

REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8172

AN ACT PROMOTING SALT IODIZATION NATIONWIDE AND
FOR RELATED PURPOSES

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the
Philippines in Congress assembled:*

SECTION 1. *Title.* – This Act shall be known as "An Act
for Salt Iodization Nationwide (ASIN)."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the
policy of the State to protect and promote the health of the people,
to maintain an effective food regulatory system, and to provide
the entire population especially women and children with proper
nutrition. For this purpose, the State shall promote the nutritional
fortification of food to combat micronutrient malnutrition as a
priority health program for the nation.

SEC. 3. *Purposes.* – The purposes of this Act are to:

a) contribute to the elimination of micronutrient
malnutrition in the country, particularly iodine deficiency
disorders, through the cost-effective preventive measure of salt
iodization;

b) require all producers/manufacturers of food-grade salt
to iodize the salt that they produce, manufacture, import, trade
or distribute;

c) require the Department of Health (DOH) to undertake
the salt iodization program and for its Bureau of Food and Drugs
(BFAD), to set and enforce standards for food-grade iodized salt
and to monitor compliance thereof by the food-grade salt
manufacturers;

d) require the local government units (LGUs), through their health officers and nutritionists/dietitians, or in their absence through their sanitary inspectors, to check and monitor the quality of food-grade salt being sold in their market in order to ascertain that such salt is properly iodized;

e) require the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to regulate and monitor trading of iodized salt;

f) direct the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), in collaboration with the Technology and Livelihood Resource Center (TLRC), to initiate, promote, and cause the transfer of technology for salt iodization;

g) authorize the National Nutrition Council (NNC), the policy-making and coordinating body on nutrition, to serve as the advisory board on salt iodization;

h) provide mechanisms and incentives for the local salt industry in the production, marketing, and distribution of iodized salt; and

i) ensure the sustainability of salt iodization program.

SEC. 4. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

a) *Micronutrient malnutrition* - a disorder resulting from deficiencies in vitamin A, iron, iodine and other micronutrients which the body needs in minute quantities everyday.

b) *Iodine deficiency disorders* - a broad spectrum of deficiencies resulting from lack of iodine in the diet which leads to the reduction of intellectual and physical capacity affecting everyone who is iodine-deficient and may manifest as goiter, mental retardation, physical and mental defects, and cretinism.

c) *Food fortification* - the addition of nutrients to processed foods at levels above the natural state.

d) *Salt iodization* - the addition of iodine to salt intended for human or animal consumption in accordance with specifications as to form, fortificant, method, manner and composition as may be prescribed by the BFAD.

e) *Food-grade salt* - salt for human and animal consumption as distinguished from industrial salt.

f) *Regulatory requirements* - the provisions of all applicable laws, regulations, executive orders, and other enactments related to food quality and safety, purity, nutritional composition, and other aspects of food regulation or control.

g) *Industrial salt* - salt used in the treatment, processing, and/or manufacture of non-food commercial products.

h) *Manufacturer* - one who produces, imports, trades in, and distributes salt.

i) *Subsistence producer / manufacturer* - one who produces, trades in or distributes salt not exceeding two metric tons (2 m.t.) of salt per year.

j) *Small producer / manufacturer* - one who produces, imports, trades in, or distributes salt ranging from more than two metric tons (2 m.t.) to three hundred metric tons (300 m.t.) per year.

k) *Medium producer / manufacturer* - one who produces, imports, trades in, or distributes salt ranging from more than three hundred metric tons (300 m.t.) to two thousand metric tons (2,000 m.t.) per year.

l) *Large producer / manufacturer* - one who produces, imports, trades in, or distributes salt exceeding two thousand metric tons (2,000 m.t.) per year.

SEC. 5. *Applicability.* – a) This Act shall apply to the entire salt industry, including salt producers/manufacturers, importers, traders, and distributors, as well as government and non-government agencies involved in salt iodization activities.

b) Iodized salt that conforms to the standards set by the BFAD to meet national nutritional needs shall be made available to consumers: *Provided*, That the implementation of this Act shall be enforced over a staggered period of one (1) year for large and medium producers/manufacturers; two (2) years for small producers/manufacturers; and five (5) years for subsistence producers/manufacturers.

c) All food outlets, restaurants, and stores are hereby required to make available to customers only iodized salt in their establishment upon effectivity of this Act. These establishments shall be monitored with the help of LGUs through its health officers and nutritionists/dietitians, or in their absence, the sanitary inspectors to check and monitor the quality of food-grade salt being sold or served in such establishments.

