

Manufacturers thrive by providing the best value to their customers and retailers. Packers will work with their consumers and retailers to determine when and how to use metric units on their products. These companies will develop marketing and educational efforts that promote their new packaging to consumers. NIST will work with manufacturers and retailers to coordinate Metric option introduction, including collaborating with State regulators and developing consumer educational resources.

Conclusion

The NIST proposal to amend the FPLA is designed to provide U.S. manufacturers increased flexibility when labeling their products: 1) Dual Unit label (current option) or 2) Metric label (additional option). U.S. packers may choose to continue to use the Dual Unit option.

Expanding the FPLA will enable U.S. manufacturers to implement the Metric option at their own pace, in the most efficient manner, and at the lowest cost, as part of the routine redesign of packaging or with the introduction of new products.

The proposed amendment to the FPLA would help strengthen the ability of U.S. manufacturers to compete in the global marketplace by:

- Expanding labeling options to allow all U.S. manufacturers to make labeling decisions based on customer needs and market demands;
- Permitting packagers, through increased labeling flexibility, to reduce production and packaging costs by producing fewer label types for different markets; and
- Enabling consumers to make value comparisons using the Metric option when it is used on packages.

The NIST Metric Program works with the National Conference on Weights and Measures (NCWM), U.S. industry, and other stakeholders to promote the voluntary use of metric units on packages. NIST offers a Handbook 130, *Packaging and Labeling*, seminar for both Industry and Weights and Measures Official participants, which focuses on the *Uniform Packaging and Labeling Regulation* (UPLR).

Learning objectives include the interpretation and application of UPLR requirements for packaging of consumer and non-consumer commodities, determination of appropriate methods of sale, and evaluation of package labels present in the U.S. marketplace. Packaging and labeling training requests can be made directly to the OWM Training Program. Currently scheduled opportunities are listed on the Calendar of Events webpage.¹⁶ NIST continues to develop labeling, unit pricing, and advertising guidelines for Metric option packages. NIST has developed educational materials to assist retailers and consumers understand metric units and to encourage consumers to use unit pricing to make value comparisons.

¹⁶ NIST Office of Weights and Measures (OWM) Training Program (301-975-3272), Calendar of Events <http://www.nist.gov/pml/wmd/calendar.cfm>.

