

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO FOOD REGULATIONS TO DELETE STANDARDS OF IDENTITY

Aim

The Singapore Food Agency (SFA) is seeking feedback from the food industry, as well as interested parties, on proposed amendments to the Food Regulations to delete standards of identity. The amendments are planned to come into effect in April 2022.

Background

2 Standards of identity in the Food Regulations (referring to those standards in Regulations 39 to 260) were developed during the 1970s to early 1990s to ensure that food products conform to a certain standard of identity and minimum quality, thereby helping to ensure fair trade.

3 The context and circumstances leading to the promulgation of these standards of identity in the past are different from Singapore's current context. Some of these standards of identity were developed prior to the development of related international standards (namely those of the Codex Alimentarius Commission), as well as the Singapore Standards (developed under the Singapore Standards Council) which have since been established.

4 At present, there is a large variety of food products available in the market to meet different consumer needs and preferences. Many of these food products do not have a standard of identity prescribed in the Food Regulations, for example, breakfast cereals, 3-in-1 powdered beverages, frozen cooked meals etc. Nonetheless, they are still subject to food safety requirements under the Food Regulations and food businesses that import, manufacture and sell such products are responsible for ensuring that they are safe for human consumption.

5 SFA has, from time to time, received requests from the industry, to allow the import/manufacture and sale of food products which do not comply with the quality criteria in the Food Regulations, because of climate, environmental factors, production methods etc. Cases encountered include specific gravity / refractive index / iodine value for edible vegetable oils, milk solids content for milk, milk fat content for processed cheese, among others. The inability to meet quality criteria prescribed in the Food Regulations for these products does not mean that the products are unsafe for consumption. To restrict the import/manufacture and sale of such products would unnecessarily impede trade.

6 As the food industry innovates to produce variations of a product (for e.g., sugar-free kaya, egg-free mayonnaise), having to conform to a fixed standard of identity would stifle their efforts at innovation.

Proposed amendments

7 Recognising that it is in the interest of the food industry to produce food of good quality and to constantly innovate to produce new products to cater to consumer demand, and also to facilitate trade, SFA is proposing an amendment to the Food

Regulations to delete the standards of identity in Regulations 39 to 260, except where these continue to be needed for food safety reasons, or to support the policies that have an impact on public health.

8 For the standards of identity that are retained in the Food Regulations, the industry is required to ensure compliance with these standards. For standards of identity that are deleted from the Food Regulations, industry can refer to available international standards (such as those of the Codex Alimentarius Commission) or the Singapore Standards.

9 The proposed deletion of the standards of identity does not affect food safety. All food products imported, manufactured and sold in Singapore must comply with prevailing food safety provisions, such as use of food additives and maximum limits for incidental constituents, as well as relevant labelling requirements. SFA will continue to work with the various stakeholders from farm to fork so that the food imported, produced and sold to the consumer is safe for human consumption.

10 SFA understands that, in the absence of the standards of identity, the industry may face challenges in determining whether a particular food can be added with certain food additives. SFA has plans, in future, to develop a food category system (with associated food category descriptors), to provide clarity to the industry regarding the food additive provisions. The food category system would be based on the Codex General Standard for Food Additives (CODEX STAN 192-1995). The descriptors for each food category will provide information on the types of food products that belong in the category, for e.g. "Yeast-leavened breads and specialty breads include all types of non-sweet bakery products and bread-derived products. E.g. white bread, rye bread, pumpnickel bread, raisin bread, whole wheat bread, *pain courant francais*, malt bread, hamburger rolls, whole wheat rolls, and milk rolls." SFA will work closely with the industry to develop the food category system with the associated descriptors.

11 The list of standards of identity proposed to be deleted / retained can be found in **Annex I**. The legal text for the amendments is not available at this time.

Request for comments

12 SFA invites views and comments on the proposed amendments to the Food Regulations to delete / retain the standards of identity as listed in **Annex I**. Please submit your comments or feedback in the form of the table provided in **Annex II**. All submissions should be clearly and concisely written and should provide a reasoned explanation for any proposed revisions.

