

**A GUIDE FOR
HEALTHIER CHOICE
SYMBOL (HCS)
APPLICATION
(NOVEMBER 2024 version 1.0)**

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INTRODUCTION

The Healthier Choice Symbol (HCS) is a widely recognized symbol for healthier packaged foods in Singapore. It is part of the Nutrition Labelling Programme and is intended to provide point-of-sale information to help consumers make informed food choices.

Dietary intake has been shown to be associated with the development of several chronic diseases, namely coronary heart disease, hypertension, stroke, diabetes mellitus, and certain cancers. These conditions are notable health concerns in Singapore, and dietary improvements may help reduce their associated risks.

In line with the policy of the National Healthy Lifestyle Programme, the Ministry of Health (MOH) introduced the Nutrition Labelling Programme in 1998. This initiative aims to encourage the food industry to display nutrition information panels and to educate consumers about reading food labels. The Health Promotion Board (HPB), a statutory board under MOH, currently administers this programme.

Food products may carry the HCS if they meet nutritional standards set by HPB. Evaluation is based on key nutrients of concern, particularly fat, saturated fat, sugar, and sodium, as well as beneficial nutrients such as dietary fibre, calcium, and wholegrains. The product's contribution towards a balanced diet is also considered. Additionally, HPB assesses the product's overall suitability, including its nature, eligibility, positioning, and marketing. The HCS Programme is a voluntary scheme administered by HPB, which reserves the right to evaluate product suitability and eligibility with the aim of improving public health nutrition in Singapore.

This guidebook details:

1. Application procedures
2. License agreement
3. Advertising materials
4. HCS symbol usage and labelling guidelines
5. Labelling requirements for HCS endorsed products

Guidelines in this guidebook do not apply to infant formula or any other food products for infants one year of age and below.

Please refer to 'A Guide to Nutrition Labelling For Food Products' at this website (<https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims>) for Nutrient Claims, Health Claims, the list of acceptable nutrient function claims, criteria for use of nutrient specific diet-related reduction of disease risk claims and further information.

A **nutrition claim** suggests/implies that a food has a nutritive property. This property may be general or specific and it can be stated positively or negatively.

Examples of nutrition claims are "High in fibre", "Low in fat", "Cholesterol free", and "Sugar free".

A **health claim** is any representation that states, suggests, or implies that a relationship exists between a food or a constituent of that food and health.

Health claims include the following:

(a) Nutrient function claims refer to nutrition claims that describe the physiological role of the nutrient in growth, development, and normal functions of the body.

Example:

"Nutrient A (naming a physiological role of nutrient A in the body in the maintenance of health and promotion of normal growth and development). Food X is a source of/ high in nutrient A."

(b) Other function claims refer to claims concerning specific beneficial effects of the consumption of foods or their constituents, in the context of the total diet on normal functions or biological activities of the body and relating to a positive contribution to health or to the improvement of a function or to modifying or preserving health.

Example:

“Substance A (naming the effect of substance A on improving or modifying a physiological function or biological activity associated with health). Food Y contains x grams of substance A.”

(c) Reduction of disease risk claims refer to claims relating the consumption of a food or food constituent, in the context of the total diet, to the reduced risk of developing a disease or health-related condition.

Examples:

“A healthful diet low in nutrient or substance A may reduce the risk of disease D. Food X is low in nutrient or substance A.”

“A healthful diet rich in nutrient or substance A may reduce the risk of disease D. Food X is high in nutrient or substance A.”

Food² or food constituent refers to energy, nutrients, related substances, ingredients, and any other feature of a food, a whole food, or a category of foods on which the health claim is based. The category of food is included in the definition because the category itself may be assigned a common property of some of the individual foods making it up.

²include special purpose foods; foods fortified with nutrients such as protein, carbohydrate, dietary fibre, fatty acids, amino acids, vitamins and minerals: and foods added with approved herbal ingredients.

CONTACTS

Questions concerning the Healthier Choice Symbol Programme may be directed to:

***Level 4, Healthy Food and Dining Division
Health Promotion Board
3 Second Hospital Avenue
Singapore 168937***

Email: HPB_HCSadmin@hpb.gov.sg

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

HCS Application Process and Licence Agreement

Each food group has a set of nutritional guidelines, and each product will be evaluated according to these guidelines. The company is also required to send in the product packaging artwork for approval.

The Healthier Choice Symbol Programme (HCS) is a voluntary scheme administered by the Health Promotion Board (HPB), and the Board reserves the right to evaluate product suitability and eligibility for the Programme for the benefit of public health.

Once the application is approved, companies will then enter into a Licence Agreement with HPB. Companies will do a yearly product review to maintain the validity of the licence agreement. Audit checks on HCS products will also be more frequent. HPB will randomly select HCS products for nutrient verification and conduct visual checks on products that either no longer qualify for or are not authorised to carry the HCS.

Companies with non-compliant products will be notified and are expected to comply with the follow up actions to rectify the non-compliance. Companies which do not rectify the non-compliance within the stipulated timeframe will face termination of the Licence Agreement. HPB reserves the right to take legal actions in such situations.

In addition, HPB is entitled to publish a notice of non-compliance on its website and/or other platforms for non-compliant products, to ensure that consumers are not misled.

All materials including advertising materials that carry the logo are also required to be submitted to HPB for approval, before printing and usage.

It is an infringement of the Trademark to use the HCS logo without a valid Licence Agreement. HPB reserves the right to take legal action against companies using the HCS logo on their product packaging(s) and any form of advertising material(s) without a valid Licence Agreement and approval.

Application Procedures

HCS applications are submitted via the [HCS Online](https://healthier-choice.hpb.gov.sg) system (<https://healthier-choice.hpb.gov.sg>) and the only login mode is via CorpPass. All companies (including foreign companies) would need to have a CorpPass account.

