

Nutrition labelling for fortified foods in Philippines



Mandatory fortification of cooking oil with vitamin A (except for export), rice with iron, wheat flour with iron and vitamin A, refined sugar for human consumption with vitamin A, and food-grade salt with iodine. Voluntary fortification of foods widely consumed by at-risk groups is encouraged (e.g., cereals and cereal-based products like snack foods and instant noodles with iron and B vitamins).

1. TAKEAWAYS

Labels on most foods in Thailand must include a nutrient declaration – this may include fortified foods (section 3). Edible iodized salt must include a statement 'iodized edible salt', and nutrition and health claims are voluntary but must meet conditions, including "fortified" or "enriched" claims (section 4). No fortification logo exists, but other supplementary nutrition information may be included on some foods (section 5). On page 2, iodized salt is provided as a pictorial case study product (section 6) as well as a summary of key regulations (section 7) and links to further information (section 8)



2. GENERAL

- Food labelled in a false or misleading manner is prohibited (e.g., to include B12 in the food's ingredients list when no B12 is present).
- Labels must be clear, easily visible and read, and in English and/or Filipino.
- Small units with a surface area <math><10\text{cm}^2</math> are exempt from some labelling requirements.
- Prior to any pre-packaged food product entering the market, businesses must obtain a License to Operate and Certificate of Product Registration from the FDA which are only issued if the product is compliant with relevant standards and regulations, including for nutrition labelling. This is in addition to applying to use Sangkap Pinoy Seals per section 5.



3. NUTRIENT DECLARATION

- Nutrient declarations are mandatory on pre-packaged foods, with some exceptions (e.g., foods that contain insignificant amounts nutrients like coffee and spices), and fortified staple foods (including those that use one of the Sangkap Pinoy Seals).
- Where a nutrient declaration is included on a label, it must:
 - Be presented in a tabular (or table) format
 - Be titled "Nutrition Facts"
- Include the number of average servings per container/pack, i.e., by slices, pieces, weight* or volume* (*required for fortified foods).
- Express nutrition information in columns per serve average or usual serving
 - Nutrition information can also be expressed per % Recommended Energy and Nutrient Intake (RENI). RENI is calculated using the Philippine RENI for male adults aged 19-29, or for a specific target population for a product)
 - Locally manufactured food products intended for local consumption must also state RENI in a whole % (not decimal).



- Include minimum mandatory nutrition information per serve and (if desired) % RENI:
 - Calories and calories from fat (kcal)
 - Total fat (g); saturated fat (g), trans fat (g); cholesterol (mg); sodium (mg); total carbohydrates (g); dietary fiber (g); sugar (g); total protein (g);
 - Vitamins and minerals added during fortification, i.e., vitamin A, iron, and iodine (mg, mcg or $\leq\mu\text{g}$. or I.U.). *If the food is not ready to eat and is (i) consumed after adding water/edible liquid, the fortificant must be declared as % RENI per serve; (ii) used as an ingredient to prepare another food, the fortificant must be declared as % RENI per 100g of the packaged food. When the food contains $\geq 40\text{kcal}$ per serve, the % RENI per 100 kcal can be declared.*
 - Any other vitamins, minerals or nutrients for which a claim is made.
- Where a nutrient is <math><2\%</math> RENI, state "contains less (or "<math><<</math> symbol) 2% RENI" or refer to this statement via an asterisk (*).

4. NUTRITION AND HEALTH CLAIMS + FORTIFICATION CLAIMS

- You may include on the label general claims (e.g., nutrient content, comparative, health claims) and fortification claims if they meet conditions set out in regulations.
- Fortification claims ("fortified", "enriched", "added with", "supplemented with", or similar terms) can only be made when the amount of added vitamin and/or mineral meets minimum levels required by regulations and retains 80-90% of minimum levels if tested at any point in the product's shelf life. The claim must be based on the processed food as packaged and purchased by a consumer.
- Nutrient content claims can be used for micronutrients if a specified % NRV of that nutrient is present. E.g., For a "High in" claim, the % NRV must be twice that required for a "Source of" claim (e.g., 15% of NRV per 100g solids, 7.5% of NRV per 100ml liquid)
- Nutrition and health claims must comply with relevant Codex standards, but you can use a claim not covered by regulations if approved by the FDA via an application that provides substantiating evidence.
- Claims cannot represent that a food is adequate or effective to prevent, treat or cure a disease/disorder, that the food is an adequate source of all nutrients, state that a synthetic vitamin is superior to a natural vitamin, or that the food is free from trans-fatty acids.
- "IODIZED SALT" must be printed in bold capital letters and included on the label of iodized salt and any food using iodized salt as an ingredient.



5. SANGKAP PINOY SEALS AND VOLUNTARY FOPNL

There are three fortification logos (see below) that the FDA can approve the use of on food labels if fortified per regulations. The Diamond Sangkap Pinoy Seal can voluntarily be used in labels for staple foods covered by the Philippines' mandatory fortification program. The Sangkap Pinoy Seal can be used by manufacturers who fortify processed foods (not mandatory staples) with iron, vitamin A and iodine. The Saktong Iodine sa Asin Quality Seal must be used on all salt products mandatorily fortified with iodine. A voluntary energy content declaration front-of-pack nutrition logo can be included on a label.

