



Abu Dhabi Specification

معايير أبوظبي الفنية



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الإصدار الثاني

Specification for using
Weqaya Food program

معايير استخدام برنامج وقاية للأغذية



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Amendment Page

To ensure that each copy of this ADS contains a complete record of amendments, the Amendment Page is updated and issued with each set of revised/new pages of the document. This ADS is a live document which can be amended when necessary. QCC operates Food and Agriculture Working Group which prepared this document and can review stakeholder comments in order to review and amend this document, issuing an updated version when necessary.

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About the Abu Dhabi Quality and Conformity Council

The Abu Dhabi Quality and Conformity Council (QCC) was established by law No. 3 of 2009, issued by His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE.

QCC is responsible for the development of Abu Dhabi Emirate's Quality Infrastructure, which enables industry and regulators to ensure that products, systems and personnel can be tested and certified to UAE and International Standards.

Products certified by QCC receive the Abu Dhabi Trustmark. The Trustmark is designed to communicate that a product or system conforms to various safety and performance standards that are set by Abu Dhabi regulators.

1- Foreword

The QCC Working Group for Food and Agriculture was established in April 2014 with a view to reviewing all the existing standards and technical regulations related to the subject with the object of discovering if there are Food/Agriculture technical standards that require development or update. It is intended also to prioritize the Food/Agriculture technical standards topics to be studied and reviewed at the level of Abu Dhabi Emirate. Abu Dhabi Specifications (ADS) will be developed on subjects that have no specifications or local legislation and will then be put forward to ESMA as proposed UAE Standards.



2- Purpose

2.1 Healthy food as well as healthy consumption of food can help achieve and maintain good health throughout the life cycle. The importance of healthy eating and its linkage to maintain health and prevent diseases is well established.

2.2 The Department of Health (DOH) encourages and supports the consumption of healthy food, during home cooking or eating out at restaurants and cafes. In support of raising awareness about healthy eating and good eating habits, DOH also encourages food business operators and food handlers to promote, prepare and sell better choice meals. It does this by allowing restaurants, food manufacturers and producers, supermarkets, groceries and food outlets to promote products that fulfill Weqaya Food Specifications as better choice options.

2.3 This specification set out the criteria in support of approving the voluntary labelling of nutritious food/meals with the Weqaya Logo.



3 - Acknowledgements

QCC would like to thank the members of the Working Group listed below.

Name	Entity
1. Dr. Aysha Al-Dhaheeri (Chair)	Department of Health (DOH)
2. Dr. Arwa Al Modwahi	Department of Health (DOH)
3. Dr. Rabih Kamleh	AGTHIA Company
4. Dr. Afaf Kamal Eldin	United Arab Emirates University (UAEU)
5. Shahen Banabeela	Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority (ADFCA)
6. Ghalyah AlAbdouli	Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority (ADFCA)
7. Eng. Basem Tarawneh	Emirates Authority For Standardization & Metrology (ESMA)
8. Eng. Shamsa aldhahry	Al FOAH Company
9. Dr. Malin Garemo	Zayed University
10. Eng. Samia Hassan	Abu Dhabi Quality and Conformity Council-QCC- CTL
11. Aisha Qayed	Abu Dhabi Quality and Conformity Council- QCC - CTL
12. Rahma Al Ketbi	Department of Health (DOH)
13. Mariam Al Mansoori	Department of Health (DOH)
14. Rawan Al Merhi	Department of Health (DOH)
15. Dr. Wail AL Omari	Abu Dhabi Quality and Conformity Council (QCC)



4 - Scope

4.1 This specification applies to food intended to be voluntary labelled with the Weqaya Logo.

4.2 Target Group: Food labelled with the Weqaya logo is suitable for any individual of ages three years and above and is not intended as diet, therapeutic or allergy - free food but rather as a better healthy food choice.

4.3 This specification is not a substitute for any other legislation issued in UAE and the food shall comply with the relevant UAE Federal and Abu Dhabi legislations.