Registration for CorpPass Account and Setting up HCS Online e-Service

1. For companies who do not have a CorpPass account,

Company CorpPass Admin¹, please follow the below steps:

- a. Register for a CorpPass Account
- b. Set up the HCS Online e-Service in CorpPass
- c. Create account for users in company and assign access rights to users
- d. Assign roles² to users in CorpPass

2. For companies who have CorpPass account,

Company CorpPass Admin¹, please follow the below steps:

- a. Set up the HCS Online e-Service in CorpPass
- b. Create account for users in company and assign access rights to users
- c. Assign roles² to users in CorpPass

3. Foreign companies would also need to register for CorpPass and set up HCS Online e-service in CorpPass. Please refer to Points 1 and 2.

¹ *Company CorpPass Administrator (CorpPass Admin) is a staff selected by your company to register a CorpPass Account for the Company. The role of a CorpPass Admin includes the following:*

- i. *Manage Company's CorpPass account*
- ii. *Create CorpPass User Account for Company's users*
- iii. *Manage Company's User CorpPass Account*
 - a. *Update User Profile*
 - b. *Remove Users who left company or no longer need the e-Services*
 - c. *Add new Users*
 - d. *Assign Role to Users*
 - e. *Change Roles of Users*
- iv. *Adding e-Services*

² *User Roles for HCS Online System*

- i. *Authorised Representative*
 - *Helps company to enroll in HCS Programme*
 - *Accepts Licence Agreement on behalf of company*
 - *View, submit and manage company's HCS applications*
- ii. *Staff (HCS)*
 - *View, submit and manage company's HCS applications*

Companies may click on the link below to refer to the following guides:

- i. CorpPass User Guides in CorpPass (<https://www.corppass.gov.sg/corppass/common/userguides>)
- ii. Step by step user guide by HPB – for company with **no** CorpPass Account
[User Guide – Company with no CorpPass Account](#)
- iii. Step by step user guide by HPB – for company **with** CorpPass Account
[User Guide – Company with CorpPass Account](#)
- iv. [Corppass - FAQ](#)

Onboarding to HCS Online System – First Time Log In (Company's Authorised Representative to log in first)

Upon successful registration of company's CorpPass account and set up of HCS Online e-Service Access, please get the company's Authorised Representative to log in to [HCS Online](#) first.

Your company would not be able to submit applications if these steps are not done by the company's Authorised Representative.

Step 1: Login to the new HCS Online Application system (<https://healthier-choice.hpb.gov.sg>)

Step 2: Select "Healthier Choice Symbol"

Step 3: Accept the general Terms and Conditions

Step 4: Check Company Profile

Step 5: Key in own user profile

Company's Authorised Representative will be directed to the 'Manage Applications' page.

HCS Staff may log in after the company's Authorised Representative have completed the above steps. HCS Staff would be required to do the following steps during first log in.

Step 1: Login to the new Online Application system (<https://healthier-choice.hpb.gov.sg>)

Step 2: Key in own user profile

HCS Staff will be directed to the 'Manage Applications' page to submit applications.

Companies may click on the link below to refer to step by step onboarding guide by HPB:

[User Guide to Onboarding](#)

HCS Application Submission

Some important information to take note:

- 1) Each company can have a maximum of 20 draft applications and 20 open applications at any one time. This limit does not apply to package size (SKUs) submission.
- 2) HCS logo for product packaging artwork can be downloaded from the HCS logo gallery under 'Resources'. Please ensure HCS logo on product packaging and all materials are approved before print and usage. Usage of HCS logo on product packaging and materials not approved by HPB is a violation of the HCS Trademark. HPB reserves the rights to pursue legal action.
- 3) Only 1 file per package size is allowed for submission (size limit 10MB). Package size with more than one product packaging artwork, e.g. front and back view, needs to be combined into 1 PDF file or ZIP the PDF files.
Please do not zip JPEG files and upload.
- 4) Product packaging artwork is only accepted in PDF format.

For each application submission, there are three sections to complete. It should take you no more than 15 minutes if you have the necessary information ready. The required information includes product details, lab report and the product's packaging artwork.

Section 1: Product Information

- Product description and product details
- Classification of product category and subcategory
- Selection of HCS logo to use on product packaging

Section 2: Nutrient Values/Lab Report

- Uploading the nutrient analysis report and completing the nutrition information table.
- The nutrient analysis report must be obtained from an independent accredited laboratory using Association of Official Analytical Chemists (AOAC) methods or equivalent. The nutrient analysis report must contain the nutrients needed to evaluate the application.
- Here is a [guide](#) that helps you find out a list of accredited laboratories under the Singapore Accreditation Council-Singapore Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (SAC-SINGLAS).
- Nutrient analysis report from overseas will be accepted if it is from an independent accredited laboratory in Food testing listed in SAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA), using Association of Official Analytical Chemists (AOAC) methods or equivalent. You may refer to [SAC-MRA website](#) for the list of overseas accredited laboratories.

Section 3: Product Packaging Artwork

- Uploading product packaging artwork with HCS Logo selected in Product Information section. Include the size of the HCS logo in the packaging artwork or via the comment box. This helps facilitate a smoother process for artwork review. Note that the minimum logo size is 15mm (diameter).
- Your company is responsible for ensuring that its packaging labels and advertising materials do not go against the Singapore Food Regulation. You can refer to '[A Guide to Nutrition Labelling For Food Products](https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims)' at this website (<https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims>) and [Food Regulations \(Sale of Food Act\)](#) for more information.

Section 4: List your HCS Product

- i) When a product package size is approved, it is eligible for HCS Product Listing
- ii) When your approved product starts to carry HCS logo on the packaging in the market, please go to HCS Product Listing tab to list your product.
- iii) Listing your products means adding it to the list of approved HCS products on HCS webpage and the School Beverage list (if your product is a beverage with no sweeteners/sugar alcohols). This will also enable consumers to collect Health points when they purchase your HCS product.

