Types of nutrition and health claims allowed in Singapore

- Nutrient content and nutrient comparative claims
- Nutrient function claims
- Other function claims
- Nutrient specific diet related health claims

Nutrient content and nutrient comparative claims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrient content claims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nutritive property of the product in terms of energy, protein, fat, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, and any other nutrients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declaration of nutrition information panel (NIP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulated under the Food Regulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy (including low-calorie)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamins and minerals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines provided by the Health Promotion Board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nutrient comparative claims

- Compare nutrient content of the product with a reference food
- Declaration of nutrition information panel (NIP) and to include a statement to compare the nutrient content of food with reference food
- Guidelines provided by the Health Promotion Board
Nutrient function claims

• Describe the physiological role of nutrient in growth, development and normal functions of body
• Meet the requirements/guidelines for respective nutrient content
• 29 approved nutrient function claims
• Examples:
  – Vitamin A is essential for the functioning of the eye.
  – Dietary aids the digestive system

Other function claims

• Claims on specific beneficial effects of the consumption of foods or their constituents, in the context of total diet on normal functions or biological activities of the body
• 18 approved other function claims (including those for young children)
• Examples:
  – Prebiotic blend (Galacto-oligosaccharides and long chain Fructo-oligosaccharide), helps support the child’s natural defences.
  – Inulin helps in calcium absorption.

Nutrient specific diet related claims

• Describes the link between nutrients, overall diet and respective diseases
• Support national nutrition health policy
• Meet specific criteria stipulated under the Singapore Food Regulations
• 5 acceptable claims to target the main health concerns in Singapore
  – Calcium, vitamin D and osteoporosis
  – Sodium and hypertension
  – Saturated fat, trans fat and heart disease
  – Whole grains, fruit, vegetables and heart disease
  – Whole grains, fruit, vegetables and cancer
• Example:
  – “A healthy diet with adequate calcium and vitamin D, with regular exercise, helps to achieve strong bones and may reduce the risk of osteoporosis. (here state the name of the food) is a good source of/high in/enriched in/fortified with calcium”.

Guidance on health claims

• Vitamins and Nutrient Calculator
• Application of new health claims
Vitamins and Nutrients Calculator

Guidance on health claims

TOOLS & RESOURCES

Vitamins and Nutrients Calculator

Traders may use this function to find out the requirements for making any nutrition claims on food products. Consumers may also run a search to better understand the claims found on your purchases.

FOOD TYPE:

- Select Food Type

VITAMIN / NUTRIENT / MINERAL:

- Vitamin A
- Vitamin B1 (Thiamine)
- Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin)
- Vitamin B6 (Pyridoxine)
- Vitamin B12 (Cyanocobalamin)
- Folic acid
- Niacine
- Vitamin C

Guidance on health claims – Vitamins and Nutrients Calculator

Search Result

Sample Nutrient Information Panel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Servings per package</th>
<th>Per Serving* or</th>
<th>Per 100 g (or 100ml)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>Kcal, kJ or both</td>
<td>Kcal, kJ or both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>g</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Carbohydrate</td>
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* (here insert the nutrients for which nutrition claims are made, or any other nutrients to be declared)

Guidance on health claims - Vitamins and Nutrients Calculator

Vitamin A

To qualify for use of the following approved claims, the prepacked food product must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Incorporate a nutrition information panel (template as shown here);
2. Declare the vitamin A content under the nutrition information panel; and
3. Meet the criteria for use of the respective claims.

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<th>Claim</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<td>Presence of vitamin A</td>
<td>Contain at least 125 micrograms (mcg) of retinol activity in per 200ml of the product.</td>
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<td>Example: &quot;Contains/Source of/Added with Vitamin A&quot;</td>
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<td>Claims for food that is enriched, or fortified in vitamin A</td>
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Application of new health claims

• Established the Advisory Committee on Evaluation of Health Claims since August 2009
• Received 28 applications over the 6 years and 6 claims were approved
Process

Applicant systematically reviews evidence to substantiate claim

Applicant submits application form attached with relevant documents to AVA Secretariat

AVA Secretariat screens for relevant evidence guided by Codex Guidelines on Scientific Substantiation of Health Claims

AVA Secretariat consolidates responses from Advisory Members and also contributes to the evaluation

Forward to Advisory Members for further evaluation

Estimated time required for complete cycle: 9 months, depending on:
• Complexity of claims submitted
• Turn-around time by advisory members

