

# Nutrition labelling for fortified foods in Ethiopia



Mandatory fortification of edible oil with Vitamins A and D, and wheat flour with zinc and vitamins B1, B2, B3, B6, B9 (folate) and B12. Mandatory iodisation of food-grade salt. The Ethiopian Food and Drug Authority (EFDA) can order any food manufacturer to fortify food with specific vitamins and minerals.

## 1. TAKEAWAYS

Labels on fortified foods in Ethiopia may need to include a nutrient declaration (but full, new fortification standards were unable to be accessed), but otherwise they are voluntary except in particular circumstances (3). The label must also include a statement of the vitamin or mineral added and be labelled as “fortified” and can include voluntary health and nutrition claims provided conditions are met (4). A draft fortification logo is being developed, other supplementary nutrition information may be included in some circumstances, and a National Standard Mark is permitted on some foods (5). On page 2, wheat flour is provided as a pictorial case study product (6) as well as a summary of key regulations (7) and links to further information (8)



## 2. GENERAL

- Labels for pre-packaged foods must be clear, prominent, indelible, and readily legible, and in Amharic or English language.
- It is an offence to label food in a false, misleading or deceptive manner (e.g., to include B12 in the food’s ingredients list when there is no B12 in the food).
- All foods must be registered with the Ethiopian Food and Drug Authority (EFDA) and all food businesses (e.g., manufacturers) must hold a certificate of competency. An e-service portal (<http://www.efda.gov.et/e-service/>) allows for online applications for certificates of competency and related services.



## 3. NUTRIENT DECLARATION

Nutrient declarations on pre-packaged foods are voluntary as there is no requirement to include a list of the amounts of different nutrients. However, where labelling places special emphasis on the presence or low contents of an ingredient, the label must declare the percentage of the ingredient in the final product. No specific format for this is outlined.

Under new fortification standards for wheat and edible oil, nutrition declarations may be mandatory for these mandatorily fortified foods. These standards were not available in full to confirm their requirements.



## 4. NUTRITION AND HEALTH CLAIMS + FORTIFICATION CLAIMS



- You must label fortified foods as “fortified” and state the vitamin or mineral used in fortification (it is unclear if this is required in the ingredient list or in a declaration).
- You may include voluntary nutrition and health claims on your labels, but when a claim or description places special emphasis on the presence of at least one valuable and/or characterising ingredient/nutrient (e.g., “High in vitamins A and D”) or places emphasis on the low content of at least one ingredient/nutrient (e.g., “Low in sodium”):
  - The content of that specific ingredient/nutrient in the final product must be declared.
- Claims (or any label information or advertisements) cannot be false, misleading or deceptive or imply that a food can prevent or treat disease or categorize food as medicine in any way .



Standard Mark

## 5. SUPPLEMENTARY NUTRITION INFORMATION



A draft fortification logo is under development but was not yet approved mid-2023. This may be stipulated in the two fortification standards that were not fully accessible and that are listed in section 7.

Other SNI, can be included on a label. Specifically, any information or pictorial device may be displayed provided it does not conflict with mandatory labelling regulations and does not mislead or deceive consumers.

While not SNI, food manufacturers can use a **National Standard Mark** (pictured right) on a food label once they receive a permit from the Institute of Ethiopian Standards that demonstrates the food complies with relevant Ethiopian standards – including for labelling. The Mark is issued during pre-market approval of a food and it can be mandated for certain products by the National Standardization Council – it is unclear if this is required on mandatorily fortified foods. Once obtained, a permit must be displayed within the business’s premises.

## 6. PICTORIAL CASE STUDY PRODUCT – WHEAT FLOUR

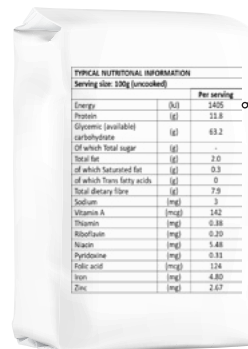
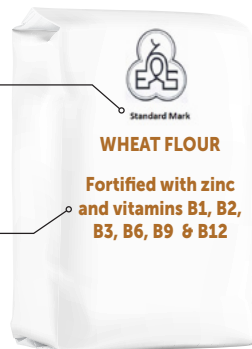
This case study product only details the three nutrition label types outlined in this fact sheet – nutrient declaration (based on Codex Standards as it is unclear what if any nutrient declaration is required on fortified food), fortification statement and the National Standard Mark – along with a product name. Figures used are provided as an example only and may not be accurate. Other details are also required on food labels (e.g., ingredient list and weight) but not shown here.

