score".

The first three NPMs use a scoring approach. These are:
- High Fat Sugar Salt (HFSS), which is used in the United Kingdom.
- NutriScore (NS), which is used in several European countries.
- Health Star Rating (HSR), which is used in Australia and New Zealand.

In this approach, the overall healthiness of a product is determined by an algorithm which incentivises the inclusion of more healthy nutrients, because they help to "compensate" for the presence of 'nutrients to limit' in the product's final score. Under this model, the product's ingredients and nutrients are assessed per 100g or 100ml of the product. A key challenge with this approach is that where products are consumed in significantly larger or smaller portion sizes than this quantity, it can lead to a product healthiness score which does not reflect the reality of the consumer's intake.

These NPMs use different scoring systems to judge products:
- HFSS uses a binary "HFSS" or "non-HFSS" classification.
- NutriScore classifies products on a scale from A-E.
- HSR grades products on a scale of 0-5 stars, in 0.5-star increments.

In assessing Unilever's portfolio against these NPM's, products were considered "healthy" if they achieved a score of "non-HFSS", A&B in NutriScore, or ≥3.5 in HSR.

The fourth NPM used was the Chile warning logo. In this model – like those listed above - nutrient criteria are applied on a per 100g or 100ml basis, but according to the product's salt, saturated fat, sugar, and calorie profile. The challenges identified previously with a per 100g / 100ml approach also apply in this model. In assessing Unilever's portfolio against this NPM, products were considered "healthy" if there was no warning label applied to any of the four nutrients.

The final two NPM's used a threshold approach, based on product category specific criteria. These were:
- Choices 5 level criteria, an evolution of Choices Int. criteria used as foundation for several country Healthy Choice Logos.

- Healthy Choice Symbol (HCS), used in Singapore.

In this approach, a product's healthiness score is determined based on its performance against specific criteria for nutrients 'to limit', and the presence in specific product groups of calcium, fibre or wholegrain. The role of the product in the diet, the appropriate serving size and frequency of consumption are also considered.

These NPM's also use different scoring systems to judge products:
- Choices classifies products on a T1 to T5 basis.
- HCS use a binary "compliant" or "non-compliant" approach.

In assessing Unilever's portfolio against these NPM's, products were considered "healthy" if they achieved a Choices score of T1 or T2 and were "compliant" in the HCS model.

The threshold approach used by Choices and HCS is very similar to that used by our USNC, which is also determined based on a product's performance against specific criteria for nutrients 'to limit'. However, in the USNC model, some products can be rewarded with better scores if they are downsized, because products in the ice cream and snack categories are measured based on a "per serving" approach, rather than product criteria per 100g or 100ml.
- Like HCS, USNC also uses a binary "compliant" or "non-compliant" scoring system to evaluate products.

References to the full methodologies of the NPMs:
- High Fat Sugar Salt Microsoft Word - Nutrient Profiling template.doc (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- NutriScore https://www.santepubliquefrance.fr/determinants-de-sante/nutrition-et-activite-physique/articles/nutri-score
- Health Star Rating Health Star Rating - Guidance for Industry
- Chile Warning logo http://web.minsal.cl/ley-de-alimentos-nuevo-etiquetado-de-alimentos/
- Choices 5 level criteria Development of the Choices 5-Level Criteria to Support Multiple Food System Actions - PubMed (nih.gov)
- Heathy Choice Symbol Singapore https://www.healthhub.sg/sites/assets/Assets/PDFs/HPB/Food/hcs-nutrient-guidelines-april-2020.pdf
- Unilever Science-based Nutrition Criteria unilever-nutrition-standards-booklet.pdf

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