



American
Heart
Association.



HEART-CHECK

FOOD CERTIFICATION

PROGRAM GUIDE

MAY 2024



WELCOME!

Congratulations on choosing to connect your company and brand with consumers' interest in heart health. Together, we can help consumers make heart-smart food and beverage choices!

This packet serves as your step-by-step "how-to" guide and provides all the information you need to navigate the certification process and then begin to leverage the certification of your product(s) by using the Heart-Check mark on your product packaging and promotions.



The American Heart Association® established the Heart-Check Food Certification Program in 1995 to give consumers an easy, reliable way to identify foods that can be building blocks of a heart-healthy diet. The iconic red-and-white Heart-Check mark helps shoppers cut through the confusion on grocery store shelves to reach for items that meet requirements based on the sound science of the American Heart Association.

Heart-Check certification provides added credibility for your brand, boosts your product's visibility and helps your company connect with health-conscious consumers. Seeing the Heart-Check mark assures shoppers they are making a smart choice. As a program participant, you enjoy these benefits:

- **INDEPENDENT EVALUATION BY A NUTRITIONAL LEADER.** The American Heart Association is one of the nation's most recognized brands. Consumers seek our guidance on nutrition and heart-healthy living. Certification from the American Heart Association is especially meaningful to consumers because it signifies the independent voice of a trusted health organization.
- **DIFFERENTIATE YOUR PRODUCTS FROM OTHERS.** For over 30 years, millions of consumers have been utilizing the Heart-Check mark to make heart healthy choices when they shop. It is a brand that consumers trust and look for over any other on-package symbol when shopping for heart-healthy food products.¹ Our prominent integrated promotion opportunities feature in-store, e-commerce, and trade show advertising, digital, social media, broadcast and print media placements, and health and wellness events. Our campaigns build awareness of the Heart-Check mark and drive consumers to certified products.
- **MAKE A VALUABLE ADDITION TO YOUR MARKETING MIX.** Many of the food industry's top brands have certified products for one reason: it works. 2/3 of Americans recognize the Heart-Check Mark with the highest recognition among Millennials and nearly 80% of consumers said they would be more likely to purchase a food or beverage item if the Heart-Check mark was displayed on the front of the package.²
- **LICENSE TO USE THE HEART-CHECK MARK ON PRODUCT PACKAGING AND IN YOUR MARKETING AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS OF YOUR CERTIFIED PRODUCTS.** See "Packaging and Promotion Requirements" on page 37 for details.
- **RECOGNITION OF YOUR CERTIFIED PRODUCTS** on heartcheck.org.

¹ Heart-Check Mark Certification Positioning and Messaging Research, November 11, 2023

² Heart-Check Mark Certification Positioning and Messaging Research, November 11, 2023

Do you have questions?

Check out the Frequently Asked Questions on page 58. And don't hesitate to contact your Business Development Manager for more information or for help with the certification process. Your Business Development Manager is your primary contact in the Heart-Check Food Certification Program and is here to help you! Contact us at 214.706.1654 or certify@heart.org to have a Business Development Manager assigned to your account.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

About the Program

Program Nutrition Requirements

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New Company or Trade Association Application

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Packaging and Promotion Requirements



PRODUCT ELIGIBILITY

When consumers see the Heart-Check mark, they instantly know the food has been certified to meet the American Heart Association's nutrition requirements for a heart-healthy food. The Heart-Check nutrition requirements were developed based on American Heart Association science recommendations published in the leading scientific journal *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association*, including:

- **2021 Dietary Guidance to Improve Cardiovascular Health:** *A Scientific Statement from the American Heart Association* (ahajournals.org/xxxx)
- **2019 ACC/AHA Guideline on the Primary Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease:** *A Report of the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association Task Force on Clinical Practice Guidelines* (ahajournals.org/xxxx)
- **Defining and Setting National Goals for Cardiovascular Health Promotion and Disease Reduction:** *The American Heart Association's Strategic Impact Goal Through 2020 and Beyond* (circ.ahajournals.org/content/121/4/586.full)

All AHA scientific statements undergo a rigorous review and approval process.

The Heart-Check program currently certifies against ten health claims in thirteen categories (listed below). For a product to be eligible, it must align with FDA/USDA requirements for the coronary heart disease health claim under which the product will be certified and meet the American Heart Association certification requirements detailed in "Program Nutrition Requirements" on page 9.

- **Standard (FDA-regulated non-meat) Individual Products** Docket #2006Q-0458: Saturated Fat, Cholesterol and Trans Fat and Reduced Risk of Heart Disease health claim
- **Raw (Fresh Fruits & Vegetables) not qualifying under Standard Certification** 21 CFR 101.75: Dietary Saturated Fat and Cholesterol and Risk of Coronary Heart Disease health claim
- **Standard (meat and seafood) "Extra Lean" Products** 21 CFR 101.75: Dietary Saturated Fat and Cholesterol and Risk of Coronary Heart Disease health claim
- **Fish with required level of Omega-3 Fatty Acids** Docket #2003Q-0401: Omega-3 Fatty Acids and Reduced Risk of Coronary Heart Disease health claim
- **Main Dish and Meal Products** 21 CFR 101.75: Dietary Saturated Fat and Cholesterol and Risk of Coronary Heart Disease health claim
- **Nuts** Docket #02P-0505: Nuts and Coronary Heart Disease health claim
- **Macadamia Nuts** Docket # 2015-Q-4850: Macadamia Nuts and Reduced Risk of Coronary Heart Disease health claim
- **Oil, Canola** Docket #2006Q-0091: Unsaturated Fatty Acids from Canola Oil and Reduced Risk of Coronary Heart Disease health claim
- **Oil, Corn** Docket #2006P-0243: Corn Oil and Corn Oil-Containing Products and Reduced Risk of Heart Disease health claim
- **Oil, Olive** Docket #2003Q-0059: Monounsaturated Fatty Acids from Olive Oil and Coronary Heart Disease health claim
- **Oil, Soybean** Docket No. FDA-2016Q-0995 Monounsaturated Fatty Acids from Soybean Oil and Coronary Heart Disease health claim
- **High-Oleic Oil** Docket No. FDA-2017-Q-0807: Oleic Acid in Edible Oils and Reduced Risk of Coronary Heart Disease health claim
- **Whole Grain Products with required levels of whole grain and dietary fiber** FDAMA Notification Docket #03Q-0547: Whole Grain Foods with Moderate Fat Content and the Risk of Heart Disease health claim

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Please note, the American Heart Association does not certify the following products:

- Alcoholic beverages
- Candy and confections
- Certain types of processed deli meats
- Desserts
- Dietary supplements
- Diet-branded and weight-loss products
- Dried meat, jerky, and meat sticks
- Foods containing partially hydrogenated oil (trans fat)
- Meal replacements
- Medical foods
- Products marketed to children

Other restrictions and limitations on product eligibility include:

- Beverage certification is limited to milk*, dairy alternatives (such as soy milk, rice milk and nut and seed milk), drinkable yogurts, fruit juices and vegetable juices.

**Milk must meet the regulatory standard of identity for "milk" as specified in 21 CFR 131.110.*

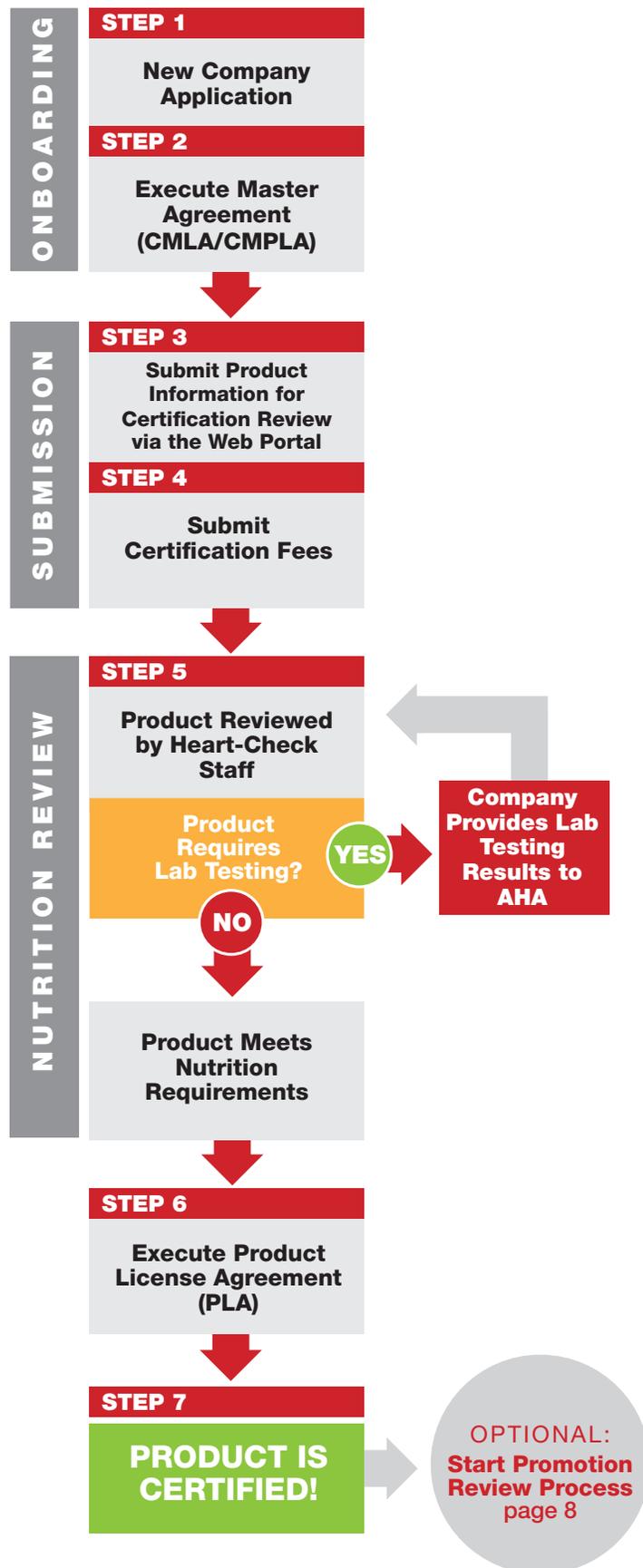
- The Heart-Check mark may be used only on products distributed in the United States, its territories and possessions.
- Products will not be certified if the end result per preparation instructions on the package does not meet our requirements.
- If a product does not align with American Heart Association science, is inconsistent with American Heart Association diet and lifestyle recommendations, or if the product name or product positioning conveys an unhealthy message that could adversely affect the credibility of the program, it will not be certified.
- Any food product produced by a tobacco company or its subsidiaries may not be certified. It is American Heart Association policy to prohibit formal corporate relationships with tobacco companies or their corporate subsidiaries or parents. A "subsidiary" or "parent" is an entity in which there exists a 5 percent or greater ownership by a tobacco company.

If you have any questions or are interested in certifying a product that may fall into one of these categories, please contact your Business Development Manager for more information.



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

CERTIFICATION FLOWCHART



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

OVERVIEW OF STEPS TO CERTIFICATION

ONBOARDING

1

New Company Application

- Submit the Application WebForm on heartcheck.org/certify to provide the Heart-Check program with your company information.

2

Execute Certification Mark License Agreement (CMLA) or Certification Mark Promotional License Agreement (CMPLA)

- Sign and return the CMLA/CMPLA This agreement outlines the terms of participation in the program and the terms of use of the Heart-Check mark.
- Submit a valid Certificate of Insurance (as outlined in the agreement). Once received, we will execute the agreement and return a copy for your records.

SUBMISSION

3

Submit Product(s) and Nutrition Profile(s) for Review

- Log into the Heart-Check web portal at certification.heartcheckmark.org to submit all your product information for review. If you have questions on this process, consult the Web Portal User Guide using the link near the center of the welcome page in the portal or contact your Business Development Manager for assistance.

4

Submit Certification Fees

- Provide the most recent audited financial information for your company to your Business Development Manager to identify your revenue tier for certification pricing.
- We will issue an invoice for certification fees based on the number of product licenses you are purchasing.

NUTRITION REVIEW

5

Products(s) Reviewed by Heart-Check Staff

- The Heart-Check staff will review the nutrition profile of each product to determine if it meets the nutrition requirements. If there are any questions during this process, we will contact you to discuss them. If the product does not meet the nutrition requirements, it will need to be reformulated and re-submitted for review before it can be certified.

6

Execute Product License Addendum (PLA)

- If one of your products requires lab testing as noted on page 29, you will be notified. You will be required to provide analytical lab tests for your product(s) for review before the certification process can be finalized.
- Once the review of the product(s) is complete, we will notify you of which product(s) are approved for certification. We will also issue a Product License Addendum (PLA), which is an addendum to the CMLA/CMPLA that names the product(s) certified and the term of the certification.

7

Product is Certified!

- When we receive the signed PLA from you and return the fully executed agreement back to you, your product is certified for the term outlined on your PLA (12-36 consecutive months unless terminated earlier as set out in Section 9 of the CMLA).

PROMOTION REVIEW (OPTIONAL)

1

Submit Promotional Materials for Review

- All promotional materials (print ads, social media, websites, POP, etc.) that will feature your certified product(s) with the Heart-Check mark or a reference to certification must be reviewed and approved prior to being released. Submit them for review in our customer portal any time during your certification term. Please note that this process may take up to 10-12 business days, but we will make every effort to complete the reviews sooner.

2

Promotional Materials Reviewed by Heart-Check Staff

- The Heart-Check team will review your promotional materials for compliance with our promotional requirements and graphic standards on page 37. If we have any questions on your materials or if we need you to make any revisions, we will be in touch to work with you on them prior to final approval.

3

Notification of Approval

- Once the promotional materials are reviewed (and edited, if needed), we will notify you of approval. This approval is valid for one year, or until the certification of your product(s) expires, whichever occurs first.

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS



The reputation of the American Heart Association — and its value to consumers — drives our dedication to preserving the integrity of the Heart-Check certification program. All certified products must meet our specified nutrition requirements and program policies. The Heart-Check Food Certification nutrition requirements follow the regulatory requirements for a coronary heart disease health claim and are further defined by AHA science positions.

Nutrient values for Heart-Check certification must be at or below the upper limit for each nutrient criterion. Lab testing may be required if nutrition values approach the maximum (see “When a Lab Test Is Required” on page 29).

Use of a heart image on the label or in labeling constitutes an implied coronary heart disease health claim. To qualify to use the Heart-Check mark, products must meet government regulatory requirements for making coronary heart disease health claims.

For information about compliance with health claim regulations, contact the **FDA** at 240-402-1774 or the **USDA** by emailing labeling@custhelp.com.



PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

	Standard (FDA-regulated non-meat) <small>Docket # 2006Q-0458: Saturated Fat, Cholesterol and Trans Fat and Reduced Risk of Heart Disease health claim</small>
Total Fat	< 6.5 g per RACC Lab trigger ≥ 5.2 g per RACC
Saturated Fat	≤ 1 g per RACC and ≤ 15% calories from saturated fat Lab trigger ≥ 0.8 g per RACC
Trans Fat ¹	< 0.5 g per RACC and per label serving size Lab trigger ≥ 0.4 g unrounded per RACC and per label serving size
Cholesterol	≤ 20 mg per RACC Lab trigger ≥ 16 mg per RACC
Sodium	One of four sodium limits applies depending on the food category: ≤ 140 mg, ≤ 240 mg or ≤ 360 mg per label serving, or ≤ 480 mg per label serving and per RACC See Individual Food Category List on page 22 for details. Lab trigger ≥ 112 mg, ≥ 192 mg or ≥ 288 mg per label serving, or ≥ 384 mg per label serving and per RACC. One of four lab triggers applies depending on food category. Trigger is at 80% of the sodium limit.
Beneficial Nutrients (naturally occurring)	≥ 10% DV per RACC of 1 or more of 6 nutrients: Vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein or dietary fiber
Additional Food Category – Specific Requirements	<p>Grain-Based and Grain Alternative Products: All grain-based products must be a good source of dietary fiber (10-19% Daily Value per RACC) and contain: ≤ 7 g Total Sugars per label serving size if good source of dietary fiber (10-19% DV per RACC) OR ≤ 9 g total sugars per label serving size if excellent source of dietary fiber (≥ 20% DV per RACC)</p> <p>Sugars from pieces of fruit do not count toward the total sugar allowance, but amounts and sources must be disclosed.</p> <p>Grain-Based & Snack Bars: ≤140 mg of sodium per label serving If product uses the new Nutrition Facts label format: ≥ 10% Daily Value of dietary fiber per RACC and contain ≤ 8 g added sugar per serving. Sugars from fruit do not count toward the sugar allowance. If product uses the old Nutrition Facts label format, the requirements above for all grain-based products apply.</p> <p>Milk and Dairy Alternatives: ≤ 130 calories per 8 fl oz</p> <p>Yogurt: ≤ 20 g total sugars per standard 6 oz label serving size</p> <p>Canned Fruits/Vegetables: (including potatoes and sweet potatoes) No “heavy syrup”</p> <p>Frozen Fruit: 100% fruit (no added sugar)</p>

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

Additional Food Category – Specific Requirements	<p>Snacks: < 5 g added sugar per serving. Naturally occurring sugars do not count toward this limit. Grain-Based Snacks: Must be a good source of dietary fiber (at least 10% DV/RACC)</p> <p>Fruit/Vegetable Juices: 100% juice (or 100% juice plus water) with no added sugars/sweeteners (excludes non-nutritive sweeteners) AND ≤ 120 calories per 8 fl oz AND ≥ 10% DV for 3 nutrients for which a DV exists. At least one of these beneficial nutrients must satisfy the 10% DV level requirement.</p> <p>Smoothies: ≤ 200 calories per RACC (8 oz) or ≤ 300 calories per 9-20 oz. (upper limit for size) AND ≤ 2 teaspoons of added sugar (8 grams) per serving Must contain at least one serving of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whole fruit or vegetable (not including any added juice or puree concentrate; juice concentrate and puree concentrate will be counted as added sugars). <p>AND/OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dairy/dairy alternative (e.g. nut/grain/soy-based milks). <p>Caffeine and other stimulant additives are not permitted; caffeine occurring naturally in other ingredients (e.g. green tea) is permitted.</p>
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RACC = REFERENCE AMOUNT CUSTOMARILY CONSUMED

¹ Products containing partially hydrogenated oils (trans fats) are not eligible for certification.

Raw (Fresh) Fruits & Vegetables (not qualifying under Standard Certification)

21 CFR 101.75: Dietary Saturated Fat and Cholesterol and Risk of Coronary Heart Disease health claim

Total Fat	<p>≤ 13 g per RACC and per label serving and per 50 g (if the RACC is 30 g or less) Lab trigger N/A</p>
Saturated Fat	<p>≤ 1.0 g per RACC and ≤ 15% calories from saturated fat Lab trigger N/A</p>
Trans Fat¹	<p>< 0.5 g per RACC and per labeled serving Lab trigger N/A</p>
Cholesterol	<p>≤ 20 mg per RACC Lab trigger N/A</p>
Sodium	<p>≤ 140 mg per label serving Lab trigger N/A</p>
Beneficial Nutrients (naturally occurring)	<p>Not Applicable</p>
Additional Food Category-Specific Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearly all fresh fruits and vegetables that don't qualify under Standard Certification should meet these requirements. • Dried fruit is not covered in this category and must qualify under Standard Certification.

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¹ Products containing partially hydrogenated oils (trans fats) are not eligible for certification.

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

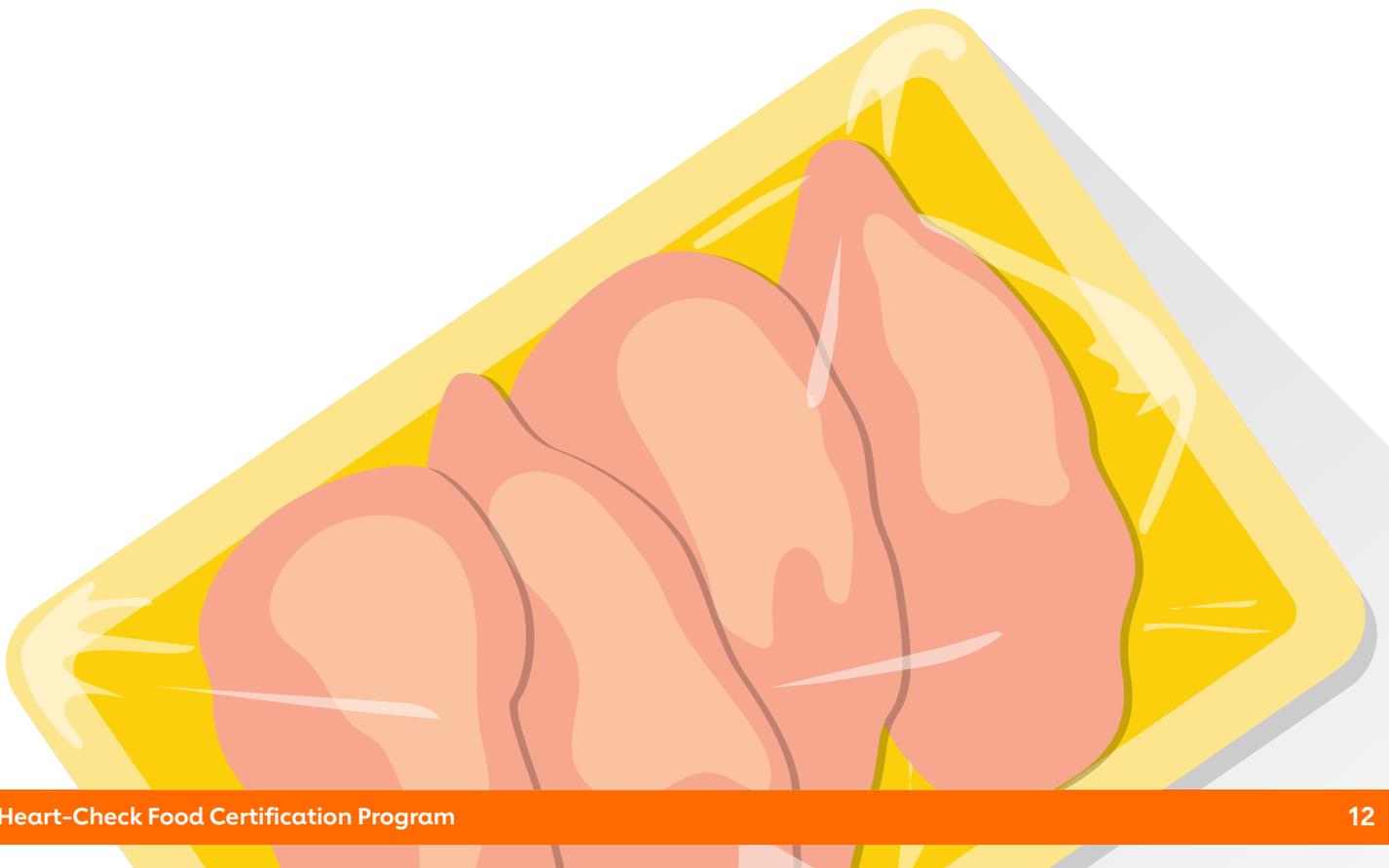
Standard "Extra Lean" (meat and seafood)

21 CFR 101.75: Dietary Saturated Fat and Cholesterol and Risk of Coronary Heart Disease health claim

Total Fat	< 5 g per RACC and per 100 g Lab trigger ≥ 4 g per RACC and/or per 100 g
Saturated Fat	< 2 g per RACC and per 100 g Lab trigger ≥ 1.6 g per RACC and/or per 100 g
Trans Fat¹	< 0.5 g per RACC and per label serving size Lab trigger ≥ 0.4 g unrounded per RACC and/or per label serving size
Cholesterol	< 95 mg per RACC and per 100 g Lab trigger ≥ 76 mg per RACC and/or per 100 g
Sodium	One of four sodium limits applies depending on the food category: ≤ 140 mg, ≤ 240 mg or ≤ 360 mg per label serving, or ≤ 480 mg per label serving and per RACC See Individual Food Category List on page 22 for details. Lab trigger ≥ 112 mg, ≥ 192 mg or ≥ 288 mg per label serving, or ≥ 384 mg per label serving and/or per RACC. One of four lab triggers applies depending on food category. Trigger is at 80% of the sodium limit.
Beneficial Nutrients (naturally occurring)	≥ 10% DV per RACC of 1 or more of 6 nutrients: Vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein or dietary fiber

RACC = REFERENCE AMOUNT CUSTOMARILY CONSUMED

¹ Products containing partially hydrogenated oils (trans fats) are not eligible for certification.



PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

Fish with required level of Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Docket # 2003Q-0401: Omega-3 Fatty Acids and Reduced Risk of Coronary Heart Disease health claim

Total Fat	<p>≤ 16 g per RACC Lab trigger ≥ 12.8 g per RACC</p>
Saturated Fat	<p>≤ 4 g per RACC Lab trigger ≥ 3.2 g per RACC</p>
Trans Fat¹	<p>< 0.5 g per RACC and per label serving size Lab trigger ≥ 0.4 g unrounded per RACC and/or per label serving size</p>
Cholesterol	<p>< 95 mg per RACC and per 100 g Lab trigger ≥ 76 mg per RACC and/or per 100 g</p>
Sodium	<p>One of four sodium limits applies depending on the food category: ≤ 140 mg, ≤ 240 mg or ≤ 360 mg per label serving, or ≤ 480 mg per label serving and per RACC</p> <p>See Individual Food Category List on page 22 for details.</p> <p>Lab trigger ≥ 112 mg, ≥ 192 mg or ≥ 288 mg per label serving, or ≥ 384 mg per label serving and/or per RACC. One of four lab triggers applies depending on food category. Trigger is at 80% of the sodium limit.</p>
Beneficial Nutrients (naturally occurring)	<p>≥ 10% DV per RACC of 1 or more of 6 nutrients: Vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein or dietary fiber</p>
Omega-3 Fatty Acids (EPA & DHA)	<p>≥ 500 mg per 85 g (3 oz cooked)</p>
Other	<p>Added fats: < 0.5 g per RACC Added CHOs: < 1 g per RACC Amount(s) and source(s) must be disclosed</p>

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¹ Products containing partially hydrogenated oils (trans fats) are not eligible for certification.



PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

Nuts

Docket # 02P-0505: Nuts and Coronary Heart Disease health claim

Total Fat	No limit Lab trigger N/A
Saturated Fat	≤ 4 g per 50 g only Lab trigger ≥ 3.2 g per 50 g
Trans Fat¹	< 0.5 g per RACC and per label serving size Lab trigger ≥ 0.4 g unrounded per RACC and/or per label serving size
Cholesterol	0 mg per label serving size Lab trigger N/A
Sodium	≤ 140 mg per label serving size Lab trigger ≥ 112 mg per label serving size
Beneficial Nutrients (naturally occurring)	≥ 10% DV per RACC of 1 or more of 6 nutrients: Vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein or dietary fiber (not applicable to walnuts)
Other	Eligible products: almonds, hazelnuts, peanuts, pecans, pistachios, some pine nuts, and single-ingredient nut butters Added fats: < 0.5 g per RACC Added CHOs: < 1 g per RACC Amount(s) and source(s) must be disclosed.

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¹ Products containing partially hydrogenated oils (trans fats) are not eligible for certification.

Macadamia Nuts

Docket # 2015-Q-4850: Macadamia Nuts and Reduced Risk of Coronary Heart Disease

Total Fat	No limit Lab trigger N/A
Saturated Fat	No limit Lab trigger N/A
Trans Fat¹	< 0.5 g per RACC and per label serving size Lab trigger ≥ 0.4 g unrounded per RACC and/or per label serving size
Cholesterol	0 mg per label serving size Lab trigger N/A
Sodium	≤ 140 mg per label serving size Lab trigger ≥ 112 mg per label serving size
Beneficial Nutrients (naturally occurring)	Not Applicable
Other	Eligible macadamia nuts include: raw, blanched, roasted, salted, and/or lightly coated and/or flavored. Added fats: < 0.5 g per RACC Added CHOs: < 1 g per RACC Amount(s) and source(s) must be disclosed.

RACC = REFERENCE AMOUNT CUSTOMARILY CONSUMED

¹ Products containing partially hydrogenated oils (trans fats) are not eligible for certification.

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

Canola Oil	
Docket #2006Q-0091: Unsaturated Fatty Acids from Canola Oil and Reduced Risk of Coronary Heart Disease	
Total Fat	No Limit Lab trigger N/A
Saturated Fat	≤ 1 g per RACC and 15% of calories from saturated fat Lab trigger ≥ 0.8 g per RACC Lab verification not required for saturated fat in pure Canola Oil.
Trans Fat¹	< 0.5 g per RACC and per 50 g Lab trigger ≥ 0.4 g unrounded per RACC or per 50 g
Cholesterol	≤ 20 mg per RACC and per 50 g Lab trigger ≥ 16 mg per RACC or per 50 g
Sodium	0 mg sodium per serving for liquid oils. See Individual Food Category List on page 22 for sodium limits for oil-containing products. Lab trigger N/A for liquid oils. One of four lab triggers applies depending on food category. Trigger is at 80% of the sodium limit.
Beneficial Nutrients (naturally occurring)	Not Applicable for liquid oils and salad dressings. All other products must have: ≥ 10% DV per RACC of 1 or more of 6 nutrients: Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein or dietary fiber
Additional Food Category-Specific Requirements	Liquid oil must be pure Canola Oil. Oil derivatives must contain ≥ 4.75 g Canola Oil per RACC. Dressings for salads and oil-containing products must have ≤ 1.5 g added sugar per serving.

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¹ Products containing partially hydrogenated oils (trans fats) are not eligible for certification.

