

FOOD FORTIFICATION BECOMES A REALITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

On 7 April 2003 regulations pertaining to the mandatory fortification of all maize meal and wheat flour were printed in the *Government Gazette*. Published under Act No 54 of 1972 Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants. These regulations will become legally applicable and implementable 6 months later, on 7 October 2003.

The regulations apply to any person or company which manufactures, imports, or sells maize meal and wheat flour, and foodstuffs which contain 90% of either maize meal or wheat flour such as bread.

The fortification cocktail and addition rates were scientifically calculated based on the research and data from the SAVACG Study as well as the South African National Food Consumption Survey concluded in 2000. Tables I and II list the Fortification Standards for wheat flour and bread, and maize meal respectively.

An official fortification logo (monochromatic or in colour) with an allowed health claim has been developed which may be used voluntarily on the packaging and advertising materials of fortified maize meal and wheat flour.



Micronutrient	Unit	WHEAT FLOUR		WHEAT BREAD	
		White	Brown	White	Brown
Vitamin A*	µRE/kg	1610	1415	800	700
Thiamine	mg/kg	3.91	3.79	2.49	2.54
Riboflavin	mg/kg	2.05	1.95	1.41	1.39
Niacin	mg/kg	38.42	54.76	27.91	41.59
Pyridoxine	mg/kg	2.82	3.07	2.13	2.67
Folic acid	mg/kg	1.36	1.24	0.74	0.74
Iron	mg/kg	43.65	47.97	32.26	34.69
Zinc	mg/kg	20.70	26.73	15.30	20.07

* Retinol equivalents (RE) = 1 µg retinol = 3.33 IU (International units) vitamin A.

Micronutrient	Unit	MAIZE MEAL			
		Super	Special	Sifted	Unsifted
Vitamin A*	µRE/kg	1877	1877	1877	1877
Thiamine	mg/kg	3.09	3.86	4.76	5.57
Riboflavin	mg/kg	1.79	1.88	1.97	2.06
Niacin	mg/kg	29.70	31.86	34.65	38.25
Pyridoxine	mg/kg	3.89	4.25	4.79	5.42
Folic acid	mg/kg	1.89	1.90	1.92	1.94
Iron	mg/kg	37.35	40.14	44.28	50.40*
Zinc	mg/kg	18.90	22.55	26.60	30.20

* Retinol equivalents (RE) = 1 µg retinol = 3.33 IU (International units) vitamin A.
* Where special permission was granted in terms of regulation 10, a lower iron content of 34.65 mg/kg is allowed.



Based on extensive market research conducted in both rural and metropolitan areas, a comprehensive communication strategy has been developed and will be rolled out.

The main objectives of this communication programme will be to educate people about food fortification and its benefits and how it fits into the

framework of a balanced meal, as well as to influence people's choice and selection towards fortified food products.

The key messages of the communication programme are as follows:

- Vitamins and minerals are essential for everyone's good health.
- Children need the vitamins and minerals found in fortified food to develop to their full potential.
- Eating as many different types of food as possible is the best source of vitamins and minerals.
- Food fortification gives you strength and energy.
- Eating fortified foods is a safe and cost-effective way of adding vitamins and minerals to your family's daily meals.