

Policy on reduction of salt and sodium consumption to reduce NCDs

The 8th National Health Assembly,
Having considered the report on “ Policy on reduction of salt and sodium consumption to reduce NCD”¹,

Concerned about an increase of health problems caused by high level of salt and sodium consumption leading to a rapid increase in the incidence of hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and kidney disease in Thai society, while increasing more severe complications in diabetes patients,

Aware that reduction of salt and sodium consumption is an important and urgent matter for which food product manufacturers or distributors need to show salt and sodium contents in an appropriate format easy to understand in order to reduce the incidence of hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and kidney disease as well as the complications of diabetes,

Noting the global trend and movement regarding the target to reduce salt and sodium consumption by 30% by 2025 and that the 6th National Health Assembly adopted a resolution to reduce salt and sodium consumption as one of the nine targets in the prevention and control of NCDs in Thailand,

Acknowledging the action for NCD reduction through campaigns to make consumers and business sector understand about reduced salt and sodium consumption, while continuing the drive to control iodine deficiency disorder and support the consumption of an appropriate amount of iodine-fortified salt,

Appreciating the networks concerned for their efforts to educate the public to reduce salt and sodium consumption, e.g. the Salt Reduction Network, Nephrology Society of Thailand, Thai Dietetic Association, Thai Health Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth), Bureau of Food of the Food and Drug Administration, and Department of Health, Ministry of Public Health,

Admiring the networks concerned for their contribution in the drafting of the policy on reduced salt and sodium consumption, e.g. Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health; Faculty of Medicine, Ramathibodi Hospital, Mahidol University; Thai NCD Net; and International Health Policy Program,

Hereby has passed the following resolutions:

1. Requesting the Ministry of Public Health by way of the Department of Disease Control as lead agency, together with Department of Health, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Medical Sciences, Bureau of Management of Thailand Healthy Lifestyle Strategic Plan, Salt Reduction Network, Office of the Consumer Protection Board, and other partner networks concerned, to take the following actions:

¹ Document NHA 8/Main 4

1.1 Establish a national mechanism to coordinate and integrate the work to drive strategies on reduced salt and sodium consumption in Thailand and set the matter as a national agenda,

1.2 Develop and finalize the national strategy on reduced salt and sodium consumption by the fiscal year 2016,

1.3 Develop action plans to reduce salt and sodium consumption at every level to be implemented by all concerned agencies,

1.4 Set standards and issue rules and regulations on the amount of salt and sodium in various kinds of domestic and imported food products, and develop labels displaying information on salt and sodium contents in an appropriate format easy to understand, e.g. using color bars,

1.5 Campaign to launch a policy-oriented drive in the public, private and civil society sectors, as well as requesting the agencies concerned to support business operators who correctly comply with the measures,

1.6 Conduct surveillance, supervision, monitoring, and assessment of consumption behaviors of the public; analyze environmental factors and disease burden; and monitor the amount of salt and sodium in food products consumed by the public,

1.7 Produce and distribute simple test kits to measure the amount of sodium;

2. Requesting agencies concerned to provide knowledge and create awareness in an attempt to modify behavior to reduce salt and sodium consumption for NCD reduction by taking the following action:

2.1 Thai Health Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth), together with Department of Health, Department of Public Relations, mass media of all branches, Office of the Consumer Protection Board, Salt Reduction Network, local government organizations, and other partner networks, to create awareness in all age groups of the general public and in all levels of business sector through continuous dissemination of information and knowledge in the format that everyone can access to and follow on the reduction of salt and sodium consumption by reducing food seasonings such as fish sauce, soya sauce, pickled fish, *budu* sauce, and shrimp paste,

2.2 The Ministry of Education to improve curriculums or develop learning packages, as well as integrating the learning/teaching process in education institutes at all levels to promote learning and create awareness on reduced salt and sodium consumption;

3. Requesting members of health assemblies at all levels to take action to drive toward reduced salt and sodium consumption in various agencies and in the communities, including create community networks and role models in the reduction of salt and sodium consumption;

4. Requesting local government organizations to set measures conducive to promoting low level of salt and sodium in the production of instant food, ready-to-eat food, food preparations in the household and shops;

5. Requesting the food industry, food business operators, restaurant associations, Thai Dietetic Association, food critics and connoisseurs, local wisdom networks involved in food production to review, develop, promote improving recipes, and produce food with reduced salt and sodium contents, as well as to promote sale of products with low level of salt and sodium in a concrete manner;

6. Requesting agencies concerned with research and development, e.g. National Research Council of Thailand, Thailand Research Fund, Health Systems Research

Institute, International Health Policy Program, Food and Drug Administration Thailand, and education institutes to support the following lines of work:

6.1 Study innovations on the reduction of salt and sodium contents in food, including exploring salt replacements and putting them to good use in a concrete manner,

6.2 Develop laws to promote reduction of salt and sodium contents in food and drinks, including setting guidelines for advertisement of food with high level of salt and sodium contents;

7. Requesting the Secretary-General of the National Health Commission to report the progress of the implementation of this resolution at the 10th National Health Assembly.