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

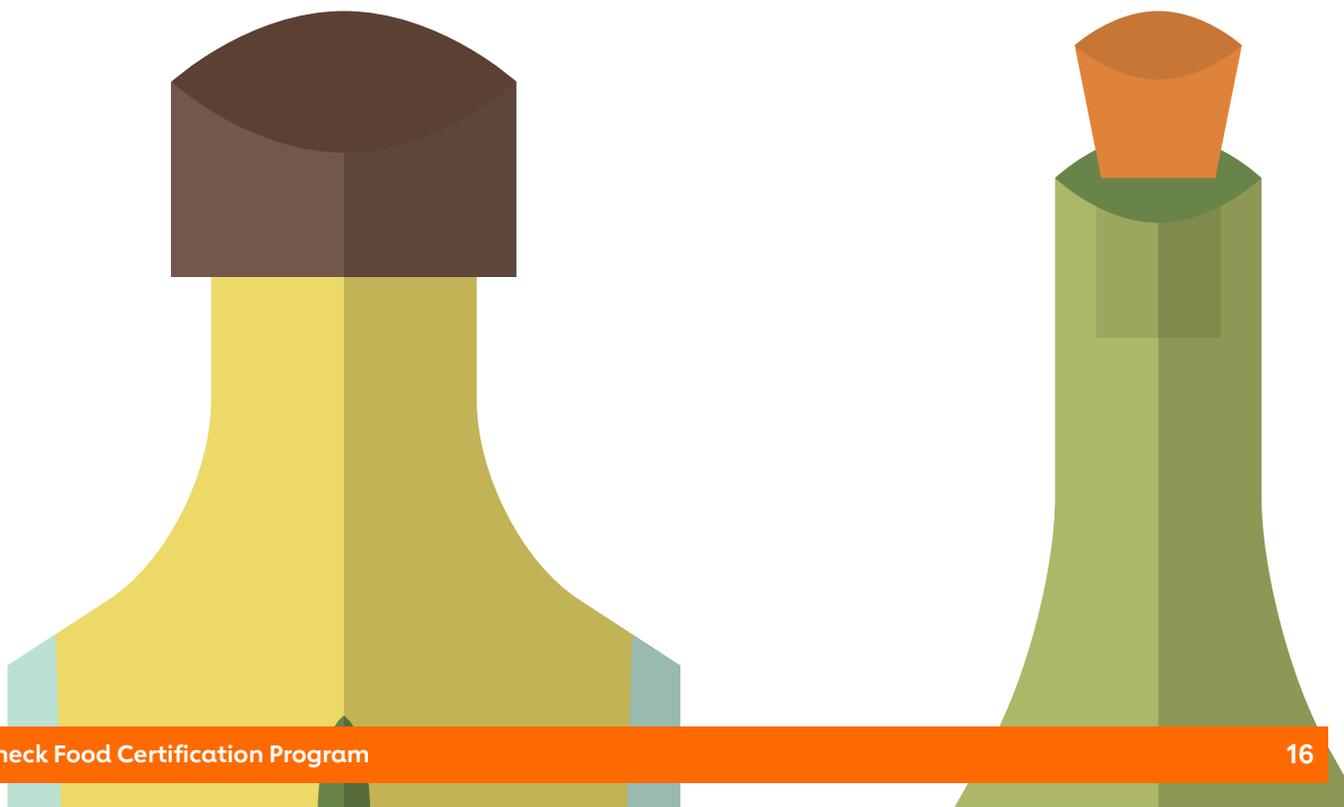
Corn Oil

Docket #2006P-0243: Corn Oil and Corn Oil-Containing Products and a Reduced Risk of Heart Disease

Total Fat	No Limit Lab trigger N/A
Saturated Fat	≤ 4 g per RACC, per labeled serving, and per 50 g (liquid oil and margarines exempt from 50 g requirement) Lab trigger ≥ 3.2 g per RACC
Trans Fat¹	< 0.5 g per RACC and per 50 g Lab trigger ≥ 0.4 g unrounded per RACC and/or per 50 g
Cholesterol	≤ 20 mg per RACC and per 50 g Lab trigger ≥ 16 mg per RACC and/or per 50 g
Sodium	0 mg sodium per serving for liquid oils. See Individual Food Category List on page 22 for sodium limits for oil-containing products. Lab trigger N/A for liquid oils. One of four lab triggers applies depending on food category. Trigger is at 80% of the sodium limit.
Beneficial Nutrients (naturally occurring)	Not Applicable for liquid oils and salad dressings. All other products must have: ≥ 10% DV per RACC of 1 or more of 6 nutrients: Vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein or dietary fiber
Additional Food Category-Specific Requirements	Liquid oil must be pure Corn Oil or a Vegetable Oil blend with ≥ 4 g of Corn Oil per RACC. Oil derivatives must contain ≥ 4 g Corn Oil per RACC. Dressings for salads and oil-containing products must have ≤ 1.5 g added sugar per serving.

RACC = REFERENCE AMOUNT CUSTOMARILY CONSUMED

¹ Products containing partially hydrogenated oils (trans fats) are not eligible for certification.



PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

Olive Oil	
Docket #2003Q-0059: Monounsaturated Fatty Acids from Olive Oil and Coronary Heart Disease Health Claim	
Total Fat	No Limit Lab trigger N/A
Saturated Fat	≤ 4 g per RACC, per labeled serving, and per 50 g (liquid oil and margarines exempt from 50 g requirement) Lab trigger ≥ 3.2 g per RACC, per labeled serving, and/or per 50 g
Trans Fat¹	< 0.5 g per RACC and per 50 g Lab trigger ≥ 0.4 g unrounded per RACC and/or per 50 g
Cholesterol	≤ 20 mg per RACC and per 50 g Lab trigger ≥ 16 mg per RACC and/or per 50 g
Sodium	0 mg sodium per serving for liquid oils. See Individual Food Category List on page 22 for sodium limits for oil-containing products. Lab trigger N/A for liquid oils. One of four lab triggers applies depending on food category. Trigger is at 80% of the sodium limit.
Beneficial Nutrients (naturally occurring)	Not Applicable
Additional Food Category-Specific Requirements	Liquid oil must be pure Olive Oil. Oil derivatives must contain ≥ 6 g Olive Oil per RACC. Dressings for salads and oil-containing products must have ≤ 1.5 g added sugar per serving.

RACC = REFERENCE AMOUNT CUSTOMARILY CONSUMED

¹ Products containing partially hydrogenated oils (trans fats) are not eligible for certification.

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

Soybean Oil	
Docket No. FDA-2016Q-0995 Monounsaturated Fatty Acids from Soybean Oil and Coronary Heart Disease	
Total Fat	No Limit Lab trigger N/A
Saturated Fat	Lab trigger per RACC, per labeled serving, and per 50 g (liquid oil and margarines exempt from 50 g requirement) Lab trigger ≥ 3.2 g per RACC, per labeled serving, and/or per 50 g
Trans Fat¹	< 0.5 g per RACC and per 50 g Lab trigger ≥ 0.4 g unrounded per RACC and/or per 50 g
Cholesterol	≤ 20 mg per RACC and per 50 g Lab trigger ≥ 16 mg per RACC and/or per 50 g
Sodium	0 mg sodium per serving for liquid oils. See Individual Food Category List on page 22 for sodium limits for oil-containing products. Lab trigger N/A for liquid oils. One of four lab triggers applies depending on food category. Trigger is at 80% of the sodium limit.
Beneficial Nutrients (naturally occurring)	Not Applicable or liquid oils and salad dressings. All other products must have: $\geq 10\%$ DV per RACC of 1 or more of 6 nutrients: Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein or dietary fiber
Additional Food Category-Specific Requirements	Liquid oil must be pure Soybean Oil Oil derivatives must contain ≥ 5 g Soybean Oil per RACC Dressings for salads and oil-containing products must have ≤ 1.5 g added sugar per serving.

RACC = REFERENCE AMOUNT CUSTOMARILY CONSUMED

¹ Products containing partially hydrogenated oils (trans fats) are not eligible for certification.

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

High Oleic Oils

Docket # FDA-2017-Q-0807: Oleic Acid in Edible Oils and Reduced Risk of Coronary Heart Disease Qualified Health Claim

Total Fat	No Limit Lab trigger N/A
Saturated Fat	≤ 4.0 g per RACC, per labeled serving, and per 50 g Lab trigger ≥ 3.2 g per RACC, per labeled serving, and/or per 50 g Olive oil: 4 g per RACC only
Trans Fat¹	≤ 0.5 g per RACC and per label serving Lab trigger ≥ 0.4 g unrounded per RACC
Cholesterol	≤ 20 mg per RACC Lab trigger ≥ 16 mg per RACC
Sodium	0 mg sodium per serving for liquid oils See Individual Food Category List on page 22 for sodium limits for oil-containing products. Lab trigger N/A for liquid oils. One of four lab triggers applies depending on food category. Trigger is at 80% of the sodium limit.
Beneficial Nutrients (naturally occurring)	Not applicable for liquid oils and salad dressings.
Additional Food Category-Specific Requirements	High oleic acid oils or oil blends containing a high oleic oil must contain 5 g oleic acid per RACC.

RACC = REFERENCE AMOUNT CUSTOMARILY CONSUMED

¹ Products containing partially hydrogenated oils (trans fats) are not eligible for certification.

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

Whole Grain with required levels of whole grain & dietary fiber

FDAMA Notification Docket # 03Q-0547: Whole Grain Foods with Moderate Fat Content and the Risk of Heart Disease health claim

Total Fat	< 6.5 g per RACC Lab trigger ≥ 5.2 g per RACC
Saturated Fat	≤ 1 g per RACC and < 15% calories from saturated fat per 100 g Lab trigger ≥ 0.8 g per RACC
Trans Fat¹	< 0.5 g per RACC and per label serving size Lab trigger ≥ 0.4 g unrounded per RACC and/or per label serving size
Cholesterol	≤ 20 mg per RACC Lab trigger ≥ 16 mg per RACC
Sodium	One of four sodium limits applies depending on the food category: ≤ 140 mg, ≤ 240 mg or ≤ 360 mg per label serving, or ≤ 480 mg per label serving and per RACC See Individual Food Category List on page 22 for details. Lab trigger ≥ 112 mg, ≥ 192 mg or ≥ 288 mg per label serving, or ≥ 384 mg per label serving and/or per RACC. One of four lab triggers applies depending on food category. Trigger is at 80% of the sodium limit.
Beneficial Nutrients (naturally occurring)	≥ 10% DV per RACC of 1 or more of 6 nutrients: Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein or dietary fiber
Whole Grain Content	≥ 51% by weight/RACC
Minimum Dietary Fiber (from whole grain only)	1.7 g per RACC of 30 g 2.5 g per RACC of 45 g 2.8 g per RACC of 50 g 3.0 g per RACC of 55 g
Additional Food Category Specific Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certifiable Grain-Based Products include: breads, biscuits, cereals (ready-to-eat and cooked), grains, flours, crackers, pancakes, French toast, waffles, muffins, sweet quick-type breads, and pastas. • Must be a good source of dietary fiber (10-19% DV per RACC). • ≤ 9 g total sugars per label serving size • Sugars from pieces of fruit do not count toward the total sugar allowance, but amounts and sources must be disclosed.

RACC = REFERENCE AMOUNT CUSTOMARILY CONSUMED

¹ Products containing partially hydrogenated oils (trans fats) are not eligible for certification.

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

	Main Dish	Meal Products
21 CFR 101.75: Dietary Saturated Fat and Cholesterol and Risk of Coronary Heart Disease health claim		
Total Fat	$\leq 3 \text{ g}$ per 100 g of product and $\leq 30\%$ calories from fat and $\leq 19.5 \text{ g}$ of total fat per label serving size Lab trigger $\geq 2.4 \text{ g}$ per 100 g	$\leq 3 \text{ g}$ per 100 g of product and $\leq 30\%$ calories from fat and $\leq 26 \text{ g}$ of total fat per label serving size Lab trigger $\geq 2.4 \text{ g}$ per 100 g
Saturated Fat	$\leq 1 \text{ g}$ per 100 g of product and $< 10\%$ calories from saturated fat and $\leq 6 \text{ g}$ of saturated fat per label serving size Lab trigger $\geq 0.8 \text{ g}$ per 100 g	$\leq 1 \text{ g}$ per 100 g of product and $< 10\%$ calories from saturated fat and $\leq 8 \text{ g}$ of saturated fat per label serving size Lab trigger $\geq 0.8 \text{ g}$ per 100 g
Trans Fat¹	$< 0.5 \text{ g}$ per label serving size Lab trigger $\geq 0.4 \text{ g}$ unrounded per label serving size	$< 0.5 \text{ g}$ per label serving size Lab trigger $\geq 0.4 \text{ g}$ unrounded per label serving size
Cholesterol	$\leq 20 \text{ mg}$ per 100 g of product and $\leq 90 \text{ mg}$ per label serving size Lab trigger $\geq 16 \text{ mg}$ per 100 g	$\leq 20 \text{ mg}$ per 100 g of product and $\leq 120 \text{ mg}$ per label serving size Lab trigger $\geq 16 \text{ mg}$ per 100 g
Sodium	$\leq 600 \text{ mg}$ per label serving size Lab trigger $\geq 480 \text{ mg}$ per label serving size	$\leq 600 \text{ mg}$ per label serving size Lab trigger $\geq 480 \text{ mg}$ per label serving size
Beneficial Nutrients (naturally occurring)	$\geq 10\% \text{ DV}$ per the entire Main Dish or Meal of 1 or more of 6 nutrients: Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein or dietary fiber	

For more information about main dish, meal and meal-type products please see page 26.

¹ Products containing partially hydrogenated oils (trans fats) are not eligible for certification.

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

INDIVIDUAL FOOD CATEGORY LIST

It is your responsibility to provide the American Heart Association with the specific FDA or USDA RACC category for each product being submitted for certification. Please refer to the Individual Food Category List below to identify the corresponding Heart-Check category code name.

