



agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Directorate Food Safety and Quality Assurance, Private Bag X343, PRETORIA, 0001

FAX COVER SHEET

**TO: All manufacturers, packers, importers and retailers of fruit juice and fruit drink products
Directorate: Inspection Services**

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PAGES:

Subject

INDUSTRY DISPENSATION: INCLUSION OF *COCONUT WATER* UNDER THE FRUIT JUICE AND DRINK REGULATIONS

1. Background

Coconut water on its own does not currently fall within the scope of the South African fruit juice and drink regulations (R.286 of 7/11/1980) and only has to comply with the requirements in regulation R.146 of 01 March 2010 (labeling and advertising of foodstuffs regulations) of the Department of Health.

It however forms part of the international Codex General Standard for Fruit Juices and Nectars (Codex Stan 247 -2005), in which there appears a footnote on page 16 which refers to coconut (*Cocos nucifera* L.) and reads as follows:

"This product is 'coconut water' which is directly extracted from the coconut without expressing the coconut meat."

Over the last few years there has been a rapid growth in the sale of imported plain and flavoured *Coconut water*, as well as *Coconut water* blended with fruit/vegetable juice in the South African market. Since *Coconut water* forms part of the proposed draft regulation pertaining to Fruit and Vegetable Juices, Nectars, Drinks and related products, the Department has now received a request via the SA Fruit Juice Association to include it for the time being as part of the existing fruit juice and drink regulations by means of a dispensation.

2. Dispensation

Permission is hereby granted by the Executive Officer: Agricultural Product Standards in terms of section 3(1)(c) of the Agricultural Product Standards Act, 1990 (Act No. 119 of 1990), to all manufacturers, packers, importers and retailers of fruit juice and fruit drink products to include *Coconut water* under the fruit juice and fruit drink regulations, namely No. R.286 of 7 November 1980, as amended: Provided that –

- (a) "*Coconut water*" means the product which is directly extracted from the coconut without expressing the coconut meat/flesh; and
- (b) the *Coconut water* shall comply with the following specifications:

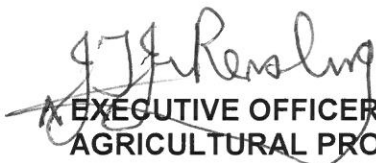
Minimum Brix when reconstituted	Minimum coconut water content (% by volume of ready-to-drink product) for a Nectar
5.0	25.0

This permission is subject to the following conditions:

- (a) All other conditions of regulation R.286 of 7 November 1980, as amended, shall be complied with.
- (b) It may be withdrawn at any time should a valid complaint be received.
- (c) All manufacturers, packers, importers and retailers of fruit juice and fruit drink products indemnify this Directorate and this Department from any detrimental effect, financially or otherwise, which may emanate as a result of this permission.
- (d) Termination date: When the proposed new Fruit and Vegetable Juices, Nectars, Drinks and related products regulations come into force after its publication in the Government Gazette.

3. Kindly take note:

The DAFF will not expect the labelling on existing *Coconut Water* packaging which may be non-compliant in terms of regulation R.286 dated 07/11/1980, as amended, to change with immediate effect and any possible amendments required may be gradually phased in over the next 12 months, i.e. by not later than **30 November 2016**.



EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT STANDARDS ACT, 1990 (ACT 119 OF 1990)