Recommendation made to AVA management

Application of new health claims

Summary of proposed claim

Identify food or food constituent
Proposed wording of claim
Targeted group of consumers
Description of claimed effect
Conditions for use of claim
Regulatory status of the claim

Guidance on health claims

Summary of studies submitted

Type of Study
Type of information provided in the study (e.g. cause and effect relationship)

Annexes

Update on Singapore Food (Amendment) Regulations 2014:
Food containing phytosterols, phytosterol esters, phytostanols or phytostanol esters

• Approved function claim

“Plant sterols/stanols have been shown to lower/reduce blood cholesterol. High blood cholesterol is a risk factor in the development of coronary heart disease”

Type of food products

Before
• Milk containing no more than 3 g total fat per 100 g, or 1.5 g total fat per 100 ml;
• Yoghurt containing no more than 3 g total fat per 100 g; and
• Fat spread.

Now
• Any edible vegetable fat or oil containing not more than 20 g of saturated fat per 100 g of total fat;
• any margarine or fat spread containing not more than 27 g of saturated fat per 100 g of total fat; or
• Any other food containing not more than 3 g of total fat per 100 g or 1.5 g of total fat per 100 ml.

Update on Singapore Food (Amendment) Regulations 2014:
Food containing phytosterols, phytosterol esters, phytostanols or phytostanol esters
Labelling requirement

Before

- The product is a special purpose food intended exclusively for people who want to lower their blood cholesterol level;
- Patients on cholesterol lowering medication should only consume the product under medical supervision;
- The product may not be nutritionally appropriate for pregnant and breast-feeding women and children under the age of 5 years;
- The product should be used as part of a balanced and varied diet, including regular consumption of fruit and vegetables to help maintain carotenoid levels;

Now

- The product is a special purpose food intended for people who want to lower their blood cholesterol level;
- A statement suggesting the amount of the food (in g or ml) to be consumed each time (referred to as a serving) and the number of servings suggested to be consumed per day, with a statement of the amount of phytosterols or phytostanols that each serving contains.

Proactive review of nutrient function claims

- Consulted the Advisory Committee on Evaluation of Health Claims on conducting a proactive review on nutrients that have a long history of their physiological role in growth, development and normal functions of the body.
- In recognition of:
  - the limitations of available current published scientific papers;
  - the needs of industry, especially the small-medium enterprises; and
  - the international movement towards the development of foods with health benefits
- Collaboration with industry associations represented in the Advisory Committee on Evaluation of Health Claims to identify nutrient function claims of interest with the following criteria:
  - The claims describe the general growth, development and the functions of the body, in relation to nutrients which preferably have locally established recommended daily allowance
  - The claims are supported with approval from other major developed countries

Progress

Review science of the proposed claims

Set criteria for the use of the proposed claims

Publish approved new claims with criteria in the AVA Website

Last quarter of 2014 – Third quarter of 2015

- Consumption in a day of a total of more than 3 g of phytosterols (whether in free form or as derived from any phytosterol esters) or phytostanols (whether in free form or as derived from any phytostanol esters), or both, does not provide any additional benefit in lowering blood cholesterol levels;
- Consumption in a day of a total of at least 2 g of phytosterols (whether in free form or as derived from any phytosterol esters) or phytostanols (whether in free form or as derived from any phytostanol esters), or both, has been shown to lower blood cholesterol levels; and
- A statement suggesting the amount of the food (in g or ml) to be consumed each time (referred to as a serving), and a statement of the total amount of phytosterols (whether in free form or as derived from any phytosterol esters) and phytostanols (whether in free form or as derived from any phytostanol esters) that each serving contains.

Update on Singapore Food (Amendment) Regulations 2014:

- Food containing phytosterols, phytosterol esters, phytostanols or phytostanol esters
- Consumption of more than 3 g per day of added phytosterols or phytostanols should be avoided; and
- A statement suggesting the amount of the food (in g or ml) to be consumed each time (referred to as a serving) and the number of servings suggested to be consumed per day, with a statement of the amount of phytosterols or phytostanols that each serving contains.
Future Developments

• Provide clearer guidance documents/tools for traders on the appropriate use of approved claims
• Gather feedback from consumers on perception of health claims on food products

Thank you

For more information on labelling requirements, please visit the AVA website at: www.ava.gov.sg