HEART-CHECK FOOD CERTIFICATION PROGRAM INDIVIDUAL FOOD CATEGORY LIST					
Food Category	Category Name	Heart-Check FDA/USDA Product Category (See also 21 CFR 101.12 and 9 CFR 317.312)	RACC Amount	Unit of Measure	Sodium Limit* (in mg)
*Sodium Limit is per labeled serving size except @ 480 mg = per labeled serving size and per RACC					
Dairy Products	Cheese	Cheeses not listed as separate subcategories	30	Grams	240
Dairy Products	Chs_cott	Cottage cheese	110	Grams	240
Dairy Products	Chs_hard	Cheese, grated, hard (Parmesan, Romano...)	5	Grams	240
Dairy Products	Chs_ingr	Cheese used primarily as ingredient (farmers, ricotta, dry cottage...)	55	Grams	240
Dairy Products	Milk	Milk, milk-based drinks	8	Ounces	240
Dairy Products	Milk_cond	Milk, condensed or evaporated, undiluted	30	Grams	140
Dairy Products	Yogurt	Yogurt	170	Grams	240
Eggs & Egg Substitutes	Egg_mix	Egg mixtures (egg foo young, scrambled eggs, omelet)	110	Grams	240
Eggs & Egg Substitutes	Egg_sub	Egg substitutes	50	Grams	240
Fish & Game Meat	Fish_1	Fish, shellfish, game meat; fresh or frozen	110	Grams	360
Fish & Game Meat	Fish_1_ck	Entrees without sauce, fish/game, cooked (fried fish, patties)	85	Grams	480
Fish & Game Meat	Fish_1_mf	Entrees without sauce, fish/game, uncooked (meat-free/veggie/soy protein-burger patties)	110	Grams	360
Fish & Game Meat	Fish_1_mf_ck	Entrees without sauce, fish/game, cooked (meat-free/veggie/soy protein-burger patties)	85	Grams	360
Fish & Game Meat	Fish_can	Fish/game, canned	85	Grams	360
Fish & Game Meat	Fish_entr_s_ck	Entrees with sauce, fish/game, cooked (fish with cream sauce...)	140	Grams	480
Fish & Game Meat	Fish_proc	Fish-based luncheon meat, meat spreads, Canadian bacon, sausages and frankfurters	55	Grams	360
Fish & Game Meat	Fish_proc_mf	Substitute luncheon meat, meat spreads, Canadian bacon, sausages, frankfurters, crumbled meat substitute and taco fillings	55	Grams	360

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

Food Category	Category Name	Heart-Check FDA/USDA Product Category (See also 21 CFR 101.12 and 9 CFR 317.312)	RACC Amount	Unit of Measure	Sodium Limit* (in mg)
*Sodium Limit is per labeled serving size except @ 480 mg = per labeled serving size and per RACC					
Fish & Game Meat	Fish_smoked	Fish/game, smoked or pickled, spread	55	Grams	360
Fruit Juice	Fru_juice	Fruit juices, nectars, drinks	8	Ounces	140
Fruits	Fru_avocado	Avocado	50	Grams	140
Fruits	Fru_dried	Fruit, dried (e.g. dates, figs, prunes, raisins)	40	Grams	140
Fruits	Fru_ingr	Fruits, as ingredients (cranberries, lemon, limes)	55	Grams	140
Fruits	Fru_relish	Relishes (cranberry sauce...)	70	Grams	140
Fruits	Fru_wmelon	Watermelon	280	Grams	140
Fruits	Fruit_other	Fruits, fresh/frozen, canned, not listed separately	140	Grams	140
Grain Products	Bars	Grain-based Bars	40	Grams	140
Grain Products	Biscuit	Biscuits, croissants, bagels, tortillas, soft bread sticks, cornbread	55	Grams	240
Grain Products	Bran	Bran or wheat germ	15	Grams	140
Grain Products	Bread	Breads, rolls (excluding sweet quick-type)	50	Grams	240
Grain Products	Cer<20g	Breakfast Cereal; ready to eat, <20 g cup (puffed type)	15	Grams	240
Grain Products	Cer20-42g	Breakfast Cereal; ready to eat ≥20 g but <43 g per cup (high fiber)	40	Grams	240
Grain Products	Cer43g	Breakfast Cereal; ready to eat >43 g per cup (biscuit types)	60	Grams	240
Grain Products	Cercook_dry	Breakfast Cereal; cooked, plain, dry	40	Grams	240
Grain Products	Cercook_dry_flav	Breakfast Cereal; cooked, dry, flavored or sweetened	55	Grams	240
Grain Products	Cercook_prep	Breakfast Cereal; cooked, prepared (oatmeal, grits)	1	Cups	240
Grain Products	Cracker_non	Cracker, not used as snacks (Melba toast, hard breadsticks)	15	Grams	240
Grain Products	Cracker_snak	Crackers used as snacks	30	Grams	240
Grain Products	Grain/rice_plain_dry	Grains, plain (rice, barley...)	45	Grams	140
Grain Products	Grain/rice_plain_prep	Grains, plain prepared (rice, barley...)	140	Grams	140
Grain Products	Pancakes_mix	Pancakes, French toast, variety mixes-dry mix	40	Grams	240
Grain Products	Pancakes_prep	Pancakes, French toast, variety mixes-prepared	110	Grams	240
Grain Products	Pasta_dry	Pasta, plain, dry	55	Grams	140
Grain Products	Pasta_prep	Pasta, plain, prepared	140	Grams	140

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

Food Category	Category Name	Heart-Check FDA/USDA Product Category (See also 21 CFR 101.12 and 9 CFR 317.312)	RACC Amount	Unit of Measure	Sodium Limit* (in mg)
*Sodium Limit is per labeled serving size except @ 480 mg = per labeled serving size and per RACC					
Grain Products	Pasta_ready	Pasta, dry, ready to eat (fried noodles)	25	Grams	140
Grain Products	Pizcrust	Pizza crust	55	Grams	140
Grain Products	Sweetbrd	Sweetened breads, quick-type (muffins)	55	Grams	240
Grain Products	Taco	Taco shells,hard	30	Grams	140
Grain Products	Waffles	Waffles	85	Grams	240
Legumes	Beans_dry	Beans, dry	35	Grams	140
Legumes	Beans_plain_prep	Beans, plain (prepared)	90	Grams	140
Legumes	Beans_sauce_prep	Beans, in sauce, canned in liquid, refried (prepared)	130	Grams	360
Meat & Poultry	Meat_1	Meat, whole or ground; poultry, beef, lamb, fresh pork, veal	114	Grams	360
Meat & Poultry	Meat_1_ck	Entrees without sauce (ready to serve marinated/injected cuts of meat, beef patty, corndog, cured ham, corned beef, meatballs...)	85	Grams	360
Meat & Poultry	Meat_canned	Canned meat; (beef, pork, chicken, etc.)	85	Grams	360
Meat & Poultry	Meat_entr_S_ck	Entrees with sauce (barbecue in sauce, turkey and gravy...)	140	Grams	360
Meat & Poultry	Meat_proc	Processed meats (lunch meat, potted meat, spreads...)	55	Grams	480
Meat & Poultry	Meat_saus	Linked meat sausage (ready to cook franks, pork sausage, summer sausage, kielbasa, Polish sausage, smoked sausage...)	75	Grams	360
Meat & Poultry	Meat_saus_ck	Linked meat sausage (ready to serve Vienna sausage, franks, pork sausage, summer sausage, kielbasa, Polish sausage, smoked sausage...)	55	Grams	360
Meat Substitutes	Tofu	Tofu, tempeh	85	Grams	140
Mixed Dishes	Mix_fish/gam1	Mixed dishes, fish/game, no sauce, not cup	140	Grams	360
Mixed Dishes	Mix_fish/gam1s	Mixed dishes, fish/game, with sauce, not cup	195	Grams	360
Mixed Dishes	Mix_fish/gam2	Mixed dishes, fish/game, cup	1	Cups	360
Mixed Dishes	Mix_mt1	Mixed dishes, meat/poultry, no sauce, not measured by cup (includes pizza, burritos, all type sandwiches...)	140	Grams	360
Mixed Dishes	Mix_mt1s	Mixed dishes, meat/poultry, with sauce, not measured by cup	195	Grams	360

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

Food Category	Category Name	Heart-Check FDA/USDA Product Category (See also 21 CFR 101.12 and 9 CFR 317.312)	RACC Amount	Unit of Measure	Sodium Limit* (in mg)
*Sodium Limit is per labeled serving size except @ 480 mg = per labeled serving size and per RACC					
Mixed Dishes	Mix_mt2	Mixed dishes, meat/poultry, cup (e.g. pot pies, stew)	1	Cups	360
Mixed Dishes	Mix_nonmt1	Mixed dishes, non-meat, without sauce, not measured by cup (includes pizza)	140	Grams	360
Mixed Dishes	Mix_nonmt1s	Mixed dishes, non-meat, with sauce, not measured by cup	195	Grams	360
Mixed Dishes	Mix_nonmt2	Mixed dishes, non-meat, by cup (e.g. macaroni and cheese, spaghetti, etc.)	1	Cups	360
Nuts & Seeds	Nut/seed	Nuts and seeds	30	Grams	140
Oils & Fats	Oil_Liquid	Liquid Oils	1	Tablespoon	0
Oils & Fats	Oil_Margarine	Margarine	1	Tablespoon	240
Oils & Fats	Salad_Dressing	Dressings for salads	30	Grams	240
Plant-based Beverages	Beverage	Beverages, carbonated or non-carbonated	8	Ounces	240
Potatoes	Pot_can/liquid	Potatoes, canned in liquid	160	Grams	140
Potatoes	Pot_fresh/frozen	Potatoes, fresh/frozen/plain	110	Grams	140
Potatoes	Pot_fries2	Potatoes, frozen unprepared (fries, hashbrowns, skins, pancakes)	85	Grams	140
Potatoes	Pot_stuff/mashed	Potatoes/sweet potatoes; stuffed, mashed, candied or with sauce	140	Grams	140
Potatoes	Pot_vac	Potatoes, vacuum packed	125	Grams	140
Salad	Salad_misc	Salad, egg, bean, fruit, fish, vegetable	100	Grams	240
Salad	Salad_mt/fish	Salad, meat, poultry or fish	100	Grams	240
Salad	Salad_pasta/pot	Salad, pasta or potato	140	Grams	240
Sauce	Sauce_condmj	Major condiments (ketchup, steak, soy, teriyaki, vinegar, marinades)	15	Grams	140
Sauce	Sauce_condmn	Minor condiments (horseradish, hot sauces, mustard, worcestershire)	5	Grams	140
Sauce	Sauce_dip	Sauce (BBQ, tartar, all dips including salsa, hollandaise, sweet/sour, mustard sauce)	30	Grams	140
Sauce	Sauce_major	Sauce, major main entrée (spaghetti, pasta...)	125	Grams	360
Sauce	Sauce_mayo	Mayonnaise, sandwich spreads, mayonnaise-type dressings	15	Grams	140

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

Food Category	Category Name	Heart-Check FDA/USDA Product Category (See also 21 CFR 101.12 and 9 CFR 317.312)	RACC Amount	Unit of Measure	Sodium Limit* (in mg)
*Sodium Limit is per labeled serving size except @ 480 mg = per labeled serving size and per RACC					
Sauce	Sauce_minor	Sauce, minor main entrée (pizza, pesto, gravy, cheese, cocktail, white)	0.25	Cups	140
Smoothie	Smoothie	Shakes or shake substitutes (diary shake mixes, fruit frost mixes)	8	Ounces	240
Snacks	Snacks	All varieties, chips, pretzels, popcorns, extruded snacks, fruit-based snacks (e.g. fruit chips), grain-based snack mixes	30	Grams	240
Soup	Soup_mt	Soups, meat/poultry (USDA regulated)	245	Grams	480
Soup	Soup_non	Soups, non-meat	245	Grams	480
Vegetable Juice	Veg_juice	Vegetable juice	8	Ounces	360
Vegetables	Veg_canned/liquid*	Vegetables, canned in liquid (cream style corn, pumpkin, winter squash)	130	Grams	240
Vegetables	Veg_canned/liquid*	Vegetables, canned in liquid (tomato-based)	130	Grams	360
Vegetables	Veg_fresh/frozen	Vegetables, plain, fresh/frozen	85	Grams	140
Vegetables	Veg_paste	Vegetable paste (tomato paste)	30	Grams	240
Vegetables	Veg_sauce	Vegetable, sauce or puree	60	Grams	240
Vegetables	Veg_vac	Vegetables, vacuum-packed	95	Grams	240
Vegetables	Veg_wsauce_fresh/frozen	Vegetables, with sauce or mixtures, fresh/canned/frozen	110	Grams	240

*Canned tomato products sodium limit = 360 mg; all other canned vegetables = 240 mg

HEART-CHECK FOOD CERTIFICATION PROGRAM MEAL AND MAIN DISH FOOD CATEGORY LIST

Food Category	Heart-Check Category Name	FDA/USDA Product Category	Measurement Amount	Sodium Limit (in mg) per serving size
Main Dish	Md_gam	Main dish, fish/game	Total Fat, Saturated Fat and Cholesterol are per 100 grams. Trans Fat and Sodium are per label serving size only. Meal and Main dish products do not have RACC amounts.	600
Main Dish	Md_mt	Main dish, meat/poultry		600
Main Dish	Md_non	Main dish, non-meat		600
Meals	Dinner_gam	Dinners, fish/game		600
Meals	Dinner_mt	Dinners, meat/poultry		600
Meals	Dinner_non	Dinners, non-meat		600

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

FDA/USDA DEFINITIONS FOR MAIN DISH, MEAL AND MEAL-TYPE PRODUCTS

Below are the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) citations defining main dish, meal and meal-type products. If you are unsure how your product is classified, please contact the FDA at 240-402-1774 or the USDA by emailing labeling@custhelp.com.

Description	CFR Citation
Main dish (meatless): 6 or more ounces per labeled serving (FDA)	[21 CFR 101.13(m)]
Main dish w/game meats or seafood: 6 or more ounces per labeled serving (FDA)	[21 CFR 101.13(m)]
Main dish with meat or poultry: 6 or more ounces per labeled serving (USDA)	[9 CFR 317.313(l)] [9 CFR 381.413(m)]
Meal (meatless): 10 ounces or more per labeled serving (FDA)	[21 CFR 101.13(l)]
Meal products with game meats or seafood: 10 ounces or more per labeled serving (FDA)	[21 CFR 101.13(l)]
Meal-type product with meat or poultry: 10 ounces or more per labeled serving (USDA)	[9 CFR 317.313(m)] [9 CFR 381.413(l)]

Definition of a Main Dish [21 CFR 101.13(l)]:

- Weighs at least 6 oz per serving
- Contains at least two 40 g portions of food (or combinations of foods) from two or more of the following food groups:
 - Bread, cereal, rice, and pasta
 - Fruits and vegetables
 - Milk, yogurt, and cheese
 - Meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs and nuts
- Represented as a main dish (cannot be a beverage or a dessert)

Definition of a Meal [21 CFR 101.13(m)]:

- Weighs at least 10 oz per serving
- Contains at least three 40 g portions of food (or combinations of foods) from two or more of the following food groups:
 - Bread, cereal, rice, and pasta
 - Fruits and vegetables
 - Milk, yogurt, and cheese
 - Meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs and nuts

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

OTHER INFORMATION

Dry Mixes

A dry mix product that requires preparation before consuming will be evaluated both in its original dry form and at least one prepared form in order to qualify it for certification.

Products with Preparation Instructions

The product must meet Heart-Check program requirements when prepared in order for the product to be certified. If a product has preparation instructions or serving suggestions that require the addition of other ingredients, the nutrition information for those ingredients must be provided to include in the nutrition analysis. If a product has multiple preparation methods printed on the packaging, at least one preparation method must meet the Heart-Check program requirements for the product to be certified.

To minimize consumer confusion, a disclaimer may be required next to the preparation method(s) that does not qualify. Example: "American Heart Association certification does not apply if fried."

