

**REFORMULATION OF FOOD PRODUCTS:
EVALUATING A FRAMEWORK WITH FOOD COMPANIES**

MAIN TOPIC (1 -5): REFORMULATION, FOODCOMPANIES, FOODTECHNOLOGY,
LEGISLATION, CONSUMER

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INTRODUCTION

The Dutch Government signed an agreement with the food sector to lower the amounts of salt, saturated fat, sugar (energy) in food products (1). To reformulate, different perspectives are important for food companies: **Nutrition and health** (relevant nutrients), **Food technology** (optimal product quality), **Legislation** (food law, claims) and **Consumer science** (taste, marketing). These are combined into a “Framework for Reformulation” and evaluated in a qualitative study.

OBJECTIVES

To evaluate a “Framework for Reformulation” with food companies.

METHODS / DESIGN

Interviews were held with a semi-structured questionnaire in 17 food companies.

Type of food producers	Number
Bread and/or sweet bakery products	9
Meat products	5
Convenience products (meals, sauces, etc)	3

RESULTS

Perspectives	Examples mentioned
Nutrition & health	Opportunities for salt, saturated fat and sugar reduction
Food technology	Replacement of functionality of ingredients, comparable product quality
Legislation	Sparingly use of claims, Need for legislation for reformulation Need for government to push more
Consumer science	Traditional product (meat) or luxury product (sweet bakery) positioning
New aspects	Push to reduce E numbers, price, retail (costs, sensory requirements)
Legend: Barriers & opportunities	

Interviews showed that the combination of the 4 perspectives was important for all companies to reformulate their products. However additional aspects were mentioned to be important as well. Examples are shown in Table 2, expressed as barriers and opportunities.

CONCLUSIONS

The four perspectives: Nutrition and health, Food technology, Legislation and Consumer science play an important role in reformulation. The retailer, price and the push to reduce E-numbers (clean label) are also important and have to be added to the Framework.

1 Ministerie VWS (2014). *Akkoord Verbetering productsamenstelling zout, verzadigd vet, suiker*. Retrieved from: <http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten-en-publicaties/convenanten/2014/01/23/akkoord-verbetering-productsamenstelling-zout-verzadigd-vet-suiker.html> (last accessed April 2014)