Companies may click on the link below to refer to step by step application submission guide by HPB:

[User Guide to HCS Application Submission](#)

LICENCE AGREEMENT

1. Once the application is approved, companies will then enter into a Licence Agreement (LA) with HPB.

- If your company does not have a valid Licence Agreement,
 - i. Once the first product package has been approved, the company's Authorised Representative will need to accept the LA.
 - ii. You would not be able to proceed to submit applications or amend application if the LA is not accepted.
 - iii. The LA is to be accepted within 2 weeks. Failing to do so after 2 weeks, the product(s) in the LA will be rejected. Re-application is necessary if the company still wants to use the HCS logo on product(s).
 - iv. Subsequently, when company has more products approved with HCS logo, the product name will be automatically added to the LA.
- If your company has a valid Licence Agreement,
 - i. Once a product is approved, the product name and package size will be automatically added to the LA.

2. Companies entering into the Licence Agreement with HPB will agree to:

- i) the non-exclusive use of the HCS by any one company for any one product
- ii) no sub-licensing
- iii) be responsible for monitoring the legal use of the HCS on licensed products
- iv) display the nutrition information panel, in the format recommended by HPB
- v) seek HPB's approval regarding the use of HCS in all advertising and promotional materials.

3. To maintain the validity of the Licence Agreement:

- Companies are required to do a yearly product review via HCS Online. Companies would be notified via email on the start of the Product Review process.

Companies would need to:

- i. Update the company's HCS product list.
- ii. Declare that the company's products still meet the HCS nutrient guidelines and there is no change in the content of the products.

For companies which fail to complete the Product Review process within the stipulated time period, the LA will be terminated, and the company will lose its rights to carry the HCS on its products.

Companies may go to [HCS webpage](#) for the user guide or click on the playlist link below on how to complete the Product Review:

Playlist Link: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLw_CrLrIHQhWveHSuYuEUbcblXdr1XWkS

Increasing frequency of HCS audit checks:

- i. Approved products will be randomly selected for analysis as part of our audit checks to ensure that they continue to meet the nutrient guidelines. Analysis will be carried out by independent accredited laboratories using official methods of AOAC and / or alternative methods shown to be equivalent to that of AOAC. Any food companies whose products fail the audit check will be notified and are expected to comply with the follow up actions to rectify the non-compliance. If the non-compliance is not rectified within the stipulated timeframe, the Board reserves the rights to terminate the Licence Agreement. Upon termination of the Licence Agreement, companies would not be allowed to carry the HCS on the products.
- ii. Companies with products which no longer qualifies to carry the logo or are not authorised to carry the logo but are found to carry the logo will be notified as well and are expected to remove the logo from the product packaging with immediate effect.
- iii. HPB is entitled to publish a notice of non-compliance on its website and/or other platforms for non-compliant products, to ensure that consumers are not misled.

4. Procedures following the termination of the Licence Agreement

Upon termination of the Licence Agreement, food companies will be given a period of three calendar months to remove the HCS from products. *

If companies fail to remove the HCS from the products within three calendar months, the Board reserves the right to take legal actions against them.

**The three calendar months period is not applicable for products affected by guidelines revision as these products are usually given grace period (e.g. 1 – 2 years) to meet the revised guidelines.*

NUTRITION INFORMATION PANEL

A nutrition information panel (NIP) contains nutrient information, which helps consumers assess the nutritive value of a given food.

Under the Food Regulations, businesses are required to include a NIP for prepacked food products under the following conditions:

- They are Nutri-Grade beverages – Regulation 184C.
- They are special purpose foods – Regulation 248.
- They bear a nutrition and/or health claim – Regulation 8A.
- They are prepacked edible fats and oils – Regulation 79.

For avoidance of doubt, businesses should refer to the Food Regulations to determine whether a NIP is necessary for their products. However, it is strongly encouraged that businesses include the NIP to guide consumers in making informed choices.

Placement of a nutrition information panel

The panel may be placed on any surface of the food package that can be easily seen by the consumer. It is recommended that it be placed alongside with the ingredients list and the name and address of the manufacturer, packer, importer, or distributor.

For small packaging that has a total surface area of less than 100 square centimetres, a NIP display will not be needed. However, it is necessary to include in the label a statement of the quantity of each nutrient in respect to any nutrition claim that is made. A statement of the energy yield of the food is also required in the case of a claim that the food is free of sugar (e.g. sugar-free) or where there is a claim with respect to the energy value of the food (e.g. low calorie).

Format of a nutrition information panel

A recommended nutrition information panel (NIP) should include the following basic information (with the exception for fresh produce):

- i) The core list of nutrients are energy, protein, total fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, carbohydrate, total sugar, dietary fibre and sodium.
- ii) The energy and nutrient values can be stated in per 100 g / 100 ml and per serving of the food
- iii) The nutrition information panel can include the number of servings per package and the serving size.
- iv) For products that need to be reconstituted prior to consumption, an additional column stating nutrient values per 100ml (as reconstituted) shall be included.

All nutrients shall be declared in the appropriate metric units. The unit for energy will be in kilocalories and/or kilojoules. The conversion factor will have to be stated if only one unit is listed (e.g. one kcal is equivalent to 4.2 kJ as shown in the example below).

A typical nutrition information panel is shown in **Figure 1a** and a nutrition information panel with additional column specifying nutrient values per 100ml (as reconstituted) is shown in **Figure 1b**.

Figure 1a
A typical nutrition information panel

NUTRITION INFORMATION		
Servings per package: (insert number of servings)		
Serving size: x g (or ml) (insert household measurement)		
	Per serving	Per 100 g (100 ml)
Energy	x kcal (x kJ)	x kcal (x kJ)
Protein	x g	x g
Total Fat	x g	x g
- Saturated Fat	x g	x g
Cholesterol	x mg	x mg
Carbohydrate	x g	x g
- Total Sugar	x g	x g
Dietary Fibre	x g	x g
Sodium	x mg	x mg

> Panel Heading

> Serving Size

> Nutrient Listing

1. General Format

- The text of the nutrition information panel shall be in English.
- The text shall be clear, legible and permanent.
- If a nutrition claim is made, the name and quantity of any other nutrient in the food that is relevant to the claim should be declared in the nutrition information panel in addition to the 'core list' of nutrients.
- Values for Energy, Cholesterol and Sodium are to be rounded off to the nearest whole number. All other nutrient values are to be rounded off to the nearest one decimal place.