Beneficial Nutrients ("Jelly Bean Rule")

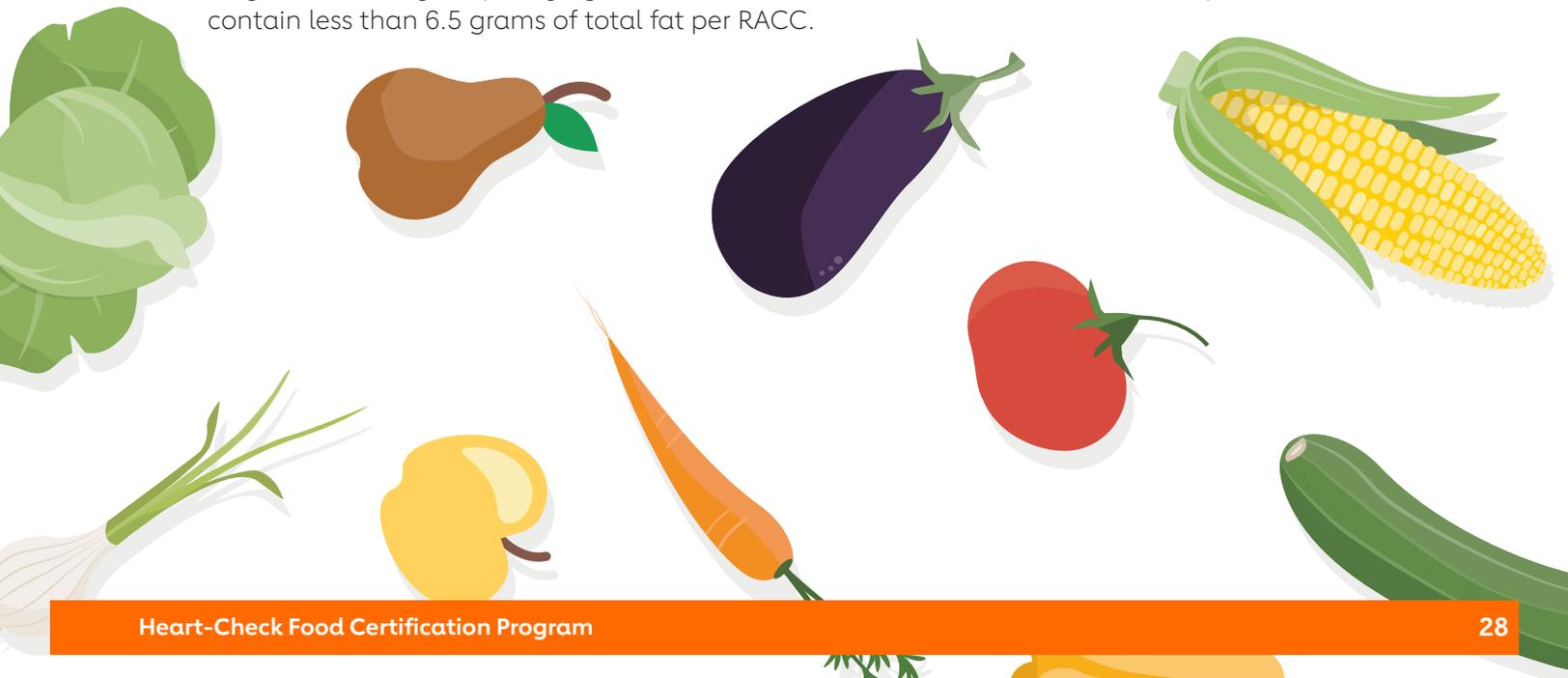
Health claim regulations require that products making coronary heart disease health claims must contain at least 10 percent of the Daily Reference Value or Reference Daily Intake for **one or more of six specified nutrients** per Reference Amount Customarily Consumed (RACC) or per the entire main dish or meal. These nutrients are **Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein and dietary fiber**. The nutrients must be naturally occurring, not fortified. If protein is the only beneficial nutrient that qualifies your product for certification, the percent daily value of protein must be labeled or the value must be provided for our records to complete the nutrition review.

Foods with Small RACCs ("30-Gram RACC Rule")

FDA regulations state that for single foods with a Reference Amount Customarily Consumed (RACC) of 30 grams or less – or 2 tablespoons or less – to make a health claim, the levels of total fat, saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium must be calculated at 50 grams to ensure all products can be evaluated comparably. The rule also applies to trans fat.

In alignment with the regulations, the American Heart Association applies the 30-gram RACC rule across all certification categories except the Nuts category.

For example: If a standard, non-meat product has a RACC of 25 grams and contains 3.5 grams of total fat per 25 grams, it would be evaluated at 50 grams. The total fat would equal 7 grams per 50 grams, thereby disqualifying it from certification because standard non-meat products must contain less than 6.5 grams of total fat per RACC.



PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

WHEN A LAB TEST IS REQUIRED

Lab testing is required when a product's nutrient values approach the maximum Heart-Check certification criteria. This is identified as a "lab trigger" in the nutrient criteria charts beginning on page 10. Lab analyses of a 12-sample composite will be required to validate compliance. 12 samples of the product, as packaged for retail, should be provided to the laboratory and composited by the lab for analysis, not composited by the company before sending the samples.

Lab testing is required prior to initial certification for products that hit one or more lab triggers. Repeat lab testing may be required if/when product is reformulated.

If your product hits a lab trigger, you will receive an email notification from the Heart-Check team stating what nutrient(s) will need to be tested. There are two options for testing:

1. Applicant lab testing

Lab test results from the applying company are accepted under the following conditions:

- Results are for the current formulation of the product.
- Testing was conducted by a facility that follows established Good Laboratory Practices (for non-clinical laboratory studies as outlined in FDA's 21 CFR 58).
- The facility uses the most current Association of Official Analytical Chemists (AOAC) official methods, where available (a Laboratory Worksheet may be required to validate your lab's accreditation).
- **Note:** All reformulated products must be tested by Eurofins prior to certification.

2. Lab Testing by Eurofins

If you would like to submit your product(s) to Eurofins for testing, you will be provided with an Analysis Request Form and shipping instructions. Applicants are responsible for late testing costs, including any costs for shipping and/or pulling product samples. If desired, a copy of the lab results can be sent directly to AHA for review.

Pass/Fail Analysis

Product(s) are considered compliant with certification criteria if the lab result is at or below the stated certification criteria. If your product passes the lab analysis, the certification process will move forward. If your product fails, you will be notified by your Business Development Manager and you may reformulate your product, as set forth in the section below, and reapply for certification at a later date.

Standard deviation/test variability will not be applied to these results. The American Heart Association nutrition criteria are absolute values. The FDA/USDA labeling allowance of +/- 20 percent does not apply.

Actions for Noncompliance

If a certified product is found to be noncompliant with certification criteria, it may be reformulated to address the noncompliant nutrient value(s). You will have 30 days to demonstrate to the American Heart Association that you are actively working to resolve the issue.

If you do not take steps to resolve the issue within 30 days, the American Heart Association may terminate your agreement and Product License Addendum. Consult the CMLA or CMPLA for details.

If for any reason your product appears to be noncompliant or is selected for periodic random testing, it is subject to the same testing procedures as a product that approaches a lab trigger. American Heart Association lab results take precedence if results differ from company-provided lab results.



The American Heart Association's Heart-Check Food Certification Program employs a per-license fee-based assessment. A license is needed to certify each product. A product is defined as a specific food with a product name, flavor, Nutrition Facts label and/or ingredient list combination that represents product differentiation or uniqueness.

Licenses can be transferred to other qualified products within a certification term. Licenses are transferable within a company. For example, if a certified product is discontinued, another product may be submitted for certification and, if it qualifies, the new product will be assigned to the open license.

Pricing is tier-based in two ways: there are quantity discounts based on the number of licenses held and there are pricing tiers based on top-level company revenue.

Additional product *servings* and *packaging sizes* do not warrant additional fees but all must be submitted for review and meet the Heart-Check program nutrition requirements if they will display the Heart-Check mark on packaging and in promotional materials.

BRAND/Form/Size/Packaging Variation Products

Discounted pricing is available for qualifying brand, form, or size variations of certified product. Products must have identical Nutrition Facts labels and ingredients lists to qualify. See below for definitions:

Brand Variations are products that are identical (including the Nutrition Facts label and ingredients list) and sold under different brand names or on-pack marketing positions. For example, a large grocery retailer parent company may carry the same product under its different store names or banners. Since the product's nutritional profile is identical, a discount is given.

Form Variations are products with identical Nutrition Facts labels and ingredient lists, but vary in form or size. Examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- Whole and Chopped
- Slivers and Pieces
- Pitted and Non-Pitted
- Organic and Non-Organic
- Seeded and Seedless
- Shelled and In-shell
- Diced and Petite Diced
- Whole Standard and Baby Cut

Variety Packs can be certified when all products within a variety pack product are certified individually (whether or not they are sold separately). Discounted pricing is available for variety packs that include certified products. If a variety pack includes a mix of certified and non-certified product, the variety pack may still qualify for the discounted pricing; however, a clear visual and/or written distinction must be made around products that either do not apply for or do not meet certification nutrition requirements so as not to confuse the consumer.

Because the fee for brand, form and variety pack variations is already deeply discounted, these products do not count toward the tier- or volume-based discount pricing level.

PROGRAM FEES

FEE SCHEDULE FOR CONSUMER PACKAGED GOODS, TRADE ASSOCIATION, TRADE ASSOCIATION MEMBER (OPTION 1)

This pricing model is the most commonly used model. All consumer packaged goods companies, trade associations, and trade association members applying for certification directly from AHA (not using a sublicense provided by their trade association) will be subject to the fees in this model.

Fees are calculated by 1) annual revenue level and 2) number of licenses needed. The amounts listed are the annual fee per license. For example, if a “medium” company (\$100M to <\$500M in annual revenue) needs 10 licenses, the fees are \$4,000 per license. If that company needs 11 licenses, the fees are \$3,500 per license.

Heart-Check Food Certification Program Fee Structure Consumer Packaged Goods and Trade Associations

		SALES REVENUE				
		Ex-Small (<\$25M)	Small (\$25M to <\$100M)	Medium (\$100M to <\$500M)	Large (\$500M to <\$1B)	Ex-Large (\$1B or More)
Tier		Fees are Calculated By Tier and Per License* (not per product)				
1	up to 5 licenses	\$3,000	\$3,500	\$4,500	\$5,500	\$6,000
2	up to 10 licenses	\$2,500	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$5,500
3	up to 20 licenses	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$3,500	\$4,500	\$5,000
4	up to 35 licenses	\$1,500	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$4,500
5	up to 50 licenses	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$2,500	\$3,500	\$4,000
6	up to 75 licenses	\$500	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$3,500
7	up to 100 licenses	\$250	\$500	\$1,500	\$2,500	\$3,000
8	up to 200 licenses	N/A	\$250	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$2,500
9	up to 350 licenses	N/A	N/A	\$500	\$1,500	\$2,000
10	up to 500 licenses	N/A	N/A	\$250	\$1,000	\$1,500
BRAND/FORM/SIZE AND VAR PACK + optional promotional license fees		\$500	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$1,500

*Companies can add/replace products within a contract year; products added during the contract year that push to the next tier level would be invoiced pro-rate per tier level and months to renewal date.

Current fees have been in effect since 2016.

CONFIDENTIAL TO AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

Please note that the tiered fee pricing is calculated on the number of **currently** certified plus products you are **currently** adding/renewing. To receive the best possible per product rate, it is important to renew all products eligible for renewal at the same time and to certify products in groups when possible.

PROGRAM FEES

FEE SCHEDULE FOR PRIVATE LABEL, TRADE ASSOCIATION MEMBER (OPTION 2), AND RETAILER SUBLICENSEE MODEL

This pricing model is used by private label manufacturers and retailers who are certifying a large volume of products and by trade associations who are purchasing sublicenses to issue to their members. This volume pricing can only be used for products that qualify as brand variations.

Fees are calculated by 1) annual revenue level and 2) number of licenses needed. The amounts listed are the annual fee per group of licenses. For example, if a company has annual revenue of \$50M to <\$75M, and they need 75 licenses, the fees are \$35,000 total. If that company needs 80 licenses, the fees are \$45,000 and they would have 20 unused licenses to expand certification to other certifiable products.

Heart-Check Food Certification Program Fee Structure Private Label, Trade Association Members, and Retailers Sublicensee Model

		SALES REVENUE						
		<\$25M	\$25M to <\$50M	\$50M to <\$75M	\$75M to <\$100M	\$100M to <\$500M	\$500M to <\$1B	\$1B or More
Tier		Licensing Fees are Calculated Per Tier						
1	up to 25 licenses	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$40,000
2	up to 50 licenses	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$40,000	\$45,000
3	up to 75 licenses	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$40,000	\$45,000	\$50,000
4	up to 100 licenses	\$25,000	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$40,000	\$45,000	\$50,000	\$55,000
5	up to 250 licenses	\$35,000	\$40,000	\$45,000	\$50,000	\$55,000	\$60,000	\$65,000
6	up to 500 licenses	\$45,000	\$50,000	\$55,000	\$60,000	\$65,000	\$70,000	\$75,000
7	up to 750 licenses	\$55,000	\$60,000	\$65,000	\$70,000	\$75,000	\$80,000	\$85,000
8	up to 1,000 licenses	\$65,000	\$70,000	\$75,000	\$80,000	\$85,000	\$90,000	\$95,000
9	up to 1,500 licenses	\$80,000	\$85,000	\$90,000	\$95,000	\$100,000	\$105,000	\$110,000
10	up to 3,000 licenses	\$95,000	\$100,000	\$105,000	\$110,000	\$115,000	\$120,000	\$125,000
11	up to 5,000 licenses	\$110,000	\$115,000	\$120,000	\$125,000	\$130,000	\$135,000	\$140,000
12	over 5,000 licenses	\$125,000	\$130,000	\$135,000	\$140,000	\$145,000	\$150,000	\$155,000

Current fees have been in effect since 2016.

CONFIDENTIAL TO AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

Please note that the tiered fee pricing is calculated on the number of **currently** certified plus products you are **currently** adding/renewing. To receive the best possible per product rate, it is important to renew all products eligible for renewal at the same time and to certify products in groups when possible.

PROGRAM FEES

PAYMENT PROCESS

Once products are submitted for certification or renewal, you will be provided with an invoice for payment. Payments can be made by check, ACH, or credit card. Payment must be received before your product certifications can be finalized. All license fees are non-refundable.

To pay by ACH, please contact Kimberly Pruitt at 214-706-1233 or Kimberly.Pruitt@heart.org.

If paying by paper check, please remit to:

Standard Mail

American Heart Association
ATTN: Heart-Check Program
c/o Bank of America Lockbox Services
Lockbox 841750
Dallas, TX 75284-1750

Overnight Mail

American Heart Association
ATTN: Heart-Check Program
c/o Bank of America Lockbox Services
1950 N. Stemmons Fwy., Ste. 5010
Lockbox 841750
Dallas, TX 75207



NEW COMPANY OR TRADE ASSOCIATION APPLICATION



Complete the New Company or Trade Association Application WebForm at

heartcheckmark.org/certify

then follow these steps:

1 Applications completed via webform are automatically sent to your Business Development Manager, who will contact you to facilitate next steps.

2 You will be assigned a Business Development Manager who will issue a CMLA or CMPLA to you. Email the signed agreement and your Certificate of Insurance to your Business Development Manager, or mail two hard copies to:

**American Heart Association
ATTN: Heart-Check Food Certification Program
Business Development Manager
7272 Greenville Ave.
Dallas, TX 75231**

If you elect to send hard copies of the CMLA or CMPLA, they must be sent directly to your Business Development Manager.

The completed New Company or Trade Association Application, financial disclosure documentation and Certificate of Insurance (COI) must be received and CMLA/CMPLA fully executed before you submit your products for certification. Once the company set-up process is complete, you will receive login credentials from your Business Development Manager to access the web portal and begin the product submission process

After you submit a New Company or Trade Association Application, you will receive one of the licensing agreements listed below to sign. If you have any questions or if you'd like to see a sample agreement, please contact your assigned Business Development Manager.

