

STANDARDS and TECHNICAL REGULATIONS

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Make Life Easier

- Get fortification written into the national nutrition policy

DEFINITIONS

From WTO TBT Annex 1

- *A “Standard” is a document approved by a recognized body that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for products or related processes and production methods, with which compliance is not mandatory. It may also include or deal exclusively with terminology, symbols, packaging, marking or labelling requirements as they apply to a product, process or production method.*

- *A “Technical regulation” is a document which lays down product characteristics or their related processes and production methods, including the applicable administrative provisions, with which compliance is mandatory. It may also include or deal exclusively with terminology, symbols, packaging, marking or labelling requirements as they apply to a product, process or production method.*

- For the purpose of this Agreement standards are defined as voluntary and technical regulations as mandatory documents. Standards prepared by the international standardisation community are based on consensus. This Agreement covers also documents that are not based on consensus.

- While both technical regulations and standards are technical product requirements, the main difference between the two is that compliance with technical regulations is mandatory, whereas compliance with standards is voluntary. A law that stipulated that a nominated food must contain a minimum amount of a micronutrient (as is the case with mandatory fortification) is an example of a technical regulation

- The TBT Agreement encourages WTO Members to develop technical regulations and standards that are based on product performance requirements, rather than on design requirements. The former creates fewer obstacles to trade, providing exporters greater leeway in terms of fulfilling the objectives of the technical requirements

- For instance, it would be preferable for a country to stipulate the minimum amount of a micronutrient that must be present in a specific type of food rather than a specific process for the addition of that micronutrient.

- Although not specifically referred to in the TBT Agreement, the Codex Alimentarius is widely interpreted as being the relevant text or “gold standard” with respect to the development of regulations on food products.

Development Process

STEP 1

- Get industry fortifying and being confident in their skills. Industry and Standards Institutes testing at Mill level and MUTUALLY establishing what is acceptable variation in terms of addition and in terms of plant variability and in analytical capability.
- **Share the results (sanitised)**

STEP 2

- Test fortified wheat flour in the marketplace taking into account the various methods by which the flour is sold i.e. Open market, small retailer, large retailer, “walkmans” etc.
- **Share the results (sanitised)**

STEP 3

- Repeat survey but at Household level and determine if household level is at desired level. For consumers purchasing daily assume level of addition is same as at marketplace.

**NOW you can think about
developing a Fortification
Technical Regulation**

**Industry must be part of the process
of both the Technical Regulation and
the National Standard**

- It can be argued that the ease of establishing legislation, the legal mechanism of which in turn dictates who is mandated to conduct monitoring, is given greater consideration than identifying which agency is best positioned to effectively monitor and adjusting the appropriate legislative mechanism.



What parameters **MUST** be included?

CODEX STAN 152 (Rev 1995)

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Other Parameters

- Protein
- Ash and acid insoluble ash
- Moisture
- Granularity – sieve size
- Fibre
- Fat and fat acidity

- Microorganisms specified
- Coliform is not a taxonomic classification but rather a working definition used to describe a group of Gram-negative, facultative anaerobic rod-shaped bacteria that ferments lactose to produce acid and gas within 48 h at 35°C.
- Heavy metals specified

- The term “contain”, or some such similar term, refers to the *total amount of* micronutrient in the food. In other words, the legal minimum and maximum levels apply to the amount of both naturally-occurring and fortificant micronutrient present in a food, not just to the amount of fortificant that is added

- This approach suits those micronutrients whose different chemical forms have similar bio availabilities; more complex regulation is needed in cases where there are significant differences in bioavailability between naturally-occurring and fortificant forms of the micronutrient in question.

Discussion

- What is the intrinsic content of each of the micronutrients being added?
- What is our level of analytical precision and accuracy for each micronutrient?
- **MAXIMUM** level – **WHAT** value and **WHY**?