2. Panel Heading

'NUTRITION INFORMATION', 'NUTRITION FACTS', as well as words of similar meanings may be used as the panel heading.

3. Serving Size

Number of servings per package and serving size shall be declared, with the serving size stated both in metric and common household measurements (e.g. pieces, cups, teaspoons, etc).

4. Nutrient Listing

The 'core list' of nutrients include (except for fresh produce):

- i) Energy
- ii) Protein
- iii) Total fat
- iv) Saturated fat
- v) Cholesterol
- vi) Carbohydrate (excluding dietary fibre)
- vii) Total Sugar

- viii) Dietary fibre
- ix) Sodium

The following additional nutrients can be added in the following order:

- i) Starch may be declared as a subgroup of carbohydrate.
- ii) Polyunsaturated fat and monounsaturated fat may be inserted after saturated fat as subgroups of total fat.
- iii) Omega fatty acids may be inserted after polyunsaturated fat or monounsaturated fat.
- iv) In accordance with Singapore Food Regulation 79(2), Retail oil should declare trans-fat on NIP. Trans Fat may be inserted after monounsaturated fat.

Other nutrients can be added after the core list.

Selective Nutrient Listing for Fresh Produce:

- For fresh fish and meat/poultry, the NIP will minimally have to display the following nutrients:
 - i) Energy
 - ii) Protein
 - iii) Total fat
 - iv) Saturated fat
 - v) Cholesterol
 - vi) Carbohydrate (excluding dietary fibre)
 - vii) Sodium

- For Fresh vegetables, the NIP will minimally have to display the following nutrients:
 - i) Energy
 - ii) Protein
 - iii) Total Fat
 - iv) Carbohydrates
 - v) Dietary Fibre

- For Frozen/Chilled* vegetables, the NIP will minimally have to display the following nutrients:
 - i) Energy
 - ii) Protein
 - iii) Total Fat
 - iv) Carbohydrates
 - v) Dietary Fibre
 - vi) Sodium

- For Fresh fruits, the NIP will minimally have to display the following nutrients:
 - i) Energy
 - ii) Protein
 - iii) Total Fat
 - iv) Carbohydrates
 - v) Total Sugar
 - vi) Dietary Fibre

- For Frozen/Chilled* fruits, the NIP will minimally have to display the following nutrients:
 - i) Energy
 - ii) Protein
 - iii) Total Fat
 - iv) Carbohydrates
 - v) Total Sugar
 - vi) Dietary Fibre
 - vii) Sodium

** Exclude fresh vegetables and fresh fruits*

Selective Nutrient Listing for HCS Sweetened Drinks:

- For Carbonated Drinks**, the NIP will minimally have to display the following nutrients:
 - i) Energy
 - ii) Protein
 - iii) Total Fat
 - iv) Saturated Fat
 - v) Carbohydrates
 - vi) Total Sugar
 - vii) Sodium

- For Isotonic Drinks**, the NIP will minimally have to display the following nutrients:
 - i) Energy
 - ii) Protein
 - iii) Total Fat
 - iv) Saturated Fat
 - v) Carbohydrates
 - vi) Total Sugar
 - vii) Sodium

- For Non-Carbonated Drinks/Asian Drinks**, the NIP will minimally have to display the following nutrients:
 - i) Energy
 - ii) Protein
 - iii) Total Fat
 - iv) Saturated Fat
 - v) Carbohydrates
 - vi) Total Sugar
 - vii) Sodium

- For Juice drinks (at least 10% fruit juice)**, the NIP will minimally have to display the following nutrients:
 - i) Energy
 - ii) Protein
 - iii) Total Fat
 - iv) Saturated Fat
 - v) Carbohydrates
 - vi) Total Sugar
 - vii) Sodium

- For Water (Still or Carbonated)**, the NIP will minimally have to display the following nutrients:
 - i) Energy
 - ii) Protein
 - iii) Total Fat
 - iv) Saturated Fat
 - v) Carbohydrates
 - vi) Total Sugar
 - vii) Sodium

**** only applicable for Sweetened Drinks with 0% in Cholesterol and Dietary Fibre**

Cholesterol and Dietary Fibre to be declared in statement 'Not a significant source of Cholesterol and Dietary Fibre' at the bottom of the NIP

If Total Fat is 0%, you may also declare Saturated Fat in the same statement.

Figure 1b: Example of a nutrition information panel with additional column listing values per 100ml (as reconstituted). This is required for products which requires reconstitution.

NUTRITION INFORMATION			
Servings per package: 10 Serving Size: 30 g (1 sachet)			
	Per serving	Per 100 g	Per 100 ml**
Energy	198 kcal*	660 kcal*	96 kcal*
Protein	1.5 g	5.0 g	0.7 g
Total Fat	10.9 g	36.3 g	1.9 g
- Saturated Fat	4.0 g	13.3 g	1.9 g
- Polyunsaturated fat	4.0 g	13.3 g	1.9 g
- Omega 3	0.5 g	1.7 g	0.2 g
- Omega 6	0.7 g	2.3 g	0.3 g
- Monounsaturated fat	2.9 g	9.6 g	1.4 g
- Omega 9	0.3g	0.5g	0.5g
- Trans Fat	0.1 g	0.3 g	0.0 g
Cholesterol	0 mg	0 mg	0 mg
Carbohydrate	23.5 g	78.3 g	11.3 g
-Total Sugar	18.0 g	60.0 g	5.0 g
- Glucose	2.0 g	6.7 g	1.0 g
- Lactose	0.8g	2.0 g	2.0g
- Galactose	0.8 g	4.7 g	2.0 g
Dietary Fibre	1.5 g	5.0 g	0.7 g
Sodium	270 mg	900 mg	130 mg
Magnesium	20 mg	40 mg	5 mg
Vitamin C	15 mg	60 mg	30 mg
Phytosterols	1 g	5 g	3 g

Polyunsaturated fat and monounsaturated fat may be inserted after saturated fat.