d) In areas endemic to iodine deficiency disorders, iodized salt shall be made available. Local government officials at the provincial and municipal levels shall provide mechanisms to ensure enforcement of this provision through ordinances and public information campaigns.

e) All food manufacturers/processors using food-grade salt are also required to use iodized salt in the processing of their products and must comply with the provisions of this Act not later than one (1) year from its effectivity: *Provided*, That the use of iodized salt shall not prejudice the quality and safety of their food products: *Provided, however*, That the burden of proof and testing for any prejudicial effects due to iodized salt fortification lies on the said food manufacturer/processor.

f) Salt producers/ manufacturers shall register with the BFAD, which shall maintain an updated registry of salt producers/manufacturers and shall monitor compliance with salt iodization program.

g) All food-grade salt shall be labeled in a manner that is true and accurate, not likely to mislead purchasers and in accordance with the requirements prescribed by the BFAD.

h) For a period of three (3) years from the effectivity of this Act, the DOH shall provide free iodized salt to indigents residing in sixth class municipalities as may be allowed by their annual appropriations.

SEC. 6. Support to the Salt Industry. – The following agencies and institutions shall support the salt iodization program through their respective internal programs:

a) the DTI is hereby required to assist and support local salt producers/manufacturers in upgrading their production technologies to include iodization by helping them obtain soft loans and financial assistance for the procurement of salt iodization machines, packaging equipment and technology and fortificant; and by ensuring the systematic distribution of the iodized salt in the market;

b) the Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA) shall assist the formation of cooperatives of local salt producers/manufacturers in order that they can economically engage in salt iodization and distribution of iodized salt;

c) the DOST, in collaboration with the TLRC, shall develop and implement comprehensive programs for the acquisition of, design and manufacture of salt iodization machines and transfer of salt iodization technology to small and subsistence local salt producers/manufacturers; and

d) the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and other appropriate government agencies shall identify areas that are suitable for use as salt farms with the purpose of protecting such areas from environmental risks to ensure sustainability of iodized salt production.

SEC. 7. Public Information. – The benefits and rationale of the use of iodized salt shall be adequately disseminated and promoted through organized, systematic and nationwide information campaign which shall involve major sectors of society to be spearheaded by the DOH, in cooperation and coordination with the LGUs and other agencies concerned, particularly the

Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), the Philippine Information Agency (PIA), provincial science centers, private sector, and students.

The implementing agency, in coordination with the PIA, shall seek the cooperation of the media sector to assist in public information dissemination. Salt iodization and its benefits shall also be included and given emphasis in all levels of health subjects in both public and private schools.

SEC. 8. *The Salt Iodization Advisory Board.* – The National Nutrition Council (NNC), as presently composed, including representatives of the DENR, the medical profession and the salt manufacturers, shall serve as the salt iodization advisory board and shall function as the policy and coordinating body on salt iodization programs and activities. It shall coordinate the efforts of all agencies concerned and monitor the implementation of the provisions of this Act. It shall also submit an annual report to the Congress of the Philippines on the progress of the salt iodization program and offer recommendations for its improvement.

SEC. 9. *Sanctions.* – The procedures for imposing sanctions under this Act and for inspecting and investigating the premises where any salt is received, held, manufactured, labeled, stored, displayed, delivered, distributed, sold, or located, or where it is reasonably believed these activities are being carried out or where salt is located, shall be in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act No. 3720, otherwise known as the Food, Drugs and Cosmetics Act, As Amended: *Provided*, That any person, whether natural or juridical, who violates any of the provisions of this Act or any of the rules and regulations promulgated for its effective implementation shall be punished by a fine of not less than One thousand pesos (P1,000) nor more than One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000): *Provided, however*, That if the violation is committed by any officer, director or member of a business and a juridical entity acting beyond the scope of his authority, such officer, director or member responsible therefor shall be personally liable for the fine: *Provided, further*, That such violator shall suffer a revocation of its business permit and/or a ban of its product from the market: *Provided, finally*, That the BFAD, in coordination with the LGUs concerned, shall be

authorized to impose and collect the fines from the violators, and such collections shall accrue to the BFAD for its use in the implementation of this Act.

SEC. 10. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall initially be charged to the appropriations of the agencies concerned, as may be appropriated, under the current General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for its implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The DOH, in cooperation with the agencies concerned, shall formulate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act within sixty (60) days from its approval.

SEC. 12. *Separability Clause.* – If any portion of this Act is declared invalid, the remainder of this Act shall not be affected by such declaration and shall remain valid and enforceable.

SEC. 13. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation, whichever is earlier.

Approved, December 20, 1995.