

CALORIE INFORMATION TO CONSUMERS SHOULD INFORM, NOT MISLEAD

Brussels, 26 March 2015. *spiritsEUROPE* comments on the position announced today by the Brewers of Europe on calorie labelling of alcoholic beverages.

spiritsEUROPE is in favour of useful, appropriate information for consumers, whether that is information about nutrition, origin, ingredients, responsible drinking messages or any other relevant information. “We are also in favour of an open dialogue for the assessment of the most appropriate method of provision of each information, that is, whether on- or off-label. But that information must work for consumers, not mislead them,” said Paul Skehan, Director General, spiritsEUROPE.

The Brewers’ of Europe suggest that calorie information for alcoholic beverages should be provided per 100ml portions. This may serve the beer interest, but is unlikely to serve the interests of the public and goes against messages about responsible drinking. While 100ml is usually a fraction of the amount of beer a person might consume in one serving, it can equal to three servings of spirits: the maximum daily recommendation for men and beyond what is recommended for women. A calorie comparison based on 100 ml rather than per serving will mislead rather than inform. Information to consumers about calorific content should not confuse messages about responsible drinking.

The spiritsEUROPE website created to inform consumers about responsible drinking www.responsibledrinking.eu already contains information about calorie content.



responsibledrinking.eu

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10. Information on calories

The calories contained in alcoholic beverages mainly come from ethanol (alcohol). There are 7 calories in 1g of ethanol.

				
100 ml of wine – 12° ≈ 74Kcal <i>(with variation between dry or sweet wine)</i>	100 ml of champagne – 12° ≈ 74Kcal <i>(with variation between brut or semi-brut)</i>	250 ml of beer – 5° ≈ 106Kcal	60 ml of liqueurs – 20° ≈ 110Kcal <i>(for liqueurs)</i> ≈ 190Kcal <i>(for cream liqueurs)</i>	30 ml of spirits – 40° ≈ 68Kcal <i>(small variation between some dark and white spirits)</i>

In addition, some spirits drinks (such as liqueurs) have by definition a certain quantity of sugar. Similarly, the soft drink you choose in your cocktail will impact the total calorie content of your drink. While a standard glass of beer, wine or spirits contains the same amount of ethanol, they can vary in volume. Their calorific value also varies given the level of sugar contained. You should always drink within drinking guidelines i.e. not more than 60 ml of spirits for women (2 drinks) or 90 ml of spirits for men (3 drinks) per day. A glass of spirits drink is never consumed by 100ml! This would exceed the low-risk **drinking guidelines** and therefore 100ml cannot be considered as a unit of reference to inform consumers on calories for spirits.

A standard drink contains 8 to 13g of pure alcohol

ENDS

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PRESS RELEASE

Notes:

- **spiritsEUROPE** represents the spirits industry, comprising 32 associations and 8 multinationals.
- Our sector long commitment is reflected in 317 prevention initiatives in place since the inception of the European Alcohol and Health Forum: see www.drinksinitiatives.eu.
- spiritsEUROPE encourages responsible commercial communications, including online training: www.marketresponsibly.eu.

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