Omega fatty acids may be inserted after polyunsaturated/monosaturated fat.

Glucose, Lactose, and Galactose may be inserted under Total Sugar

Other nutrients claimed (e.g. Calcium, Vitamin A, Vitamin D) can be added after the core list.

Phytosterols can be listed separately from total fat.

*1kcal = 4.2kJ

** As reconstituted according to label directions

Methods of Nutrient Analysis

To ensure that the nutrient information declared is accurate and consistent, the following method is recommended:

Direct chemical analysis using official methods of AOAC (Association of Official Analytical Chemists) and/or alternative methods shown to be equivalent to AOAC official methods.

A list of Singapore Accreditation Council-Singapore Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (SAC-SINGLAS) accredited laboratories can be found at the following link:

<http://www.sac-accreditation.gov.sg>

For overseas Accredited labs, please refer to SAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA)

Glycaemic Index (GI) testing should be performed using an in-vivo GI testing according to the SAC-SINGLAS Technical Notes FFT01-General criteria for testing of Health-Related Properties of Food supported ISO 26642:2010(E) at an accredited laboratory.

For reference, the Glycaemic Index (GI) classification is Low: ≤ 55 ; Medium: 56 – 69; High: ≥ 70

Nutrient Verification Criteria

To apply for the Healthier Choice Symbol, reports obtained through the forms of analysis outlined in Methods of Nutrient Analysis, as well as product recipes, ingredient listing, and a sample of the food product are to be submitted on request to Healthy Food and Dining Division for verification. Each product report shall include the following information:

- i) Name of food product (ensure it corresponds with product name on product packaging)
- ii) Analysis of declared nutrients
- iii) Method of analysis
- iv) Name and address of laboratory or company, which conducted the analysis and
- v) Contact name and telephone number of the person from the food company and representative.

Declared nutrition information must be based on the composition of the food product in the form in which they are packaged (e.g. solid or liquid) and must meet the nutrient verification criteria in '**A Guide to Nutrition Labelling For Food Products**' at this website (<https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims>).

HCS SYMBOL USAGE AND LABELLING GUIDELINES

Symbol Labelling and Presentation

1. Please refer to the HCS Licensor's Usage Specifications available in the HCS website (Click [here](#) for the link) for the colour, size and font requirements.
2. The Symbol must not be distorted, photographically or otherwise.
3. The Symbol must not touch the brand name on the product to suggest that the product is generic to HPB.
4. The Symbol must not cover any essential information on the label.
5. In line with the national nutrient claim guidelines, comparative claims e.g. *Lower* in sugar, are to carry a statement on the label qualifying the comparison. This edition/version of HCS guidelines carries nutritional taglines including, lower in sugar, lower in sodium, lower in saturated fat, and higher in calcium.

An example of the statement is "25% lower in sugar as compared to regular [range or name of food category]" or any other statement bearing similar meaning.

6. Under certain circumstances where printing onto the packaging is not feasible, the company will be allowed to paste sticker labels onto the packaging. However, as a default, companies are encouraged to print the logo on the product packaging.
 - a. Please email the HCS admin team at HPB_HCSadmin@hpb.gov.sg if you want to print stickers labels instead.
 - b. Companies are responsible for printing their own stickers labels for the HCS and the nutrition information panel.
7. HCS is a registered trademark of HPB.

Advertising Codes

This section illustrates the guidelines for all packaging, advertising and promotional materials of food products licensed to carry the Symbol. These guidelines are set with the intention of:

Governing the appropriate use of the Healthier Choice Symbol

Designing, reviewing of product packaging, advertising and promotional materials involve perceptions and decisions, which are subjective. **The guidelines stated in this article, however, are not intended to limit a creative approach.** However, companies participating in the Healthier Choice Symbol Programme have to comply with certain guidelines.

General Guidelines

- 1) The guidelines stated here are applicable to all products licensed by the Health Promotion Board that use and make reference to the Healthier Choice Symbol Programme.
- 2) These guidelines are applicable to all product packaging, advertising, and promotional materials or efforts of any nature and through any media that play a role in influencing consumer perception.

3) The Healthier Choice Symbol and the appropriate certification statement must at all times conform to the guidelines as stated in this section and any other recommendations made by the Health Promotion Board.

Responsibility

1) **It is the responsibility of participating companies to ensure that their packaging labels and advertising materials comply with the Food Regulations.**

2) While these guidelines are applicable to the company and its advertising and/or other related agencies, the primary responsibility for enforcing and conforming to these standards lies solely with the individual participating company.

3) Any violation of these guidelines may result in termination of the participating company's licence to use the Symbol.

4) **These guidelines are subject to change according to the Board's scientific positions, government regulations and other circumstances.**

All packaging, advertising and promotional material artworks must conform to the guidelines in effect at the time they are submitted for approval. Should there be any changes made to these guidelines, notification of changes and their effective dates will be sent out to all relevant participating companies.

Specifications of the Healthier Choice Symbol

1) The **colour and artwork** of the Symbol on the promotional materials will have to **conform to the colour guide** in the HCS Licensor's Usage Specifications.

2) The Symbol must **NOT** be verbally and visually associated with unrelated claims such as 'Fortified with Vitamins and Minerals', 'Low Lactose', 'No Preservatives', 'No Cholesterol' and 'Organic'.

Claims and Promotional Messages

1) All claims and information used in relation to the Healthier Choice Symbol Programme for the promotion and packaging of licensed products must be **factual, accurate and must not be misleading. Evidence such as scientific reports or statistical reports will be required for support of statements or claims.**

2) **All possible misconceptions by the consumer of products being 'good' or 'bad', 'healthy' or 'unhealthy' should be avoided.**

The purpose of this Programme is to provide information to consumers in helping them make healthier choices towards a healthier lifestyle, and not to make any negative implications to products which do not meet the Board's Nutritional Guidelines.