All logos must meet the required format and size, e.g., printed in a prominent position on the main panel in bold print against a contrasting or clear background, and be clearly visible, legible and indelible

Voluntary Diamond Sangkap Pinoy Seal for staples covered by mandatory food fortification



Voluntary Sangkap Pinoy Seal for processed foods fortified voluntarily with iron, vitamin A and iodine



Mandatory Saktong Iodine sa Asin Quality Seal for salt products covered by mandatory food fortification



Voluntary FOPNL



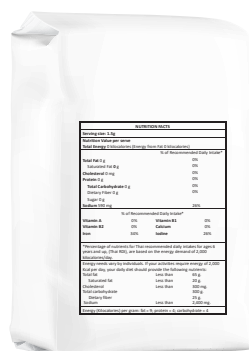
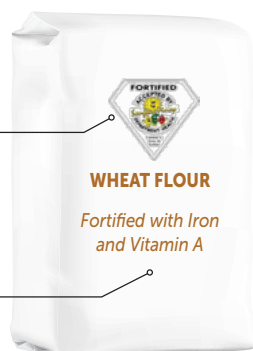
6. PICTORIAL CASE STUDY PRODUCT – IODIZED SALT

This case study product only details the three nutrition label types outlined in this fact sheet – nutrient declaration and fortification claim – along with a product name. SNI are required on some foods as detailed in section 5. 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

Fortification logo

Fortification claim



Back of pack

Nutrient declaration

7. MORE DETAIL ON THE LABELLING REGULATIONS

- Food, Drug and Cosmetics Act 1963 (as amended to 2009) sets out general labelling requirements (e.g., mandatory labelling must be conspicuously placed so that it is likely to be read and understood), prohibits misbranding of food (e.g., false and misleading labelling) and establishes the FDA (previously the Bureau of Food and Drugs) and its functions, duties and powers.
- Bureau Circular No. 2007-002 adopts Codex Alimentarius Commission Guidelines for Use of Nutrition and Health Claims (CAC/GL 23-1997, Rev. 1-2004) to be used in evaluation and use of claims in food labelling and advertisements, in addition to, and insofar as it is consistent with existing relevant national laws and regulations.
- Food Safety Act of 2013 sets out basic principles of food safety such as requirements for general labelling and prohibitions on false or misleading labelling and establishing science and risk-based regulation. Establishes the Department of Health and Department of Agriculture (for primary agricultural products) as responsible for setting mandatory food and labelling standards.
- Administrative Order 30 (2014) Labelling of prepackaged food products sets out requirements for nutrition information on labels including claims and nutrient declarations, prohibits specific claims, and includes general labelling requirements and offences for false and misleading labelling. Exemptions from the labelling provisions in specific circumstances can also be sought.
- Philippine Food Fortification Act of 2000 establishes the Philippine Food Fortification Program with both mandatory and voluntary fortification, Sangkap Pinoy Seal program logos and claims for fortified foods and requires nutrient facts labels on all processed food or food products with the micronutrient(s) added.
- Administrative Order No. 4-A s. 1995 Guidelines on Micronutrient Fortification of Food sets out requirements for labelling fortified foods (including to label food as "fortified") and criteria for fortification of staple foods and establishes the FDA as responsible for enforcement.
- Implementing rules and regulations for the Philippine Food Fortification Act of 2000 sets out requirements for meeting

fortification specifications, and monitoring, evaluation and enforcement of the program.

- Administrative Order No. 82 s. 2003 provides Guidelines on Granting the Diamond Sangkap Pinoy Seal to Manufacturers of Fortified Products, and sets out the terms of use of the Diamond Sangkap Pinoy Seal on fortified foods and related processes and offences.
- Act for Salt Iodization Nationwide (ASIN) 1995 (Republic Act 8172) mandates salt iodisation and required labelling, including product name and fortificant listed, prohibits misleading labelling and details requirements for manufacturers, and to administer, monitor and enforce labelling.
- Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 8172 "An Act Promoting Salt Iodization Nationwide and for Related Purposes" sets out an offence for mislabelling salt and requires product labels to stipulate use of iodized salt.
- FDA Circular No. 2015-005 Guidelines on the Use of "Saktong Iodine sa Asin" Quality Seal introduced an iodine-specific Saktong Iodine sa Asin Quality Seal to increase awareness and use of adequately-iodized salt in households and point of purchase.
- FDA Circular No. 2012-015 – Guidelines on Voluntary Declaration of the Front of Pack Labelling (Energy or Calorie Content) on the Labels of Processed Food Products" establishes the FOPNL as part of the labelling system.

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

- The Philippines Food and Drug Administration implements the regulations above.
- Philippines Government regulations can be searched at: <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/> or <https://www.fda.gov.ph/>.
- The US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Foreign Agricultural Service issues a Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards Country Report for the Philippines on a regular basis. See their Philippines page to access the latest report.
- The Global Fortification Data Exchange's Philippines Fortification dashboard provides more detail about food fortification in the country.