13 Submissions should reach SFA no later than 5:00 p.m., 20 August 2021, through email, to the following addresses: cheng_chee_seng@sfa.gov.sg.

ANNEX I

The following standards of identity in Regulations 39 to 260 are proposed to be deleted / retained, according to the considerations in paragraph 7.

Legend:

	Entire regulation to be <i>deleted</i>
	Entire regulation to be <i>retained</i>

Standard	Regulation to be Deleted	Regulation to be Retained	Notes
FLOUR, BAKERY AND CEREAL PRODUCTS			
39 Flour or wheat flour	39		
40 Wholemeal, whole wheat or entire wheat flour	40		
40A Wholegrain		40A	
41 Vital gluten flour	41		
42 Self-raising flour	42		
43 Protein-increased flour	43		
44 Corn flour	44		
45 Rice flour	45		
46 Tapioca flour	46		
47 Bakery products	47		
48 Bread	48		
49 Wholemeal bread	49		
50 Fruit bread	50		
51 Rye bread	51		
52 Milk bread	52		
53 Labelling of bakery products	Paragraph (1) of Rg 53	Paragraph (2) of Rg 53	
54 Flour confectionery	54		
55 Pasta	55		
56 Labelling of pasta	56		
AERATING INGREDIENTS			
57 Cream of Tartar	57		
58 Baking powder	58		
MEAT AND MEAT PRODUCTS			
59 Meat		59	
60 Fresh, raw or chilled meat	60		
61 Frozen meat		61	
62 Corned, cured, pickled or salted meat	62		
63 Smoked meat	63		
64 Minced or chopped meat	64		
65 Hamburgers or beefburgers and similar products	65		
66 Sausage meat	66		
67 Sausages	67		
68 Meat extracts, meat essences and meat juices	68		
69 Chicken essence and double strength chicken essence	69		
70 Meat paste or pate	70		

Standard	Regulation to be Deleted	Regulation to be Retained	Notes
FISH AND FISH PRODUCTS			
71 Fish		71	
72 Fresh or chilled fish	72		
73 Frozen fish		73	
74 Smoked fish	74		
75 Salted fish	75		
76 Fish paste	76		
77 Fish cakes and fish balls	77		
EDIBLE FATS AND OILS			
78 Edible fats and oils	78		
79 Labelling of edible fats or oils		79	
80 Coconut oil	80		
81 Corn oil	81		
82 Cottonseed oil	82		
83 Groundnut oil	83		
84 Olive oil	84		
85 Safflower oil	85		
86 Sesame oil	86		
87 Soya bean oil	87		
88 Sunflower seed oil	88		
89 Dripping	89		
90 Lard	90		
91 Margarine	Paragraph (1) of Rg 91	Paragraphs (2) & (3) of Rg 91	
91A Fat spread	Paragraph (1), (2) & (4) of Rg 91A	Paragraph (3) of Rg 91A	
92 Vanaspati	92		
MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS			
93 Milk		Paragraphs (1)*, (2) and (3) of Rg 93	*Propose to retain paragraph (1), with amendments as follows: (1) Delete sub-paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) (2) Replace the words “normal mammary secretion of cows, buffaloes, or goats” with “ <i>normal mammary secretion of milking animals obtained from one or more milkings.</i> ” (text in italics taken from Codex General Standard for the Use of Dairy Terms (CXS 206-1999), section 2.1)
94 Pasteurised milk	Paragraph (3) of Rg 94	Paragraphs (1) and (2) of Rg 94	
95 Ultra heat treated milk	Paragraph (2) of Rg 95	Paragraph (1) of Rg 95	
96 Sterilised milk	Paragraph (2) of Rg 96	Paragraph (1) of Rg 96	
97 Homogenised milk	97		