3) The following statements may be used together with the Symbol in all advertising and promotions.

'[Product Name] meets the Nutritional Guidelines of the Healthier Choice Symbol Programme.'

or

'[Product Name] meets the Nutritional Guidelines to qualify for the Healthier Choice Symbol.'

or

'[Product Name] meets the Nutritional Guidelines of the Healthier Choice Symbol Programme administered by the Health Promotion Board.'

or

'[Product Name] meets the Nutritional Guidelines set by the Health Promotion Board as a Healthier Choice.'

4) The following are examples of statements that are **not** allowed on **all promotional materials**:

- i) 'First (or No. 1) in Singapore to carry the Healthier Choice Symbol', or related claims
- ii) '[Product Name] is endorsed by the Health Promotion Board', or related claims
- iii) 'The one and only product with the Healthier Choice Symbol'

Multiple Product Advertising and Promotions

Products related by brands are often promoted collectively. The following guidelines are applicable to advertisements or promotions of:

Participating (licensed) products with other Participating (licensed) products,

and

Participating (licensed) products with other non-participating products.

- The joint advertising and promotion of the above two situations are both allowed.
- The acceptance of the participating products must not in any way, direct or implied, be extended to non-participating products shown in the advertisement.

The acceptance of one product by the Board messages must not in any way imply, that it extends to other products, although they are not projected in the advertisement.

Consumers must not be misled into believing that other products manufactured by the company, or within a brand, also meet with the Board's Nutritional Guidelines.

Joint advertisement or promotion of participating products and non-participating products that are packed together must ensure that **only licensed products carry the Healthier Choice Symbol**. For example, free samples (non-participating products) which are wrapped with a participating product must not have the Symbol on their wrapping.

Advertising materials that featured multiple participating products with different tagline are to use the HCS logo with the Eat All Foods in Moderation tagline.

Illustrations and Text

The Healthier Choice Symbol Programme focuses on promoting a balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle, therefore all text and illustrations used on artworks for product packaging, advertisements and promotional materials will be considered in this context. Consumer perception of the overall context of materials and illustrations will be reviewed prior to approval.

LABELLING REQUIREMENTS FOR HCS ENDORSED PRODUCTS

Retail packs

- 1) Packaged products sold at retail stores will require the following to be printed on the product packaging:
 - i) Nutrition Information Panel (NIP) as stated in this Guidebook
 - ii) ≥25% comparative statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines
 - iii) 'Eat All Foods in Moderation' statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines. E.g. below the HCS logo
 - iv) Other labelling requirements e.g. wholegrain requirements for Cereals category as stated in the HCS nutritional guidelines
 - v) Any claims made have to meet the nutrient claims guidelines as stated in '[A Guide to Nutrition Labelling For Food Products](https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims)' at this website (<https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims>). It is the companies' responsibility to ensure compliance with the [Food Regulations \(Sale of Food Act\)](#)

- 2) Non-packaged fresh produce e.g. loose fruits in supermarket will require the following:
 - i) Nutrition Information Panel (NIP) as stated in this Guidebook
 - ii) NIP and HCS to be easily accessible, for example, to be displayed on a price board or equivalent
 - iii) 'Eat All Foods in Moderation' statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines. e.g. below the HCS logo

Bulk Packages

- 3) Bulk packages intended for **business-to-business (B2B) sales only** will require the following:
 - i) HCS, where more than 2 logos may be allowed if necessary
 - ii) Statements or table containing the nutrient values of the relevant HCS nutrient criteria
 - iii) ≥25% comparative statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines
 - iv) 'Eat All Foods in Moderation' statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines. e.g. below the HCS logo
 - v) Other labelling requirements e.g. wholegrain requirements for Cereals category as stated in the HCS nutritional guidelines
 - vi) Any claims made have to meet the nutrient claims guidelines as stated in '[A Guide to Nutrition Labelling For Food Products](https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims)' at this website (<https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims>). It is the companies' responsibility to ensure compliance with the [Food Regulations \(Sale of Food Act\)](#)
 - vii) Should there be any claims made (e.g. nutrient/health claims), the following would need to be declared:
 - a. Nutrition Information Panel (NIP) as stated in this guidebook.
 - viii) If the bulk packaging is a multi-pack and the individual packaging within have fulfilled the labelling requirements for packaged products sold at retail stores, then the bulk packaging need to fulfil the following labelling requirements:
 - a. Statements or table containing the nutrient values of the relevant HCS nutrient criteria
 - b. HCS, where more than 2 logos may be allowed if necessary

- c. 'Eat All Foods in Moderation' statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines. E.g. below the HCS logo
- d. Should there be any claims made (e.g. nutrient/health claims), the following would need to be declared:
 - Nutrition Information Panel (NIP) as stated in this Guidebook
 - ≥25% comparative statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines
 - Other labelling requirements e.g. wholegrain requirements for Cereals category as stated in the HCS nutritional guidelines
 - Any claims made have to meet the nutrient claims guidelines as stated in '[A Guide to Nutrition Labelling For Food Products](https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims)' at this website (<https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims>). It is the companies' responsibility to ensure compliance with the [Food Regulations \(Sale of Food Act\)](#)

Carton Box

- 4) Companies who are selling HCS products in carton(s) and have HCS logo on the carton box(s) will be required to fulfil these labelling requirements for the carton box packaging:

Business to Consumers

- i) Nutrition Information Panel (NIP) as stated in this Guidebook
- ii) ≥25% comparative statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines
- iii) 'Eat All Foods in Moderation' statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines. E.g. below the HCS logo
- iv) Other labelling requirements e.g. wholegrain requirements for Cereals category as stated in the HCS nutritional guidelines
- vi) Any claims made have to meet the nutrient claims guidelines as stated in '[A Guide to Nutrition Labelling For Food Products](https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims)' at this website (<https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims>). It is the companies' responsibility to ensure compliance with the [Food Regulations \(Sale of Food Act\)](#)