Company Type	Licensing Agreement Required
Consumer Packaged Goods	Certification Mark License Agreement Food Products
Trade Association	Certification Mark Promotion License Agreement Food Products
Trade Association Member	Certification Mark License Agreement - Trade Association Members' Food Products

CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

All companies participating in the Heart-Check Food Certification Program are required to obtain and maintain insurance from a qualified insurance carrier designating the American Heart Association as an additional insured party in the amount of \$5,000,000 for general liability, product liability, and personal injury. If you have less than \$5,000,000 for any of these categories, you must have umbrella coverage to equal \$5,000,000. For example, if you have \$1,000,000 in general liability, you must have \$4,000,000 in umbrella coverage to equal \$5,000,000.

We require that a copy of the Certificate of Insurance be provided to the AHA for our records upon entry into the program and annually thereafter. If you have questions about the insurance requirements, please contact your Business Development Manager.



If you are new to the Heart-Check Food Certification Program or if you'd like a refresher on the product submission and review processes including nutrition, packaging, and promotional reviews, please contact your Business Development Manager and we would be happy to walk you through our processes and requirements.

ONLINE APPLICATION PROCESS

Submitting your product for certification is simple using the Heart-Check product application and renewal portal. The online portal makes it easy to provide product details, update product details, or renew a product's certification.

To complete the portal process you will need:

- A PDF of your full product packaging, including the Nutrition Facts label and ingredient list.
- To know your product's FDA/USDA product category code (see page 22). If you are unsure what your product's category code is, please contact your Business Development Manager.
- If applying for Whole Grain Certification, you will need:
 - The "raw" (not rounded) gram weight of each whole-grain ingredient used in this product per 100 grams **of the product**.
 - Provide either 1) The USDA Nutrient Data Table Name and Number of the whole-grain **ingredient** or 2) The dietary fiber yield (grams) per 100 grams of each whole-grain **ingredient**.
 - For more information, contact your Business Development Manager.
- To know what type of product your product is:
 - **Branded Product** – A single product that is sold under one name, label and in one form or style.
 - **Brand/Form Variation** – A product that is identical to a product already certified (or submitted simultaneously for certification), including nutrition and ingredient information, but sold under a different label/brand or form. A reduced fee structure is allowed for these products see page 31 for more information.
 - **Branded Commodity** – When a commodity product is marketed or packaged displaying a brand name and the submitting company is a member of a Trade Association that certifies the same commodity product.
 - **Variety Pack** – A variety pack presents a unique circumstance based on certifiably and/or certification of the individual products within the variety pack and whether or not they are sold separately. Additionally, variety packs are typically marketed and promoted as separate or unique products, which necessitates additional review and approvals beyond typical serving and packaging size variations. Therefore, the reduced fee schedule that applies to brand and form variation will also apply to variety pack pricing.
 - If you're unsure about which product type to choose, contact your Business Development Manager.

If you would like a more detailed instruction guide, please ask your Business Development Manager to send you the Web Portal User Guide or download it directly at heartcheck.org/certify.

If you have any questions about the portal submission process or would like to schedule an online meeting to walk through the process, please contact your Business Development Manager.

NEW PRODUCT APPLICATION

FINISHING THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Once you complete your product submission, your submitted product is available for you to view on the Product Homepage in the “Submitted and Certified Products” section. From there you can also upload updated packaging for your product as needed. The review process requires two to four weeks from the time all materials, including fees, are received, although additional time may be needed if your product must undergo lab testing. You will be notified if lab testing is required.

If your product is approved for certification, you will receive email notification that includes a Product License Addendum (PLA) for signature. If your product fails to pass certification, Heart-Check program staff will contact you to discuss why your product did not comply with certification requirements and what the next steps are.

A product is not considered legally certified unless/until the PLA is fully executed (signed by both parties).

The PLA is an addendum to the CMLA or CMPLA and enumerates i) the product(s) being certified, ii) the term of certification, and iii) additional requirements/restrictions, if needed.

After the PLA is fully executed and you receive final packaging approval from Heart-Check program staff, you can actively use the Heart-Check mark for the term specified on the PLA (12–36 consecutive months). We also encourage you to use the mark in your promotional materials. See “Packaging and Promotion Requirements” on page 37 for details.

RENEWAL PROCESS

Certification of your product is renewed annually through the Heart-Check web portal at **certification.heartcheckmark.org**. Ninety (90) days in advance of your product’s expiration date, you will receive an automated email reminder. This reminder includes instructions for renewing your products and information regarding the terms of termination should you choose not to renew. At that time, your product will appear on the Product Homepage with the option to renew. You must submit your product for renewal, update any information that has changed, and pay the annual product certification fee.

You will receive an additional automated reminder sixty (60) and thirty (30) days in advance of your product’s expiration date. If you choose not to renew certification, please consult the CMLA or CMPLA for details on the terms of termination of your license to use the Heart-Check mark on packaging and promotional materials.

Please be aware that expired products decrease your total product count. As a result, your products may be placed in a lower tier, thereby increasing the certification fee you pay for each product. It is beneficial to renew your products in advance of expiration to prevent any lapses in certification.

MULTI-YEAR AGREEMENTS

Participants now have the option to certify their product for one, two, or three year terms. Choosing a multi-year certification license will lock in pricing based on the then current fee structure. Fees will be invoiced annually.

PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS



The license for your certified product(s) includes the right to use the Heart-Check mark on your product packaging and in promotions for your certified products including (but not limited to): on your SmartLabel™, website, digital and social media, print media, in point-of sale materials, and various regional and national advertising channels.

Please note: products utilizing a sublicense, such as some Trade Association Member, Private Label, or Retailer products do not have full promotional rights included in their licensure. For details on the promotional rights included in your licensing fee or for information on purchasing additional promotional rights please contact your Business Development Manager.

This section outlines the standards, practices and restrictions for displaying the Heart-Check mark on packaging and in promotions for your product. All materials (print or digital) that display the Heart-Check mark or reference your certified products must meet the following requirements and be submitted to Heart-Check program staff for review and approval prior to print/launch.

GRAPHIC STANDARDS

USING THE APPROPRIATE MARK

All companies participating in the Heart-Check program must use a current version of the Heart-Check mark (the “shield” logo). Packaging or promotions with old versions of the Heart-Check mark are not permitted.

There are two graphic options available for the Heart-Check mark. The traditional, full-sized mark capitalizes on powerful elements of relevance to shoppers: the “American Heart Association” name, the word “certified” and the familiar red heart and checkmark. The abbreviated version of the Heart-Check mark features the iconic Heart-Check and gives more design flexibility with a smaller profile than the traditional mark.

The American Heart Association’s corporate service mark — the heart and torch — cannot be substituted for the Heart-Check mark or used in any promotions of certified recipes.



FILE FORMATS

The Heart-Check mark is available in the following file formats. Included below are recommended uses for each format.

EPS Files (CMYK, PMS, Grayscale and Black & White)
The EPS files apply to printed materials. They are native to Adobe Illustrator. They can be opened in Illustrator or placed in QuarkXPress, Adobe InDesign and other applications. The EPS files are vector files that can be enlarged or reduced without losing their integrity.

JPEG (RGB)
The JPEG files apply to digital media, such as websites, television, etc. They are pixel-based files that can be placed in Microsoft PowerPoint, Adobe Dreamweaver and other applications. They should be used at 100% of their current size and may become pixelated if enlarged. These files have a white background and are best utilized when placed on a white background.

PNG (RGB)
The PNG files apply to digital media, such as websites, television, etc. They are pixel-based files that can be placed in Microsoft PowerPoint, Adobe Dreamweaver and other applications. They should be used at 100% of their current size and may become pixelated if enlarged. These files have a transparent background and are best utilized when placed on photos or color backgrounds.

Flexography (CMYK & PMS)
These simplified EPS files apply to challenging printing processes, such as flexography or silk screening. They are native to Adobe Illustrator. They can be opened in Illustrator or placed in QuarkXpress, Adobe InDesign and other applications. The EPS files are vector files that can be enlarged or reduced without losing their integrity.

PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

TYPEFACE

The font is Lub Dub.

SIZE

Full-Sized Heart-Check mark:

Minimum size: 0.875" x 0.6875"

Maximum size: 1.25" x 1"

Abbreviated Heart-Check mark:

Minimum size: 0.55" x 0.5"

Maximum size: 1.25" x 1.13"

- For extremely small or large labels, packages or promotional pieces, smaller or larger sizes of the Heart-Check mark may be submitted for consideration.
- Claim language type size should be no smaller than 6 point or all upper-case type of 1/16 inches minimum height.

SYMBOL/TYPE PROPORTIONAL RELATIONSHIP

- The Heart-Check mark should always be used in its entirety and not re-typeset in any way. This will ensure the proportional relationship of the wording and the Heart-Check mark.
- The ratio of height to width must be maintained when scaling the mark.

COLOR

- It is preferred that the full color version of the Heart-Check mark is used whenever possible. When this is not an option, the following additional versions are available:
 - Black & White
 - Grayscale
 - Red & White
 - Reverse out in White (can be used with pre-approval only)
- Pantone®* 3517C (red) is the recommended color for the heart, the rule, the word "certified", and the mark border. Black is the required color for the American Heart Association name and descriptor statement. (Process red color formulation is 17% cyan 100% magenta and 100% yellow.)
- Other acceptable Pantone colors are 7621C and Cool Grey 10. Custom colors are also acceptable, but samples must be submitted for approval.

- When the Heart-Check mark is used on a promotion that has red in its established color scheme, this red may be considered as a replacement for Pantone 3715C if the red is a "true" red (not burgundy, pink, orange, rust, magenta, etc.). The substituted color must be approved by the American Heart Association.

NOTE: *The checkmark within the heart must be white, except when the mark appears reversed out in white.*

IMPROPER GRAPHIC TREATMENT OF THE HEART-CHECK MARK

The Heart-Check mark should be placed to provide maximum clarity in all printed materials, slides or electronic media.

When applying the Heart-Check mark to materials, do not:

- Alter the proportional relationship between the elements.
- Use the parts separately.
- Print words or images over the Heart-Check mark.
- Modify the Heart-Check mark.
- Superimpose the mark on backgrounds that would impair immediate recognition and readability. (Examples of unacceptable backgrounds include heavily speckled papers, grid patterns and photos with high-contrast or excessive detail. Recycled papers with light speckle are acceptable.)

IMPROPER USE OF THE HEART-CHECK MARK

When using the Heart-Check mark on product packaging or promotional materials for certified products, all efforts must be made to make it clear what product(s) Heart-Check certification applies to. Particular care should be taken when displaying recipes, meals, or non-certified products.

To provide guidance to the consumer about your certified product(s):

- Physical separation between the Heart-Check mark and non-certified products/images is required.
- Generally, placing the Heart-Check mark immediately next to the certified product name is preferred.
- The Heart-Check mark should not be placed over an image of a non-certified meal or recipe using a certified product. When promotions or

* Pantone, Inc.'s check-standard trademark for color reproduction and color reproduction materials

PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

packaging feature images of prepared dishes (ex. Sandwiches), the Heart-Check mark should not be next to the image or overlap a serving dish or plate of a prepared dish.

- In any of these cases, disclaimers may be required to provide clarity to the consumer (see "Promotion Review" on page 49 for more information).

The Heart-Check mark is not permitted to be placed on or next to a coupon (i.e. not adjacent to the outline/dotted line of the coupon). In promotions that include the Heart-Check mark and a coupon, there must be physical separation (at least a Heart-Check mark's width) between the Heart-Check mark and the coupon.

FOOD STYLING

Food styling must convey an image perceived as heart-healthy. With the growing public health concern over the incidence of obesity and overweight in the U.S., it is very important that food photography convey how the product fits into an overall heart-healthy eating plan. Food styling guidelines include:

- **Portion Control:** Individual servings must be representative of a recipe's serving size. If the image appears to exceed a reasonable serving size, it may not be approved or the American Heart Association may require disclaimer language adjacent to the image. Sample disclaimer: "Standard serving is __ ounces (about __ nuts). This image contains __ servings."
- **Serving Size Disclaimer:** Any food appearing to be eaten by one person in one sitting (sandwiches, salads, soup, spaghetti, etc.) should not contain more than one serving of the certified product. Items containing more than one serving will require a serving size disclaimer statement adjacent to the image. Sample Disclaimer: "Standard serving is __ ounces of meat. This sandwich/wrap/etc. contains __ servings."
- **Use of Condiments:** Serving suggestions, including displays of multiple servings or preparation methods, should minimize the use of condiments or additional food items in the image that might result in the finished product being perceived as not heart-healthy. Food stylists should not embellish the certified products with foods high in fat or sodium, such as pickles, cheese, gravy, mayonnaise or potato chips.

- The American Heart Association must approve all images, and is the final authority on the appropriateness of images. Companies are encouraged to contact Heart-Check program staff with questions prior to photo shoots.

DISCLAIMER MESSAGE DISASSOCIATING CERTIFICATION FROM NON-AHA INFORMATION

When recipes, scientific research from an organization other than AHA, or links to the company website are provided in promotional material, the disclaimer below must be included as a footnote. The disclaimer must be legible for the average consumer.

Heart-Check Food Certification does not apply to [INSERT THE FOLLOWING AS APPLICABLE: recipes, scientific research by an organization other than the American Heart Association, and/or information reached through links or QR codes], unless expressly stated. For more information about the American Heart Association's Heart-Check nutrition guidelines, visit heartcheck.org/guidelines.

Other disclaimer statements may be required as appropriate.

HEALTH CLAIMS, NUTRITION CLAIMS, AND CARDIOVASCULAR CLAIMS

- There must be no implication through words, graphics or positioning that use of the Heart-Check mark assures the consumer that non-cardiovascular health claims are valid, endorsed or approved by the American Heart Association. Advertising or promotional materials will not be approved if the American Heart Association feels that reference to a non-cardiovascular health claim is not clear to the consumer.
- All claims and other information related to certified products must be factual, accurate, truthful and non-misleading. Written documentation may be required for support.
- The American Heart Association is the final authority on cardiovascular disease-related statements and positions on cardiovascular diseases, including coronary heart disease (heart attack), stroke, atherosclerosis, arteriosclerosis, hypertension (high blood pressure) and high blood cholesterol.

PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

- Certification may not be linked to or based on any health claim other than those used in the Heart-Check certification program.
- Additionally, you may not promote the benefits of individual nutrients or compounds, such as antioxidants. Instead, you may promote your product as part of an overall healthy eating plan.
- Consumers must not be given the impression that any one food/ingredient/nutrient is a “magic bullet,” or that a certified product is superior to an identical food product that is not certified.
- Do not imply any type of exclusivity.
- Collateral that includes the Heart-Check mark may not contain check-marks or generic hearts used as bullet points next to product attributes that are unrelated to certification because they imply a relationship between the attributes and certification. When all information is related to certification, check-marks or generic hearts may be permitted.