Standard	Regulation to be Deleted	Regulation to be Retained	Notes
98 Reconstituted or recombined milk	98		
99 Evaporated milk	99		
100 Sweetened condensed milk	100		
101 Dried milk or milk powder or dried whole milk or dried full cream milk or full cream milk powder	101		
102 Dried half cream milk	102		
103 Skimmed or separated milk or defatted milk	Paragraphs (1), (2), (3)(b) and (4) of Rg 103	Paragraphs (3)(a)*, (c) and (d) of Rg 103	*Retain paragraph (3)(a) with the following words deleted " <i>This tin/receptacle contains the equivalent oflitres of skimmed milk</i> ".
104 Filled milk	Paragraphs (1), (2)(b), (3) of Rg 104	Paragraphs (2)(a)*, (c) and (d) of Rg 104	*Retain paragraph (2)(a) with the following words deleted " <i>This tin/receptacle contains the equivalent oflitres of filled milk</i> ".
105 Flavoured milk	105		
106 Lactobacillus milk drink or cultured milk drink	106		
107 Malted milk powder	107		
108 Whey	108		
110 Cream	110		
111 Homogenised cream	111		
112 Reconstituted or recombined cream	112		
113 Thickened cream	113		
114 Reduced cream	114		
115 Sour cream	115		
116 Butter	116		
117 Cheese	Paragraph (1) of Rg 117	Paragraphs (2) and (3) of Rg 117	
118 Cheddar cheese	118		
119 Unnamed cheese	119		
120 Cream cheese	120		
121 Processed or emulsified cheese	121		
122 Cheese spread or cheese paste	122		
123 Yoghurt	123		
124 Fruit yoghurt	124		
125 Ghee or ghi	125		
ICE-CREAM, FROZEN CONFECTIONS AND RELATED PRODUCTS			
126 Ice-cream	126		
127 Dairy ice-cream	127		
128 Milk-ice	128		
129 Frozen confections	129		
SAUCE, VINEGAR AND RELISHES			
130 Sauce	130		
131 Soya bean sauce	131		

Standard	Regulation to be Deleted	Regulation to be Retained	Notes
132 Oyster sauce	132		
133 Tomato sauce	133		
134 Chilli sauce	134		
135 Vinegar	135		
136 Distilled vinegar	136		
137 Blended vinegar	137		
138 Artificial or imitation vinegar	138		
139 Labelling of vinegar	139		
140 Salad dressing	140		
141 Pickles	Paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of Rg 141	Paragraph (d) of Rg 141	
142 Chutney	142		
SUGAR AND SUGAR PRODUCTS			
143 Sugar	143		
144 Refined soft brown sugar	144		
145 Icing sugar or icing mixture	145		
146 Molasses	146		
147 Table molasses	147		
148 Dextrose anhydrous	148		
149 Dextrose monohydrate	149		
150 Glucose syrup	150		
151 Honey	151		
151A Royal jelly	Paragraph (1) of Rg 151A	Paragraph (2) of Rg 151A	
152 Sugar confectionery	152		
TEA, COFFEE AND COCOA			
153 Tea	153		
154 Tea dust, tea siftings and tea fannings	154		
155 Instant tea	155		
156 Brewed tea	156		
157 Coffee	157		
158 Coffee and chicory	158		
159 Coffee mixture	159		
160 Instant coffee or soluble coffee	160		
161 Instant coffee and chicory or soluble coffee and chicory	161		
162 Decaffeinated coffee	162		
163 Cocoa beans	163		
164 Cocoa nibs	164		
165 Cocoa paste, cocoa mass or cocoa slab	165		
166 Cocoa, cocoa powder or powdered cocoa	166		
167 Cocoa essence or soluble cocoa	167		
168 Chocolate	168		
169 Milk chocolate	169		
170 Chocolate confectionery	170		
FRUIT JUICES AND FRUIT CORDIALS			
171 Fruit juices	171		