Business to Business Only*

- i) HCS logo, where more than 2 logos may be allowed if necessary

** Not applicable if business A sold to business B and business B sold the carton to consumers*

Dispenser

- 5) HCS products sold in dispenser* will require the following:
 - i) Bag-in-Box (BIB) packaging (intended for **business-to-business (B2B) sales only**) to follow the below requirements:
 - a. Statements or table containing the nutrient values of the relevant HCS nutrient criteria
 - b. HCS, where more than 2 logos may be allowed if necessary
 - c. Eat All Foods in Moderation statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines. E.g. below the HCS logo
 - d. Should there be any claims made (e.g. nutrient/health claims), the following would need to be declared:
 - Nutrition Information Panel (NIP) as stated in this Guidebook
 - ≥25% comparative statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines

- Other labelling requirements e.g. wholegrain requirements for Cereals category as stated in the HCS nutritional guidelines
 - Any claims made have to meet the nutrient claims guidelines as stated in '[A Guide to Nutrition Labelling For Food Products](https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims)' at this website (<https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims>). It is the companies' responsibility to ensure compliance with the [Food Regulations \(Sale of Food Act\)](#)
- ii) Dispenser artwork to follow the below requirements:
- a. HCS logo - company is to display the logo besides the respective HCS drink with the drink name on the dispenser
 - b. 'Eat All Foods in Moderation' statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines. E.g. below the HCS logo
 - c. NIP to be published on website or other digital platforms
 - d. $\geq 25\%$ comparative statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines (if applicable)
 - e. Where possible, to include
 - a no larger than A4 standee with HCS, Eat All Foods in Moderation statement, $\geq 25\%$ comparative statement (if applicable) and NIP meeting the NIP requirements as stated in this Guidebook to be displayed beside the dispenser

**Non-consumer facing dispenser will only need to put (ii)a*

Coffee Machine or equivalent

- 6) HCS products sold in coffee machine or equivalent* will require the following:
- i) Where there is a bulk package of the finished product to be reconstituted (intended for **business-to-business (B2B) sales only**), the packaging is to follow the below requirements:
 - a. Statements or table containing the nutrient values of the relevant HCS nutrient criteria
 - b. HCS, where more than 2 logos may be allowed if necessary
 - c. 'Eat All Foods in Moderation' statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines. E.g. below the HCS logo
 - d. Should there be any claims made (e.g. nutrient/health claims), the following would need to be declared:
 - Nutrition Information Panel (NIP) as stated in this Guidebook
 - $\geq 25\%$ comparative statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines
 - Other labelling requirements e.g. wholegrain requirements for Cereals category as stated in the HCS nutritional guidelines
 - Any claims made have to meet the nutrient claims guidelines as stated in '[A Guide to Nutrition Labelling For Food Products](https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims)' at this website (<https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims>). It is the companies' responsibility to ensure compliance with the [Food Regulations \(Sale of Food Act\)](#)
 - ii) Coffee machine artwork to follow the below requirements:
 - a. HCS logo - company is to display the logo besides the respective HCS drink on the machine
 - b. 'Eat All Foods in Moderation' statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines. E.g. below the HCS logo
 - c. Where possible, to include the following:

- \geq 25% comparative statement. E.g. 25% lower in sugar and saturated fat as compared to regular coffee drinks.
 - a no larger than A4 standee with HCS, Eat All Foods in Moderation statement, \geq 25% comparative statement (if applicable) and NIP meeting the NIP requirements as stated in this Guidebook to be displayed beside the machine
- d. NIP to be published on website or other digital platforms and include a statement on the machine to ask consumers to visit their website for the detailed NIP. E.g. Please visit our website (website link) or QR code to the website for the detailed NIP.
- *Non-consumer facing coffee machine or equivalent will only need to put (ii)a*

Steamer or equivalent

- 7) HCS products sold in steamer or equivalent* (e.g. steamed paus) will require the following:
- i) Where there is a bulk package of the finished product (intended for **business-to-business (B2B) sales only**), the packaging is to follow the below requirements:
 - a. Statements or table containing the nutrient values of the relevant HCS nutrient criteria
 - b. HCS, where more than 2 logos may be allowed if necessary
 - c. 'Eat All Foods in Moderation' statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines. E.g. below the HCS logo
 - d. Should there be any claims made (e.g. nutrient/health claims), the following would need to be declared:
 - Nutrition Information Panel (NIP) as stated in this Guidebook
 - \geq 25% comparative statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines
 - Other labelling requirements e.g. wholegrain requirements for Cereals category as stated in the HCS nutritional guidelines
 - Any claims made have to meet the nutrient claims guidelines as stated in '[A Guide to Nutrition Labelling For Food Products](https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims)' at this website (<https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims>). It is the companies' responsibility to ensure compliance with the [Food Regulations \(Sale of Food Act\)](#)
 - ii) Steamer artwork to follow the below requirements:
 - a. HCS logo - company is to display the logo besides the respective HCS product or image on the steamer, where possible
 - b. 'Eat All Foods in Moderation' statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines. E.g. below the HCS logo
 - c. NIP to be published on website or other digital platforms
 - d. \geq 25% comparative statement as stated in the HCS nutritional guidelines (if applicable)
 - e. Where possible, to include
 - a no larger than A4 standee with HCS, Eat All Foods in Moderation statement, \geq 25% comparative statement (if applicable) and NIP meeting the NIP requirements as stated in this Guidebook to be displayed beside the steamer.

