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Terms Used in Food and Nutrition Articles

Recommended Dietary Allowances

These value judgements, based on the existing knowledge of nutritional sciences, are intended to serve as goals and guides in planning and interpreting food consumption. It should not be assumed that malnutrition will occur whenever the recommendations are not met completely. The current revision was done in 1968. The R.D.A.'s replace the minimum daily requirement nutritional guideline established by the Food and Drug Administration over 25 years ago. R.D.A.'s are designed to provide optimal nutrition for the population of the United States. (Food and Nutrition Board, National Research Council)

Minimum Dietary Allowances (FDA)

This deals with the labeling of foods and supplements for special dietary uses. The contents must be expressed per serving, per 100 grams, or per recommended dosage. One MDR is the amount of vitamin or mineral needed to prevent symptoms of deficiency and to provide a small margin of safety.

Fortified Foods

The Food and Drug Administration has designated eight classes of food to which specified amounts of certain vitamins and minerals may be added to improve nutritive value. The eight classes are processed cereal, fruit juices and fruit drinks, infant formulas, infant fruit products, alimentary pastes, whole fluid and powdered milk for drinking, fluid skim milk and fluid low fat milk for drinking, and salt. The Definitions and Standards of Identity state which vitamins and minerals may be added to each of the eight classes and specify the conditions. The Definitions and Standards of Identity are in accordance with the statements of the National Research Council and the American Medical Association (Improvement of Nutritive Quality of Foods, J.A.M.A., September 16, 1968, Vol. 205, No. 12).

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Enriched Foods

To be labeled enriched, certain foods—white bread and rolls, cornmeal, corn grits, farina, white flour, macaroni products, noodle products, rice, and mixes—must contain certain nutrients in amounts within the limits specified in the standards for the particular product. The nutrients are thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, and iron.

Restored Foods

The term "restored" is applied to processed or refined cereals to which have been added iron and certain of the B vitamins to bring the cereals' levels up to the averages contained in whole grains.

Food Additive

A food additive is a substance or mixture of substances other than a basic foodstuff which is present in food as a result of any aspect of production, processing, storage, or packing. The term does not include chance contaminants.

Pesticide

A pesticide is a chemical used to kill or suppress an organism that, in a specific situation, is a pest. Among the pesticides are fungicides, bactericides, nematocides, insecticides, miticides, rodenticides, herbicides.

GRAS List, FDA

This relates to a large number of additives that are generally regarded as safe.

Delaney Clause

The Delaney Clause relates to the Food Additives Amendment of 1958 and the Color Additive Amendment of 1960. It states that no additive is permitted in any amount if the tests show that it produces cancer when fed to man or animals or by other appropriate tests.