

Supporting document 2

Assessment against Policy Guideline on Fortification of food with vitamins and minerals – Application A1104

Voluntary Addition of Vitamins & Minerals to Nut- and Seed-based Beverages

Executive summary

This Supporting Document provides a summary of FSANZs consideration of this Application against the specific policy principles of the Ministerial Policy Guideline on *Fortification of food with Vitamins and Minerals*.

FSANZ's assessment concludes that permitting the voluntary addition of vitamins and minerals to nut- and seed-based beverages satisfies the specific policy principles for voluntary fortification outlined in the Policy Guideline.

Specific order policy principles

Specific order principle	
Where there is a need for increasing the intake of a vitamin or mineral in one or more population groups demonstrated by actual clinical or subclinical evidence of deficiency or by data indicating low levels of intake. Or	Not applicable to this Application
Where data indicates that deficiencies in the intake of a vitamin or mineral in one or more population groups are likely to develop because of changes taking place in food habits. Or	Not applicable to this Application
Where there is generally accepted scientific evidence that an increase in the intake of a vitamin and/or mineral can deliver a health benefit. Or	Not applicable to this Application
To enable the nutritional profile of foods to be maintained at pre-processing levels as far as possible after processing (through modified restoration ²). Or	Not applicable to this Application
To enable the nutritional profile of specific substitute foods to be aligned with the primary food (through nutritional equivalence).	On the basis of consumer usage and market presentation, nut- and seed-based beverages are considered to be a substitute for milk as the primary/counterpart food. Permission to fortify these beverages would enable their vitamin and mineral profile to align with full cream cow's milk. The protein and energy content of these beverages is lower than full cream cow's milk but protein and energy could be increased through product reformulation without regulatory approval.
The permitted fortification has the potential to address the deficit or deliver the benefit to a population group that consumes the fortified food according to its reasonable intended use	Data are presented that indicate non-dairy consumers have lower intakes than dairy consumers of many of the vitamins and minerals in milk. Consumers who choose fortified nut- and seed-based beverages would consume the vitamins and minerals in amounts that they would otherwise consume through milk or other fortified plant-based milk substitutes.

Specific order principle	
<p>Permission to fortify should not promote consumption patterns inconsistent with the nutrition policies and guidelines of Australia and New Zealand</p>	<p>Data are presented that some consumers may regard unfortified plant-based milk substitutes as healthy as low fat milk and healthier than full cream milk. Fortifying these products would bring them into closer alignment with such consumer perceptions.</p> <p>Milk and calcium fortified milk substitutes are considered one of the five food groups in the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating and the New Zealand Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Healthy Adults. Fortifying nut- and seed-based beverages aligns their nutritional profile with milk.</p> <p>Permission to fortify will also require nut- and seed-based substitutes that are lower in protein or fat than full cream milk to be labelled with an advisory statement that young children (aged up to 5 or 2 years respectively) should not consume these beverages. This requirement also applies to other plant-based milk substitutes to mitigate the risk of inadequate protein or energy intakes among this population group.</p>
<p>Permission to fortify should not promote increased consumption of foods high in salt, sugar or fat, or foods with little or no nutritional value that have no other demonstrated health benefit.</p>	<p>Unfortified nut- and seed-based beverages have minimal salt, sugar and fat; they also have a limited micronutrient profile. The principle of nutritional equivalence does not take account of the original nutritional inferiority of the unfortified substitute food, rather it focuses on the nutritional contribution of the counterpart food or primary food, to determine whether any substitute for that counterpart should be fortified to ensure that consumers of such substitute foods are no more nutritionally disadvantaged than consumers of the counterpart.</p>
<p>Fortification will not be permitted in alcoholic beverages.</p>	<p>Not applicable to this Application.</p>
<p>Permissions to fortify should ensure that the added vitamins and minerals are present in the food at levels which will not have the potential to result in detrimental excesses or imbalances of vitamins and minerals in the context of total intake across the general population</p>	<p>Consumers who choose fortified nut- and seed-based beverages would consume the vitamins and minerals in amounts that they would otherwise consume through milk or other fortified plant-based milk substitutes. From an assessment of the processing of nut- and seed-based beverages and the impact on absorption of added vitamins and minerals, the permission to fortify nut- and seed-based beverages is unlikely to result in detrimental excesses or imbalances of vitamins and minerals in the context of total intake across the general population.</p>
<p>The fortification of a food, and the amounts of fortificant in the food, should not mislead the consumer as to the nutritional quality of the fortified food.</p>	<p>FSANZ notes that, although there is a definition of milk in the Code, milk substitutes are routinely identified on the label as 'milk'. Fortifying these products would bring them into closer alignment with milk.</p>

Specific order principle	
<p>Labelling – There should be no specific labelling requirements for fortified food, with the same principles applying as to non-fortified foods. An added vitamin or mineral is required to be listed in the Nutrition Information Panel only if a claim is made about it and the vitamin or mineral is present at a level for which a claim would not be misleading. An added vitamin or mineral must be listed in the ingredient list under current labelling requirements</p>	<p>No specific labelling requirements are proposed with regards to the fortification permissions.</p> <p>Protein and fat must be declared in the Nutrition Information Panel. A vitamin and mineral, whether naturally occurring, through addition of a food additive, or for nutritional reasons, may be declared providing that a minimum amount (10% RDI or ESADDI/200 mL) is present. Unfortified nut- and seed-based beverages do not meet these criteria except for calcium if it is contributed by a food additive whereas the fortified food qualifies to declare 7 vitamins and minerals. Consumers could readily differentiate the two products by referring to this information.</p> <p>As with other plant-based beverages, advisory statements will be required as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A statement to the effect that the product is not suitable as a complete milk replacement for children under five years of age, due to the lower protein content. • A statement to the effect that the product is not suitable as a complete milk replacement for children under two years of age, if the protein content is above 3% m/m, but the fat content is less than 2.5% m/m.
<p>Monitoring/Review - A permission to voluntarily fortify should require that it be monitored and formally reviewed in terms of adoption by industry and the impact on the general intake of the vitamin/mineral</p>	<p>Monitoring and review of the market uptake of fortification permissions will occur through publically available market share reports.</p> <p>Closer monitoring of consumer uptake and impact of general intake of the added vitamins and minerals will be reliant on formal nutrition monitoring programs such as national nutrition surveys.</p>