**Non-consumer facing steamer or equivalent will only need to put (ii)a*

Vending Machines

- 8) HCS products sold in vending machines will require the following:
 - i) Where the finished product is a packaged product,
 - a. the packaging of the finished product is to follow the labelling requirements for packaged products in point 1.
 - b. HCS logo - company is to display the logo besides the respective HCS product on the machine
 - c. 'Eat All Foods in Moderation' statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines. E.g. below the HCS logo
 - ii) Where the finished product is not a packaged product,
 - a. NIP and $\geq 25\%$ comparative statement (if applicable). E.g. 25% lower in sugar and saturated fat as compared to regular coffee drinks, must be accessible e.g. printed on vending machine artwork or digital platforms.
 - b. If digital platform is chosen, to include a statement on the machine to ask consumers to visit their website for the detailed NIP. E.g. Please visit our website (website link) or QR code to the website for the detailed NIP.
 - c. HCS logo - company is to display the logo besides the respective HCS product on the machine
 - d. 'Eat All Foods in Moderation' statement as stated in the HCS Nutrient Guidelines. E.g. below the HCS logo

All artworks using or with reference to the HCS must be submitted to the Health Promotion Board for approval, prior to printing, distribution, publishing or broadcasting.

ADVERTISING MATERIALS

Procedures for Approval of Advertising Material

- 1) All materials including but without limitation, artworks and advertising material using or with reference to the HCS must be submitted to the Health Promotion Board for approval, prior to printing, distribution, publishing or broadcasting.

- 2) Advertising materials include, but not limited to, any of the following used to promote, directly or indirectly, the sale of food and beverage products
 - Words (e.g. written audible message)
 - Still or moving picture, sign, symbol
 - Any combination of 2 or more of the above

- 3) Advertising materials include, but not limited to, promotional material distributed via the following channels:
 - Print
 - Periodical Advertising (newspaper, magazine)
 - Brochures, leaflets, flyers, posters and handouts
 - Direct mail and personal sales

 - Broadcast
 - Radio or Podcasts
 - TV Commercial
 - Public Service Announcement
 - Theatres/Cinema
 - SMS

 - Outdoor and Transit
 - Event marketing
 - Transit advertising (MRT, Bus, Taxi, Subways, airport walkways)
 - Static Billboards/ Digital Billboards/ Mobile Billboards
 - Street furniture (park benches, bus shelters, news racks, telephone kiosks, etc)

 - Online/ Digital
 - Email
 - Social Media
 - Display / Video advertisements
 - Websites
 - Mobile Applications

 - Point-of-sale*
 - Physical Retail Store (e.g. shelf talkers, signages)
 - Vending Machine (e.g. wraps, decals)
 - E-commerce platform (e.g. banner ads)
 - F&B outlet (e.g. cashier/table standees, table stickers)

*Point-of sale does not include product pricing information in retail platforms or online platforms

4) Examples of materials to be submitted for approval includes:

TV Commercial	: Storyboard including graphic illustration and, supertitles
Radio	: Scripts
Printed Material	: Final artwork (original, in full colour) (e.g. press/magazine advertisement, leaflets)
Product Packaging:	Final artwork (original, in full colour)

5) All advertisements are required to comply with the requirements of the following:

- i. This Guidebook, particularly **HCS SYMBOL USAGE AND LABELLING GUIDELINES**
- ii. HCS Licensor’s Usage Specifications on the Symbol colour and size guide
- iii. Singapore Food Regulations and Singapore’s Code of Advertising Practice.
 - Please refer to [‘A Guide to Nutrition Labelling For Food Products’](https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims) at this website (<https://hpb.gov.sg/healthy-living/food-beverage/nutrition-labelling-and-claims>) and [Food Regulations \(Sale of Food Act\)](#) for more information.
 - Singapore’s Code of Advertising Practice can be found in the Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore (ASAS)’s website (www.asas.org.sg)

6) Please submit the advertisements at the ‘Manage Advertising Material’ module at HCS Online. Please note that you can only submit advertising materials for your HCS product after it has been approved and listed. The advertisements submitted to the Health Promotion Board will be reviewed in a timely fashion.

Companies may click on the link below to refer to step by step Advertising Material Submission guide by HPB:

[User Guide to Advertising Materials Submission](#)

DEFINITIONS

1. Reference Foods

A 'reference food' is defined as one of the following:

- i) The regular product which has been produced for a significant period by the manufacturer making the nutrient claim or
- ii) A weighted average of an industry norm for that particular type of food or
- iii) A food whose composition is determined by reference to published food composition tables.

2. 'Meal-type' Products

A 'meal-type' product is a food that is represented or promoted as a quick and easy alternative to a prepared meal or light meal. Typically, it is already partially cooked to the point where it needs only to be heated before serving or ready for consumption. It is commonly known as, a breakfast, lunch, dinner, meal, main dish, quick-bite, ready-to-go meals or pizza/pasta.

3. Foods that are Naturally Low or High in a Nutrient

Many foods are naturally low or high in particular nutrients. Meat/Fish, for example, is high in protein. When making claims, such foods should be labelled as 'a naturally high/low (nutrient) food'.

Claims of this type shall apply to a class of foods rather than to a particular food. The claim shall be made only to a class of foods and not a specific brand of food.

AIDS TO CALCULATION

Conversion factors for vitamin equivalents

Vitamin	Dietary equivalents	
Niacin	1 mg niacin equivalents (NE) =	1 mg niacin 60 mg tryptophan
Folate	1 µg dietary folate equivalents (DFE) =	1 µg food folate 0.6 µg folic acid added to food or as supplement consumed with food 0.5 µg folic acid as supplement taken on an empty stomach
Vitamin A	1 µg retinol activity equivalents (RAE) = OR	1 µg retinol 12 µg β-carotene 24 µg other provitamin A carotenoids
	1 µg retinol equivalents (RE) =	1 µg retinol 6 µg β-carotene 12 µg other provitamin A carotenoids
Vitamin E	1 mg α-tocopherol	1 mg RRR-α-tocopherol (d- α-tocopherol)

Source: *GUIDELINES ON NUTRITION LABELLING (CXG 2-1985)*

Sodium

1 g of salt (sodium chloride) contains 400 mg of sodium.

Food Energy

To convert food into kilocalories:

Fat 1 g = 9 kilocalories

Carbohydrate 1 g = 4 kilocalories

Protein 1 g = 4 kilocalories