



October 2012

Fortification of bread with folic acid Q & A

Background

The New Zealand (Permitted Fortification of Bread with Folic Acid) Food Standard 2012 (the Standard) came into force on 28th September 2012. This New Zealand only standard continues to permit the voluntary addition of folic acid to bread sold in New Zealand.

The standard does not apply to bread sold or imported into Australia.

Question; Which breads can be fortified under the New Zealand standard?

Any bread which meets the definition set out in standard 2.1.1 Cereals and Cereal Products of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code) may be fortified with folic acid or L-methyltetrahydrofolate, calcium (L-MTHF):

"bread means the product made by baking a yeast-leavened dough prepared from one or more cereal flours or meals and water"

and

"flours or meals means the products of grinding or milling of cereals, legumes or other seeds"

Question; How much folic acid or L-MTHF can bread contain under the New Zealand standard?

Bread can contain up to 2.5 mg/kg of folic acid, or of L-MTHF, or of the total of folic acid and L-MTHF, if used together.

Question; Can fortified flours be used to make bread?

Yes. You can make bread using cereal flour that is fortified with folic acid or L-MTHF as these are forms of folate allowed under standard 1.1.1 of the Code. Standard 1.3.2 of the Code permits the voluntary fortification of flour with "folate" which must be in these permitted forms.

Question; Are any declarations required on fortified bread?

The labelling requirements continue to be regulated under the Code.

- Where bread requires labelling, when folic acid or L-MTHF is added this information must be included in the ingredient list.
- Where bread can be sold without a label, the retailer needs to be able to provide information to customers who ask, for example, whether folic acid or L-MTHF has been added.

Question; Can nutrition content and health claims be made on fortified bread?

- Folate nutrition content claims can be made for bread containing folic acid or L-MTHF.
- A folate health claim can be made for bread fortified with folic acid. However certain compositional requirements must be met in conjunction with a folate declaration in the nutrition information panel (NIP) or made available to the customer on request (where bread can be sold without a label). Where L-MTHF is added to bread a health claim cannot be made.
- For further details refer to:
 - Standard 1.2.8 Nutrition Information Requirements
 - Standard 1.3.2 Vitamins & Minerals
 - Standard 1.1A.2 Transitional Standard – Health Claims

Question; Where can I get more information?

- The MPI website <http://foodsafety.govt.nz/> contains information for bakers
<http://foodsafety.govt.nz/industry/sectors/manufacturers-food-beverages/bakery-products/>
- The Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code can be found at:
<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/>

MPI can be contacted on the number at the bottom of this page