RESTRICTIONS

- The Heart-Check mark must not be used in connection with any product, product claim(s) or promotion that is inconsistent with American Heart Association science statements, positions or policy statements.
- Images must not place the Heart-Check mark in controversial environments or settings inconsistent with the image of the American Heart Association (for example, environments or events that promote smoking or other unhealthy lifestyle habits).
- The Heart-Check mark must not be displayed in relation to any type of sweepstakes or fundraising promotion.
- The Heart-Check mark must not be used where there is any business or promotional link to a tobacco company or subsidiary thereof. This includes food manufacturers owned or partially owned by tobacco companies.
- The Heart-Check mark is not permitted to be placed on or next to a coupon (i.e. not adjacent to the outline/dotted line of the coupon). In promotions that include the Heart-Check mark and a coupon, there must be physical separation between the Heart-Check mark and the coupon.
- The Heart-Check mark cannot be used on recipe cards unless the recipe is a Heart-Check certified recipe.
- Certification of one food product cannot be extended to other non-certified products in any direct or implied manner.
- Do not imply that a certified product is better than another or that another food is a “bad” food.
- Comparative advertising is strongly discouraged and the American Heart Association has the right to refuse use of the Heart-Check mark or mention of certification if a comparative claim is determined to be inappropriate.
- Comparative advertising is permitted between certified food products and non-certified products only if handled with caution. Any consumer perception of “good” food vs. “bad” food must be avoided.
- A certified product may not be promoted as the first or only one of its kind certified.
- Consumers must not be left with the impression that a certified food product is superior to a similar food product that is not certified.
- The nutritional values of food may be listed as an informational point of reference for consumers.
 - The serving size and the source for the nutritional information must be cited (for example USDA Data).
 - If comparing the nutrients among dissimilar foods (for example nuts vs. vegetables) use the RACC-based serving size for each as the point of reference.
 - If comparing the nutrients among similar foods (for example chicken vs. beef) use the same serving size as the point of reference.

COMPARATIVE ADVERTISING CLAIMS

PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

Avoid these common mistakes when developing your packaging and promotional materials:

- The American Heart Association “certifies” products. It does not “endorse,” “approve” or “recognize” products.
- The American Heart Association only certifies products, not product lines, brands or companies. It is incorrect for your company to say “we” are certified.
- Companies are “participants” in the Heart-Check program. Use of the term “partner/partnership” is not permitted.
- It is **not** the American Heart Association’s responsibility to ensure products meet the FDA/ USDA regulatory requirements for nutrient content claims, health claims or other claims for which there is a regulatory definition beyond those required by the Heart-Check Food Certification Program. These claims, such as “low in sodium” or “high in fiber,” are beyond the scope of certification criteria. Compliance is the responsibility of your company.
- A reasonable consumer should be able to easily distinguish between certified products and non-certified products.
- Do not use “AHA,” “The Association” or “The Heart Association.” Always spell out “American Heart Association” in its entirety.

PACKAGING REVIEW

Any visual use of the Heart-Check mark or mention of certification must receive written approval from the American Heart Association prior to use. Please confirm the packaging materials adhere to all Graphic Standards requirements before submission.

Packaging artwork and copy displaying the Heart-Check mark **must be submitted electronically to the American Heart Association for written approval**. This must be completed before printing any packaging displaying the Heart-Check mark.

Once the CMLA/CMPLA is fully executed, you will receive high-resolution images of the Heart-Check mark by email. Submit a PDF of your product packaging (including all panels, images, copy, etc.) during the online application process (see “New Product Application” on page 35 for details). Contact your Business Development Manager for assistance.

Research studies cited must be sourced. Scientific or general health claims on the packaging may require additional Science review, which may add 10 to 15 business days to the packaging review and approval process.

Packaging approvals are effective for the term of your product certification unless/until our program graphic standards (as defined in this guide) are updated.

Companies are contractually obligated to resubmit packaging for approval when any changes are made, including, but not limited to, the product’s formula, ingredient list, Nutrition Facts label and/or the use, treatment or location of the Heart-Check mark.

Please remember that final, **written approval will not be granted until your CMLA or CMPLA with Product License Addendum is signed by both parties**.

PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

FDA/USDA Coronary Heart Disease Health Claim Language

Pursuant to the FDA/USDA regulations (21CFR101.14[d][2][iv]; see complete reference in text box below), the use of a heart-shaped logo, such as the Heart-Check mark, or use of the word “heart,” as in the name “American Heart Association,” is considered an implied health claim. Execution of the CMLA or CMPLA indicates your agreement to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and government agency rules, including, but not limited to, food labeling laws. Therefore, the FDA/USDA health claim regulations must be fully satisfied, which includes **using appropriate health claim language on the product package or label.**

The FDA/USDA health claim language must be in close proximity to the Heart-Check mark – but not inside the shield. Alternatively, a referral statement may be used per the FDA regulation below.

21 CFR 101.14(d)(2)(iv): All information required to be included in the claim appears in one place without other intervening material, except that the principal display panel of the label or labeling may bear the reference statement: “See ___ for information about the relationship between ___ and ___,” with the blanks filled in with the location of the labeling containing the health claim, the name of the substance, and the disease or health-related condition (e.g., “See attached pamphlet for information about calcium and osteoporosis”), with the entire claim appearing elsewhere on the other labeling, provided that, where any graphic material (e.g., a heart symbol) constituting an explicit or implied health claim appears on the label or labeling, the reference statement or the complete claim shall appear in immediate proximity to such graphic material.

The American Heart Association’s intent is to help direct you to applicable regulations to facilitate the performance of your obligations under the CMLA or CMPLA with the American Heart Association. However, it is not the American Heart Association’s responsibility to ensure products meet the FDA/USDA regulatory requirements for health claims. Compliance is the sole responsibility of your company. Because the regulations often involve multiple conditions and are subject to some degree of interpretation about how they may be applied, it is your responsibility to consult with your regulatory legal counsel at your expense to ensure compliance.

For additional information about health claim language requirements, contact the FDA at 240-402-1774.

USDA has adopted some codified health claims but does not currently allow for any FDA Modernization Act or Qualified Health Claims. If your USDA-regulated product is qualified to make a health claim, all labeling regulations and health claim language requirements will apply.

For additional information about packaging reviews and health claim language requirements, contact the USDA at labeling@custhelp.com or via their website fsis.usda.gov.



PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

Health Claim Language by Certification Category

The following table reflects certification category claims and the corresponding health claim language requirement.

Certification Category	Certification Category Claims	FDA/USDA Health Claim Language Requirements
Standard (FDA-regulated non-meat)	Saturated Fat, Cholesterol, and Trans Fat, and Reduced Risk of Heart Disease <i>(Docket #2006Q-0458)</i>	<i>Required wording for the claim:</i> "Diets low in saturated fat and cholesterol, and as low as possible in trans fat, may reduce the risk of heart disease."
Standard "Extra Lean" (meat and seafood) Raw Fruits & Vegetables AND Main Dish & Meal Products	Dietary Saturated Fat and Cholesterol, and Risk of Coronary Heart Disease <i>(21 CFR 101.75)</i>	<i>Model claim language:</i> "While many factors affect heart disease, diets low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of this disease."
Fish (high in omega-3 fatty acids)	Omega-3 Fatty Acids & Coronary Heart Disease <i>(Docket #2003Q-0401)</i>	<i>Required wording for the claim:</i> "Supportive but not conclusive research shows that consumption of EPA and DHA omega-3 fatty acids may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease. One serving of [name of the food] provides [number of grams] gram[s] of EPA and DHA omega-3 fatty acids. [See nutrition information for total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol content.]"
Nuts	Nuts & Heart Disease <i>(Docket #02P-0505)</i>	<i>Required wording for the claim:</i> "Scientific evidence suggests but does not prove that eating 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts [such as name of specific nut] as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease. [See nutrition information for fat content.]" <i>[Note: The bracketed phrase naming a specific nut is optional. The bracketed fat content disclosure statement is applicable to a claim made for whole or chopped nuts.]</i>

PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

Certification Category	Certification Category Claims	FDA/USDA Health Claim Language Requirements
Macadamia nuts	Macadamia Nuts and Reduced Risk of Coronary Heart Disease <i>(Docket # 2015-Q-4850)</i>	<p><i>Required wording for the claim:</i></p> <p>“Supportive but not conclusive research shows that eating 1.5 ounces per day of macadamia nuts, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol and not resulting in increased intake of saturated fat or calories may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease. See nutrition information for fat [and calorie] content.”</p>
Oil, Canola	Unsaturated Fatty Acids from Canola Oil and Reduced Risk of Coronary Heart Disease <i>(Docket #2006Q-0091)</i>	<p><i>Required wording for the claim:</i></p> <p>“Limited and not conclusive scientific evidence suggests that eating about 1½ tablespoons (19 grams) of canola oil daily may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease due to the unsaturated fat content in canola oil. To achieve this possible benefit, canola oil is to replace a similar amount of saturated fat and not increase the total number of calories you eat in a day. One serving of this product contains [x] grams of canola oil.”</p>
Oil, Corn	Corn Oil and Reduced Risk of Heart Disease <i>(Docket #2006P-0243)</i>	<p><i>Required wording for the claim:</i></p> <p>“Very limited and preliminary scientific evidence suggests that eating about 1 tablespoon (16 grams) of corn oil daily may reduce the risk of heart disease due to the unsaturated fat content in corn oil. FDA concludes that there is little scientific evidence supporting this claim. To achieve this possible benefit, corn oil is to replace a similar amount of saturated fat and not increase the total number of calories you eat in a day. One serving of this product contains [x] grams of corn oil.”</p>

PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

Certification Category	Certification Category Claims	FDA/USDA Health Claim Language Requirements
<p>Oil, Olive</p>	<p>Monounsaturated Fatty Acids from Olive Oil and Coronary Heart Disease <i>(Docket #2003Q-0559)</i></p>	<p><i>Required wording for the claim:</i> “Limited and not conclusive scientific evidence suggests that eating about 2 tablespoons (23 grams) of olive oil daily may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease due to the monounsaturated fat in olive oil. To achieve this possible benefit, olive oil is to replace a similar amount of saturated fat and not increase the total number of calories you eat in a day.”</p>
<p>Oil, Soybean</p>	<p>Monounsaturated Fatty Acids from Soybean Oil and Coronary Heart Disease <i>(Docket No. FDA-2016Q-0995)</i></p>	<p><i>Required wording for the claim:</i> “Supportive but not conclusive scientific evidence suggests that eating about 1.5 tablespoons (20.5 g) daily of soybean oil, which contains unsaturated fat, may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease. To achieve this possible benefit soybean oil is to replace saturated fat and not increase the total number of calories you eat in a day. One serving of this product contains (X) grams of soybean oil. OR “Supportive but not conclusive evidence suggests that eating about 1.5 tablespoons (20.5 g) daily of soybean oil which contains unsaturated fat may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease. To achieve this possible benefit, soybean oil is not to increase the amount of saturated fat in the diet or the total number of calories you eat in a day. One serving of this product contains (X) grams of soybean oil.”</p>

PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

Certification Category	Certification Category Claims	FDA/USDA Health Claim Language Requirements
High Oleic Oils	Oleic Acid in Edible Oils and Reduced Risk of Coronary Heart Disease <i>(Docket No. FDA-2017-Q-0807)</i>	“Supportive but not conclusive scientific evidence suggests that daily consumption of about 1½ tablespoons (20 grams) of oils containing high levels of oleic acid, when replaced for fats and oils higher in saturated fat, may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease. To achieve this possible benefit, oleic acid-containing oils should not increase the total number of calories you eat in a day. One serving of [x] oil provides [x] grams of oleic acid (which is [x] grams of monounsaturated fatty acid).”
Whole Grain	Whole Grain Foods with Moderate Fat Content <i>(Docket #03Q-0547)</i>	<i>Required wording for the claim:</i> “Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods, and low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may help reduce the risk of heart disease.”



PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

Product Package Samples

The images below show acceptable alignment of the Heart-Check mark on a food package. Please note the size relationship of the Heart-Check mark to the overall face of the product package. The mark should be large enough to be read easily, but without the product appearing to be an American Heart Association-branded product. Please also note the close proximity of the health claim language and the Heart-Check mark. If you have questions, contact your Business Development Manager.



PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS



FULL HEART-CHECK MARK

ABBREVIATED HEART-CHECK MARK



PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS



FULL HEART-CHECK MARK

Note: The black arrows show a referral statement and the health claim language as described on page 43.



ABBREVIATED HEART-CHECK MARK

PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

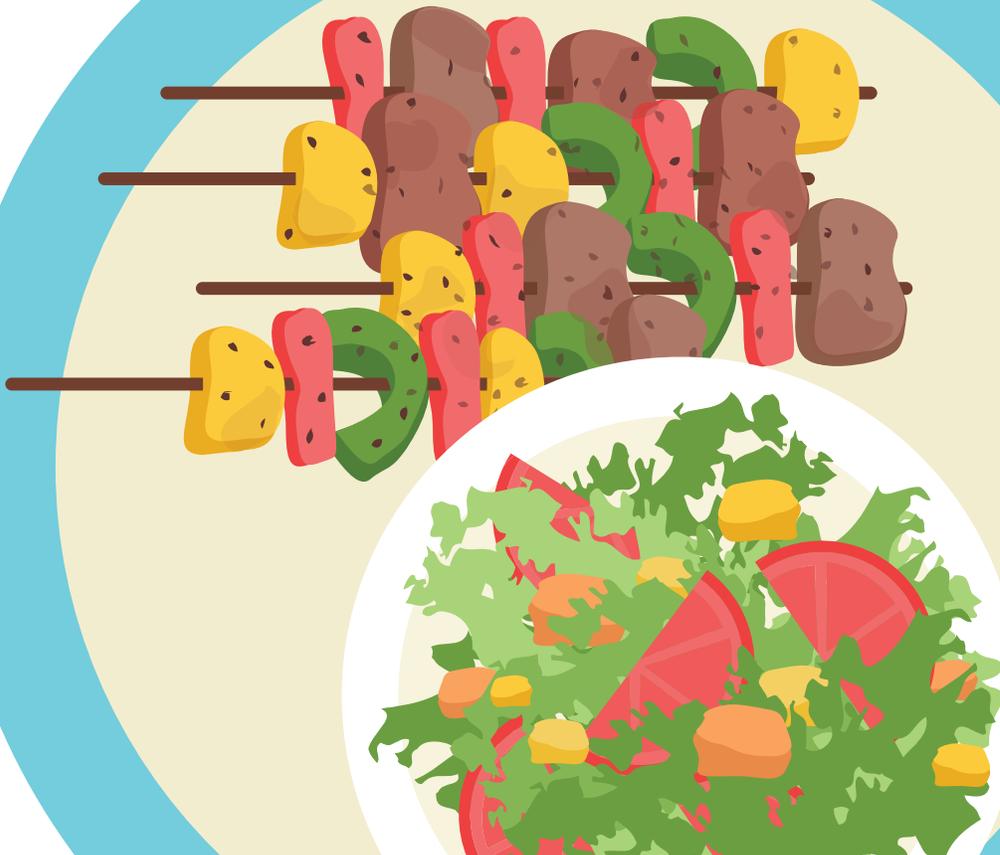
PACKAGING DOS & DON'TS

DO

- ✓ Do add the Heart-Check mark on front of the product packaging where consumers can see it.
- ✓ Do add FDA/USDA health claim language in immediate proximity to the Heart-Check mark.
- ✓ Do visually separate – preferably in a different panel – the Heart-Check mark from health claims other than those against which we certify (see page 5), such as soy.
- ✓ Do submit a mockup of your packaging with the mark properly placed and await approval prior to printing.
- ✓ Do contact your Business Development Manager to ask questions if you need further guidance.

DON'T

- ✗ Don't separate the components of the Heart-Check mark. The mark should only be used in its entirety.
- ✗ Don't change the colors of the Heart-Check mark to match your packaging. Use approved colors for the Heart-Check mark (see page 38 for details).
- ✗ Don't print words or images over the Heart-Check mark.
- ✗ Don't alter the height/width ratio of the Heart-Check mark, or the proportional relationship between the elements of the mark.



PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

PROMOTION REVIEW

Companies are encouraged to use the Heart-Check mark and refer to the product's certification in advertising, marketing and promotions. However, you must receive prior written approval from the American Heart Association.

Promotions include, but are not limited to: print ad, shelf tags and other in-store promotional items, FSIs, e-newsletters, websites, web banner advertisements, billboards, trade show materials, and circulars. If you are unsure if a piece is a promotion that requires review, please ask your Business Development Manager for clarification.

Promotions can be submitted for review via our customer portal. Please verify that the promotional materials adhere to all Graphic Standards requirements (see page 37) before submission. For example, you may promote your product's certification with a coupon or recipe, but there must be a visual separation.

Please allow 10–12 business days for American Heart Association internal reviews. While many pieces take less time, extensive pieces or those with national distribution may require further review by our Special Review Committee, which will require the full 10–12 business days noted. Materials with scientific statements, particularly those regarding heart-health, require approval from our Science department, which requires **additional** time above the 10–12 business days to process the review. Our Science department has a turnaround time of 2 weeks.

Promotional approvals are effective for 12 consecutive months or until your product certification expires, whichever comes first.

Please remember that final, **written approval will not be granted until your CMLA or CMPLA with Product License Addendum is signed by both parties.**

PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

Additional Considerations for Deli Meat:

- Deli Meats: All deli meat promotions require the serving size to be listed near the Heart-Check mark (see example below). If there are images of other foods (ex: cheese/crackers) in the promotion; we may require the phrase “Per __oz. serving of meat” be used to provide additional clarification. Also, if an image of the deli meat in a sandwich/wrap/etc. is in the promotion, the following disclaimer is required: “Serving size is __oz. of meat. This sandwich/wrap/salad/etc. contains __servings.” We do not permit images to depict more than two servings.

Example for Deli Meats:



Per 2 oz. Serving of Meat

Additional Considerations for Trade Association Members Utilizing a Sublicense

Heart-Check Food Certification Promotional Rights for Sublicensees	
Included	<p>PLEASE NOTE: All promotional materials must be pre-approved through appropriate Trade Association.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple recognition of certification on website • Point of Purchase/In-store • Trade Show/Conference Materials
Requires Promo Package	<p>All other materials, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website with content beyond simple recognition of certification • Social Media (includes promoted posts) • E-blasts • Press Releases • Consumer Materials (such as brochures, fact sheets, infographics) • Sponsored Blog Posts • Digital Advertising (i.e. web banners, digital catalogs) • Regional and National Print, Radio, and TV (includes customer magazines, retailer circulars and FSIs, regional direct mailers, posting on a 3rd party website (e.g. partner website), retailer e-blast or recipe book, B2B advertising in national print outlets, billboards, and/or national direct mailers)

Company Website

We encourage you to promote your product’s certification on your company website. Although the Heart-Check mark graphic may not be used as a hyperlink, we suggest you place the following sentence near the mark:

Visit heartcheck.org for more information on heart-healthy living, to learn more about American Heart Association’s Food Certification Program and view a list of currently certified products.

Do not place information about product certification on websites for holding companies, partners, distributors or retailers of certified products.

PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

Promoting Certified and Non-Certified Products Together

To guard against an erroneous implied suggestion that all displayed food products are certified when there is a mix of certified and non-certified products in sponsor advertisements or promotional materials, there must be a distinction made between the certified and non-certified foods. The distinction can be achieved by a physical positioning or separation of certified and non-certified food products. Additionally, when certified and non-certified products are promoted together, a statement about which products are or are not certified must be included near the Heart-Check mark. AHA staff will assist you in determining the appropriate statement. Examples include:

- Certification applies only to [insert product name].
- Select varieties of [insert product line] are certified by the American Heart Association.
- Look for the Heart-Check mark on select varieties of [insert product name].

The Heart-Check mark may not be used on any single page that displays only non-certified products within a multi-page promotional piece.

Avoiding Brand Confusion

It is important that a reasonable consumer does not perceive that the American Heart Association has certified the advertisement, promotion or website rather than the product. The Heart-Check mark must be:

- Visually separated from the messages or copy.
- Shown in close proximity to the certified product.
- At least 25% smaller and less prominently displayed than company or product logos.



PACKAGING & PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

PROMOTION DOS & DON'TS

DO

- ✓ Do send promotional materials for approval before they are finalized. For example, when preparing a television commercial, send the script and/or story board for approval before filming. You can minimize design fees by providing copy for approval before promotional materials are designed.
- ✓ Do remember the American Heart Association promotes healthy eating. Take this approach when styling your food, writing promotional copy and choosing media outlets.
- ✓ Do allow 10–12 business days for promotion reviews by Heart-Check program staff. (see page 37 for more information).
- ✓ Do limit portions to one serving in photos of certified products. Oversized portions are not allowed.
- ✓ Do refer to the quarterly activation guide designed to support your monthly marketing and promotion planning. The guide contains relevant events to tie into, ideas for activating, statistics around what consumers are looking for throughout the year, and specific preapproved messages that do not need to be submitted for review.

DON'T

- ✗ Don't use the Heart-Check Food Certification mark in connection with restaurant menu items or recipes. (Note: The Heart-Check Meal & Recipe Certification Programs, separate from the Food Certification Program, govern the use of the Heart-Check mark in restaurants and for recipes).
- ✗ Don't use the Heart-Check mark in sweepstakes and fundraising promotions.
- ✗ Don't imply exclusivity. Even if a product is the only or first product certified in its category, exclusivity claims or messaging will not be approved.



Don't Forget...

- Use of the Heart-Check mark without prior written approval constitutes a breach of contract. In all cases, use of the Heart-Check mark or mention of certification must be submitted to the American Heart Association for approval before publication, printing or production.
- Distribution of packaging or promotional materials is not authorized until the Certification Mark License Agreement (CMLA) or Certification Mark Promotion License Agreement (CMPLA) and Product License Addendum is fully executed with the American Heart Association.
- Only Heart-Check program staff can approve packaging, advertising, promotion and public relations materials displaying the Heart-Check mark. Individuals at local American Heart Association offices are not authorized to approve materials related to the Heart-Check Food Certification Program.
- Expired or terminated products must discontinue use of the mark on packaging and in promotions per the terms and conditions indicated in the CMLA or CMPLA.
- Unauthorized display and/or use of the Heart-Check mark is considered trademark infringement. Legal action will be taken against such actions.

EXPANDING YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION



Your company's relationship with the American Heart Association can extend beyond the Heart-Check Food Certification Program. The American Heart Association offers additional opportunities for your company to help increase choices for consumers who want to improve their overall diet and to help the American Heart Association fulfill its mission to create healthier lives free of cardiovascular disease and stroke.

HEART-CHECK RECIPE CERTIFICATION

These are exciting times in the food industry but as you know, it can be overwhelming for consumers. With all the information out there, we are always looking for ways to make it easier for consumers to make healthier choices.

To help, we are pleased to offer the American Heart Association Heart-Check Recipe Certification Program. This program will truly help bridge the gap between your heart-healthy products and consumers' heart-healthy dietary pattern.

The program certifies recipes in several categories based on nutrition requirements that were developed using American Heart Association science recommendations. For more information on the nutrition requirements and to learn more about the program, visit our website or contact your Business Development Manager.

HEALTHY FOR GOOD

What's good for your mind and body is good for your heart. That's why the American Heart Association is taking Healthy for Good to the next level, promoting a holistic well-being approach, with simple resources that make it easier for you to nourish your mind, heart and body, one step at a time. With science you can trust and tools you can actually use. Because we know that when you create healthy habits that stick, it sticks with you, for good.

Corporate sponsorship opportunities are available to organizations that fit within one or more of the three focus areas and are committed to supporting the mission of Healthy for Good. For more information on getting involved, contact Mallory Brown Mallory.Brown@heart.org or Xochilt Rios Mejia xochilt.rios.mejia@heart.org.

INDUSTRY NUTRITION FORUM

The American Heart Association's Industry Nutrition Forum, previously called the Industry Nutrition Advisory Panel (INAP), brings together leaders from the food and beverage industry who embrace the American Heart Association's work to accelerate making food more nourishing and making healthier foods and beverages accessible to everyone. Through the forum, industry members are kept abreast of emerging nutrition science and American Heart Association nutrition policies and programs while providing the American Heart Association information on the strategic needs, structure and operations of the food industry.

Forum members:

- Build thought leadership in the industry
- Leverage cutting edge nutrition science and consumer insights
- Network with nutrition and health experts
- Receive regular reports from the American Heart Association, including strategy, advocacy, research, community impact and consumer health

Any for-profit or not-for-profit corporation, trade organization or agency whose objectives are in alignment with the American Heart Association's is eligible for membership.

EXPANDING YOUR RELATIONSHIP

RETAIL CAMPAIGN OPPORTUNITIES

Positioning grocery stores as “health and wellness” destinations has become a major retail strategy to strengthen shopper loyalty and increase return visits.

The American Heart Association facilitates proactive collaborations with consumer packaged goods companies, trade associations and grocery retailers to implement solutions-based shopper health and wellness programs delivered directly in stores. For more information about in-store health and wellness events, contact your Business Development Manager.

WELL-BEING WORKS BETTER

Our **Well-being Works Better** platform helps business leaders promote health and well-being for all.

No, this is not just another wellness program. Yes, this is what you need to help improve the mental and physical health of your greatest asset, your employees. You'll get:

- A holistic approach (mind-heart-body connection)
- Actionable guidance grounded in science
- The latest research and tools
- Competitive advantages when hiring talent

Building a culture where employees thrive is no longer an option. It's a business imperative. We'll help you re-evaluate pre-pandemic norms to unleash the power of a healthy, happy workforce. For more information, visit heart.org/workforce.

WORKFORCE WELL-BEING SCORECARD

The American Heart Association's Workforce Well-being Scorecard is designed to help employers evaluate the culture of health and well-being within their workforces to identify gaps and determine how their progress stacks up to peer organizations. The Scorecard was developed in partnership with leading science and workforce well-being volunteers, and is grounded in the science of the American Heart Association. Employers have the option to submit employee health data in order to

achieve Platinum recognition, and the AHA offers a free online health assessment tool for gathering the data, if needed.

- The new-and-improved Scorecard has been enhanced to include evaluation of:
 - Mental health policies
 - Organizational well-being strategies to address employee burnout
 - Strategies to promote health equity in the workforce
 - Employer support of financial health, a key element of well-being
 - Impact of volunteerism and community partnerships

For more information, visit heart.org/workforce.

AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION CPR & FIRST AID

Saving lives is our business. We fund the research and develop the courses to train lifesavers. Every workplace should be safe. That's why we prepare employees to respond to any life-threatening event, whether it's a cardiac emergency, on-the-job accident or workplace disaster. As more companies have access to on-site AEDs, our training ensures employees are confident and ready to act in an emergency. For more information, go to cpr.heart.org.





ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Q1: How does Heart-Check certification benefit my company and my brand?

A1: Certification from the American Heart Association is especially meaningful to consumers who value heart healthy options because it signifies the independent voice of a trusted health organization. Seeing the mark on a food package assures shoppers they are making a smart choice.

Q2: How does the Heart-Check mark benefit consumers?

A2: The Heart-Check mark gives consumers an easy, reliable way to identify heart-healthy foods. The familiar mark helps families make healthier choices by providing shoppers with clear guidance from a trusted source.

Q3: Can any food company apply a product for certification?

A3: A food product produced by a tobacco company or its subsidiaries will not be certified.

Q4: What products are not eligible for certification?

A4: Please see page 6 for a complete list of products and/or categories that are not eligible for Heart-Check certification.

Q5: How can I use the Heart-Check mark?

A5: Once your product is certified, you may display the Heart-Check mark on product packaging and in advertising, public relations and promotions. Examples include television, radio, print, trade show booth and point of sale.

PROGRAM NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

Q6: How were the nutrition requirements determined for the Heart-Check program?

A6: The Heart-Check nutrition requirements were developed based on the American Heart Association scientific statements covering diet and lifestyle, added sugars intake and cardiovascular health promotion and disease reduction.

In addition, use of a heart image on a food label or in labeling constitutes an implied coronary heart disease health claim. To qualify to use the Heart-Check mark, products must meet government regulatory requirements for making coronary heart disease health claims.

Q7: What if I reformulate a product that has already been certified?

A7: If you reformulate a currently certified product, thereby changing the nutritional profile, you must notify us in writing and submit a new Nutrition Facts label, an ingredient list and possibly a lab analysis for review. No additional fees are required. Contact your Account Manager for details.

Q8: If my product fails to meet nutrition requirements for certification, can I reapply?

A8: Yes. You may reapply for certification after reformulating your product to address the nutrient(s) of concern. However, you must provide lab testing results from Eurofins that demonstrate your product is compliant with nutrition requirements.

PROGRAM FEES

Q9: What is the fee to apply for certification?

A9: Product certification fees are structured based on the total number of applying products and other factors. To learn more about the Heart-Check Food Certification program and related fees, contact our business development department at certify@heartcheck.org or call 214-706-1233.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

NEW COMPANY OR TRADE ASSOCIATION APPLICATION

Q10: What are the steps to apply for certification?

A10: First, your company must be approved for participation in the program. This step involves an application form you can download from heartcheck.org/certify and license agreement that must be signed before moving forward. You can then submit your product online for certification. See “Overview of Steps to Certification” on page 8 for details.

Q11: Who do I contact if I have questions or need help with the application process?

A11: If your company is new to the Heart-Check program, please contact us at 214-706-1654 or certify@heart.org. Companies actively involved in the program should contact their Business Development Manager to add and renew products, resolve certification-related issues and ask questions.

NEW PRODUCT APPLICATION

Q12: How long does the product certification process take?

A12: Product review by Heart-Check program staff takes four weeks after receipt of all required information and fees. However, it may take longer if lab testing is required. Once your product is certified, review of promotional materials requires a minimum of 12 business days. See “New Product Application” on page 35 for details.

Q13: How long is my product certified?

A13: Your product’s certification is typically valid for one year (12 consecutive months). However, we do offer multi-year certifications of up to 3 years. See page 36 for more information. You can easily renew your product online at certification.heartcheckmark.org.

Q14: Is there a limit on how many products a single company can certify?

A14: At this time, your company may certify up to 500 different products. If your company has greater than 500 products that you would like to certify, please contact us at 214-706-1654 or certify@heart.org.

Q15: Will my product undergo lab testing?

A15: Lab testing is required when a product’s nutrient values are close to exceeding the certification criteria limits. There may be other instances when lab testing is needed to verify compliance of a product with certification criteria. See “When a Lab Test Is Required” on page 29 for details.

PACKAGING AND PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

Q16: Where can I place the Heart-Check mark on the product packaging?

A16: We recommend placing the Heart-Check mark on front of the product packaging where consumers can see it. See “Packaging and Promotion Requirements” on page 37 for details.

Q17: What happens if I decide not to renew my product?

A17: You will receive an renewal letter outlining the conditions of your failure to renew. If you choose not to renew certification, please consult the CMLA or CMPLA for details on when you must remove the Heart-Check mark from packaging and stop promoting the product as certified.