

Proposed food labels stress calories, sugar, portions



This is the FDA's proposed label for packaged foods to reflect the latest scientific information. (Photo: FDA)

By Kim Painter, Special for USA Today - The nutrition labels on the backs of 700,000 packaged foods are getting a proposed makeover that will make calorie counts more noticeable, serving sizes more realistic and added sugars more obvious.

The changes, proposed by the Food and Drug Administration, were unveiled at the White House Thursday by first lady Michelle Obama. The announcement was tied to the fourth anniversary of her Let's Move Campaign. Like that campaign, the labeling proposal reflects concerns about obesity and the quality of the American diet that were not as prominent when the labels last had a major update in the early 1990s.

"This is a huge deal," Obama said. A consumer "should be able to walk into a grocery store, pick an item off the shelf and tell whether it's good for your family."

The FDA is releasing two versions of the proposed label for everyone from food manufacturers to dietitians to comment on in the next 90 days. Manufacturers would have two years to comply with final requirements, FDA says.

Read more>>>