5-Terms and definitions:

Weqaya Logo: Weqaya is an Arabic word that means prevention. The heart shape encircling the word Weqaya emphasizes that simple lifestyle preventive measures can decrease the cases and deaths related to Cardio Vascular Diseases.

Food: Any substance, whether processed, semi processed or raw, which is intended for human consumption, and includes drink, and any substance which has been used in the manufacture, preparation or treatment of “food” but does not include cosmetics or tobacco or substances used only as drugs.

Meal: Includes three components, the protein part of the meal, the carbohydrate such as pasta, rice and/or vegetables, and the sidings, which includes beverages, bread, and fat for bread, salad, salad dressing and fruit.



Portion: is the amount of a food an individual choose to eat at any one time.

Competent authority: the authority(s) in charge of implementation of relevant responsibilities in this specification as per the conformity scheme procedures.

Total Fat: means total lipids, and includes phospholipids.

Trans Fatty Acids (TFAs): means fatty acids with at least one non-conjugated (namely interrupted by at least one methylene group) carbon-carbon double bond in the Trans configuration.

Saturates: means fatty acids without double bond.

Salt: means the salt equivalent content calculated using the formula: salt = sodium \times 2.5.

Total sugar: means all monosaccharides and disaccharides present in food, but excludes polyols.

Added sugars: includes sugars that either added during the processing of foods, or packaged as such. They include sugars (free, mono- and disaccharides), sugars from syrups and honey, and sugars from concentrated fruit or vegetable juices in excess of what expected from the same volume of 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice of the same type.

Cholesterol: is a fatty substance that is found in animal-based foods such as meats, poultry, egg yolks, and whole milks. The amount is expressed in milligrams per serving of stated size and may also be expressed as a percentage of the daily value per serving of stated size.

6. Requirements

6.1 The food business operator shall develop, implement and maintain a Food Safety Management System based on the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Principles.

-Entities wishing to apply the Weqaya Logo on their products must seek the competent authority's approval prior to the use of the Weqaya Logo as per the conformity scheme procedures.

-Food business or entities wishing to apply the Weqaya Logo to their products must have grade A as inspection performance as per ADFCA inspection reports in the previous year.

- Food labelled with the Weqaya logo must satisfy the requirements of this Specification and be prepared in an appropriate and hygienic manner including using better choice ingredients, for different age groups and children ages three and above.

6.2 Weqaya Logo Use Criteria

-Weqaya Logo cannot be used for food that is deep-fried or food that contain artificial sweeteners, artificial flavors or artificial colors;

-Specifications for food labelled with Weqaya Logo shall include the following where applicable:

6.2.1 Specifications for meals on regular menus (adults)/takeout food

where the Weqaya Logo can be used:

1. Kcal:

i. Main dish: shall contain ≤ 700 kcal/portion

ii. Side dish: shall contain ≤ 250 kcal/portion.



2. Total fat: ≤ 3 grams of fat / 100 grams of product except fish.
3. Saturated fat: ≤ 1 gram saturated fat / 100 grams of product.
4. Trans fatty acids (TFAs): $\leq 1\%$ from naturally occurring TFAs (Maximum 2 grams TFAs/100 grams of oils used in food labelled with Weqaya).
5. Added sugar: ≤ 2 gram sugars/100 grams of product. In total ≤ 9 gram of added sugar per portion.
6. Salt: ≤ 0.8 grams salt/100 grams of product or ≤ 0.32 grams of sodium/100 grams of product. In total, the dish should not exceed ≤ 2.4 grams salt per portion or 960 milligrams of sodium per portion.
7. Fruits, legumes or vegetables other than potatoes shall weigh ≥ 100 grams.
8. Salad dressing: should be based on oil/vinegar or lemon and meet the specifications 3 –6.