Standard	Regulation to be Deleted	Regulation to be Retained	Notes
172 Concentrated fruit juice	172		
173 Nectar	173		
174 Fruit juice cordials, squashes or syrups	174		
175 Fruit drinks or fruit crushes	175		
JAMS			
176 Jams	176		
177 Fruit jelly	177		
178 Marmalade	178		
179 Kaya or egg jam	179		
NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINKS			
180 Flavoured cordials or syrups	180		
181 Soya bean milk	181		
182 Flavoured soya bean milk	182		
183 Soft drinks	183		
183A Natural mineral water		183A	
184 Labelling of non-alcoholic drinks	184		
ALCOHOLIC DRINKS			
185 Intoxicating liquors	185		
186 Ale, beer, lager, porter or stout	186		
187 Wine	187		
188 Malt wine	188		
189 Quinine wine	189		
190 Aromatic wine, wine cocktail and vermouth	190		
191 Port and sherry	191		
192 Meat wine or beef wine	192		
193 Sparkling wine	193		
194 Carbonated wine	194		
195 Fruit wine	195		
196 Cider or perry	196		
197 Sparkling cider or sparkling perry	197		
198 Aerated cider or aerated perry	198		
199 Honey wine	199		
200 Cereal grain wine and Chinese wine	200		
201 Brandy	201		
202 Marc brandy	202		
203 Fruit brandy	203		
204 Whisky	204		
205 Rum	205		
206 Gin	206		
207 Vodka	207		
208 Liqueurs and alcoholic cordials	208		
209 Blended liquor	209		
210 Compounded liquor	210		
SALTS			
211 Salt	211		
212 Iodised salt	212		

Standard	Regulation to be Deleted	Regulation to be Retained	Notes
SPICES AND CONDIMENTS			
213 Spices and condiments	213		
214 Aniseed (Jintan manis)	214		
215 Caraway seed (Jintan)	215		
216 Greater Cardamon (Kepulaga Besar) or Lesser Cardamon (Kepulaga Kecil)	216		
217 Celery seed (Biji Seladeri)	217		
218 Chilli	218		
219 Cinnamon (Kayu Manis)	219		
220 Cloves (Bunga Cengkih)	220		
221 Coriander (Ketumbar)	221		
222 Cumin seed (Jintan Putih)	222		
223 Black Cumin (Jintan Hitam)	223		
224 Dill seed (Adas Manis)	224		
225 Fennel fruit or seeds (Adas Pedas)	225		
226 Fenugreek (Halba)	226		
227 Ginger	227		
228 Mace (Jaitree) (Bunga Pala)	228		
229 Mustard seed (Biji Sawi)	229		
230 Prepared mustard	230		
231 Nutmeg (Buah Pala)	231		
232 Black pepper or pepper corn	232		
233 White pepper	233		
234 Star anise (Bunga Pekak)	234		
235 Tumeric (Kunyit)	235		
236 Curry powder	236		
FLAVOURING ESSENCES OR EXTRACTS			
237 Almond essence	237		
238 Ginger essence	238		
239 Lemon essence	239		
240 Lemon oil	240		
241 Orange essence	241		
242 Peppermint essence	242		
243 Rose essence	243		
244 Vanilla extract	244		
245 Flavouring essences	245		
FLAVOUR ENHANCERS			
246 Monosodium glutamate	246		
SPECIAL PURPOSE FOOD			
247 Special purpose foods		247	
248 Labelling requirements for special purpose foods		248	
249 Low-calorie food	249		
250 Diabetic food		250	
250A Foods containing phytosterols, phytosterol esters, phytostanols or phytostanol esters		250A	

Standard	Regulation to be Deleted	Regulation to be Retained	Notes
251 Infants' food	Paragraph (5) of Rg 251	Paragraphs (1), (2), (2A), (3) and (4) of Rg 251	Paragraph (5) of Rg 251 is proposed to be deleted, in view that date-marking requirements in Regulation 10 and the Second Schedule already apply.
252 Infant formula		252	
253 Infant milk formula or infant milk preparation		253	
254 Labelling of infant formula		254	
MISCELLANEOUS FOODS			
255 Agar	255		
256 Custard powder	256		
257 Edible gelatin	257		
258 Fish crackers	258		
259 Prawn crackers	259		
RICE			
260 Rice	260		

ANNEX II

Please provide your comments in the table below.

S/N	Questions	Comments
1	Do you agree with the proposed standards of identity to be deleted / retained? When providing your comments, please clearly state which standard (by quoting the Regulation number) you are commenting on, and explain the reasons for your comments.	
2	Any other comments?	