Front of pack

Back of pack

**National Standard Mark**  
See section 5 on whether this is required or not on a package and re draft fortification logo.

**Fortification statement and list of fortificants\***  
The fortificants may be able to be listed in the ingredients list or in a nutrient declaration. Current regulations are not clear on this requirement.



**Nutrient declaration**  
Note that the declaration is based on Codex Standards as it is unclear what if any nutrient declaration is required on fortified food as explain in Section 3.

## 7. MORE DETAIL ON THE LABELLING REGULATIONS

**Definition of Organization, Powers and Duties of the Ethiopian Food and Drug Authority Council of Ministers Regulation No. 531/2023** sets out the objectives, powers and duties of the EFDA, including the power to issue and enforce regulated products and enforce Ethiopian mandatory standards [Ethiopian Standards that are mandatory]. Specifically, it can regulate health warnings, labelling and advertisement of foods and can organise laboratories necessary to execute its functions.

**Ethiopian Standards Agency Establishment Council of Ministers' Regulation No.193/2010** establishes the Ethiopian Standards Agency (that became the Institute of Ethiopian Standards (IES) in 2021), sets out its powers and functions and establishes the National Standard Mark.

- **General Standard for Prepackaged Foods – Labelling (Compulsory Ethiopian Standard 73), 2013** sets out general labelling requirements for pre-packaged foods (some duplicative of those in the proclamation above). It also requires any label that places special emphasis on the presence or low contents of an ingredient to declare that ingredient's percentage in the product on the label.
- **CES 310: 2022 Fortified Edible Oils - with Vitamin A and D – Specification** [unable to be accessed] that is likely to mandate fortification of edible oils.
- **CES 309 Compulsory Ethiopian Standard - Fortified Wheat Flour- Specification** [only able to access part of the standard on the [WHO's Global database on the Implementation of Nutrition Action \(GINA\)](#)] mandates fortification of wheat flour.

**Food and Medicine Administration Proclamation No.1112/2019** sets out general labelling requirements for pre-packaged foods, including that labels must not be false, misleading or deceptive and that all foods must be registered with the EFDA or a regional health regulatory before commencing trade. It also includes a requirement for fortified foods to be labelled as "fortified" (it is unclear if this is required in the ingredient list or a declaration) and include a description of the type of fortificant, and for

such foods to be fortified in line with applicable Ethiopian standards.

- **Food, Medicine and Health Care Administration and Control Council of Ministers Regulation No.299/2013** requires labels on fortified food to include a statement stipulating the fortificant, and states that fortification must comply with EFDA requirements.

Ethiopia is also a Member State of the **Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)**. The **Treaty Establishing the COMESA adopted in 1993** requires that Member States adopt a harmonised system and create national legal frameworks for standardised labelling of goods traded in the Common Market and free trade area, though no such standardised labelling regulations were identified. Other related plans broadly apply to nutrition labelling and fortification, such as to promote strengthening of food safety and technical standards to access regional markets, but do not specifically affect the current regulations and requirements for nutrition labelling detailed in this fact sheet.

## 8. REGULATORS, USEFUL CONTACTS AND WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION

The **Institute of Ethiopia Standards** develops Compulsory Ethiopian Standards. Ethiopian Standards are outlined in the **Ethiopian Standards Catalogue** on the IES website.

The **EFDA** implements the regulations above. EFDA regulations can be searched at <http://www.efda.gov.et/> Ethiopian government regulations can be searched at <https://www.fsc.gov.et/Digital-Law-Library/Federal-Laws>

The US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Foreign Agricultural Service issues a Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards Country Report for Ethiopia on a regular basis. See their **Ethiopia page** to access the latest report.

The Global Fortification Data Exchange's **Ethiopian Fortification dashboard** provides more detail about food fortification in the country.