6.2.2 Weqaya for kids:

6.2.2.1 Specifications for meals on “Weqaya for kids” menus/takeout food for children where the Weqaya logo can be used:

1. Kcal:
 - a) Main dish: shall contain ≤ 600 kcal/portion
 - b) Side dish: shall contain ≤ 200 kcal/portion.
2. Total fat: ≤ 3.5 grams of fat / 100 grams of product except fish.
3. Saturated fat: ≤ 1 gram saturated fat / 100 grams of product.
4. Trans fatty acids (TFAs): $\leq 1\%$ from naturally occurring TFAs (Maximum 2 grams TFAs/100 grams of oils used in food labelled with Weqaya).
5. Added sugar: ≤ 2 gram sugars/100 grams of product. In total ≤ 9 gram of added sugar per portion.
6. Salt: ≤ 0.8 grams salt/100 grams of product or ≤ 0.32 grams of sodium/100 grams of product. In total, the dish should not exceed ≤ 2.4 grams salt per

portion or 960 milligrams of sodium per portion and ≤ 250 mg of sodium per portion (side dish).

6.2.2.2 “Weqaya for kids” food preparation specifications

1. Weqaya adult meals offered in smaller portions for children where applicable.
2. It is permitted to use current marketing techniques directed at children in relation to “Weqaya for kids” healthier options, e.g. use of a toy, appealing packaging, and attractive “Weqaya for kids” menu.
3. A main meal should have at least 2 of the following components as a main component in the meal, a side dish should have at least 1 of the following components (a-e):
 - a) Whole grains (of bread, pasta, rice, couscous) or quinoa, barley, buckwheat, oat.
 - b) Lean protein (chicken, fish (lean or fatty fish), lean red meat, eggs, lentils, beans.
 - c) Low fat dairy product ($\leq 2\%$ fat/100 gram product) (milk, yoghurt, laban, kefir, cottage cheese).
 - d) Fruits 75 gram or more (whole fruit, not juice).
 - e) Vegetables 75 gram or more.

6.2.3 Specifications for individual food items where the Weqaya logo can be used:

1. Milk, or other fermented dairy products intended for drinking: no artificial flavoring or, artificial colors or artificial sweeteners, ≤ 0.7 grams fat/100 grams of product, ≤ 9 grams naturally occurring sugar/ 100 grams of product.
2. Yogurt, laban or other fermented dairy product: no artificial flavoring or sweeteners, ≤ 1.3 grams fat/100 grams of product; ≤ 9 grams naturally



- occurring sugar/100 grams of product, ≤ 0.5 grams sodium/100 grams of product (≤ 1.2 grams salt/100 grams of product).
3. Cheeses (other than fresh cheeses): ≤ 17 grams fat/100 grams of product; ≤ 0.5 grams sodium/100 grams of product (≤ 1.2 grams salt/100 grams of product).
 4. Fresh cheese and labnah: ≤ 5 grams fat/100 grams of product; ≤ 0.5 grams sodium /100 grams of product (≤ 1.2 grams salt/100 grams of product).
 5. Flour: 100% wholegrain, ≥ 5 grams fiber/100 grams of product.
 6. Bread: $\geq 25\%$ whole grain, ≥ 5 grams dietary fiber /100 grams of product, ≤ 7 grams fat/100 grams of product, $\leq 1\%$ from naturally occurring TFAs, ≤ 5 grams of added sugars/100 grams of product, ≤ 0.4 grams sodium /100 grams of product (≤ 1.0 gram salt /100 grams of product).
 7. Pasta/noodles (dry weight): $\geq 50\%$ whole grain, ≥ 5 grams dietary fiber/100 grams of product, sodium ≤ 0.4 grams/100 grams of product (≤ 1.0 grams salt /100 grams of product).
 8. Rice (dry weight): 100% wholegrain, ≥ 3 grams fiber/100 grams of product.
 9. Breakfast cereals: $\geq 50\%$ whole grain, ≥ 5 grams dietary fiber /100 grams of product, ≤ 7 grams fat /100 grams of product, $\leq 1\%$ from naturally occurring TFAs, ≤ 13 grams of added sugars /100 grams of product, ≤ 0.4 grams sodium /100 grams of product (1.0 gram salt /100 grams of product).
 10. Popcorn /crackers/crisp bread/biscuits: $\geq 25\%$ whole grain, ≥ 5 grams dietary fiber /100 grams of product, ≤ 7 grams fat /100 grams of product, $\leq 1\%$ from naturally occurring TFAs, ≤ 5 grams total sugars /100 grams of product, ≤ 0.4 grams sodium /100 grams of product (≤ 1.0 gram salt /100 grams of product).
 11. Meat or poultry: Fresh/frozen or minced meat, poultry: ≤ 10 grams fat /100 grams of product, no added salt or sugar or preservatives.



