

## The Application of the FoodFinder Web-Based Software in Food Labelling

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** In South Africa, food labelling regulations are governed by the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics, and Disinfectants Act (Act 54 of 1972); Regulations Relating to the Labelling and Advertising of Foodstuffs (R. 146 of 2010) and the most recently published draft R.3337 of April 2023. These regulations outline the mandatory information that must be displayed on food labels, including ingredients, nutritional information, allergens, and specific claims. The use of dietary analysis software, FoodFinder, facilitates the accurate calculation of nutrient information of mixed dishes, and can be used to ensure compliance with these regulations.

**Objective:** To educate users on how best to use the dietary analysis software program tool, FoodFinder, to comply with the latest food labelling regulations of South Africa.

**Methods:** A training approach will be used to demonstrate ways of using FoodFinder for food labelling purposes and flag the limitations whilst using the software.

**Results:** Mandatory food labelling regulations are clear and prescriptive. FoodFinder is allowed for analysis purposes of mixed dishes or food products when no health claims are linked to the product. Regulations allow for the use of single ingredient agricultural commodities, located within the national food composition database of South Africa, embedded within FoodFinder, to be used in creating recipe calculations, for food labelling purposes.

**Conclusion:** Educating users is crucial for maximizing FoodFinder's potential for accurate food labelling. An increased awareness and understanding of food labelling regulations together with accurate usage of FoodFinder for labelling purposes, has significant benefits in generating detailed nutrient information to consumers. Education campaigns targeted at users of FoodFinder can help enhance compliance of food manufacturers and enable consumers to make informed choices based on the nutrient information provided on food labels.

### PRESENTER BIOGRAPHY: JOELAINE CHETTY

Joelaine Chetty completed her undergraduate, BSc Dietetics (Hons) degree in 1998 at the University of the Western Cape. She attained her Masters of Public Health (MPH) degree at the University of Cape Town in 2013. Kicked off her Nutrition/Dietetics career in Gauteng as a Community Dietitian for the Central Wits Regional Health Services. An interest in Food composition focus area was sparked and initiated at the South African Medical Research Council in 2000. A strong interest in the scarce skill of food compilation has seen her active in the field and committed in striving for a country-specific food composition database for South Africa. She has presented food composition related research nationally and internationally over her 15year food composition field. She is a member of the Health Professionals Council of South Africa and Association for Dietetics of South Africa. Joelaine is a Military spouse and mother of two teenagers.