12. Fish: Fresh/frozen or minced fish, no added salt or sugar or preservatives
13. Vegetables, root vegetables, and legumes; the products can be fresh, processed or frozen: added fat ≤ 3 grams/100 grams of product, added fat cannot contain more than 10% saturates, ≤ 1 gram added sugars /100 grams of product, ≤ 0.2 grams sodium /100 grams of product (≤ 0.5 grams salt /100 grams of product). No “Heavy Syrup” allowed for canned fruits and vegetables, including potatoes and sweet potatoes
14. Vegetable Juice: 100% vegetable juice, no added natural or artificial sweeteners or salt.
15. Fruits fresh, dried or frozen: no added natural or artificial sweeteners or salt.
16. Nuts and peanuts: ≤ 10 grams saturated fat /100 grams of product, no added sweeteners, salt or artificial flavors.
17. Smoothies: 200 calories per 240 milliliters with an upper limit of 300 calories for larger sizes, Low fat or skimmed dairy, no added salt, ≤ 2 gram added sugar/100 milliliters (1/2 teaspoon). Must contain at least one serving of whole fruit or vegetable (not including any added juice or puree concentrate). Caffeine and other stimulant additives are not permitted; caffeine occurring naturally in other ingredients (e.g. green tea) is permitted.

6.2.4 Specifications for Groceries and Supermarkets to market and promote foods that fulfil above Weqaya requirements:

6.2.4.1 In-store marketing:

1. Tastings of healthy items: provide ready-to-eat/pre-cut fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat milk and milk products, lean cooked meats, and healthy snack and beverage choices. Provide in-store tasting events that include bite-sized portions of low-cost, easy to prepare, healthy foods.



2. Provide a variety of consumer-friendly materials such as healthy recipes, information about specific nutrients, tips for shopping on a budget, and tips for selecting and storing healthy foods.
3. Provide print nutrition education materials in a variety of venues (point of purchase, targeted store areas like produce section, during tours or cooking classes).
4. Coordinate tours to highlight availability of healthier items. Provide incentives to tour participants (e.g., shopping bags, gift cards for healthy foods).
5. Organize community events that offer free nutrition classes to help customers learn to shop/cook healthier foods. (Topics such as reading food labels, shopping on a budget, shopping for specific health conditions, etc.).
6. Organize community day events. Increase publicity for store-based events by involving local media and community leaders. Participate in community events and health fairs.
7. Distribution of promotional tactics such as coupons, contests, and Buy One Get One Free offers on healthier products.

6.2.4.2 In-store Layout:

1. Place lower-calorie and healthier foods in visible, accessible locations.
2. Increase the reach to healthier options; highlight the healthier options through Shelf labels, samples.
3. Create promotional shelf space designated for healthier snacks/lunch items.



4. Use shelf space, shelf position displays to promote healthy items (e.g., stock more low-fat milk, water, whole grain bread, fruits and vegetables, etc. at eye level).
5. Reduce the unhealthy checkout purchases by placing multiple healthy checkout aisles in stores to shift the healthy/unhealthy balance.
6. Maximize customer exposure: stock healthier options in high traffic and high visibility areas such as endcaps and candy-free checkout aisles.



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