



October 2012

## Fortification of bread with iodine and folic acid

### **Background**

The New Zealand (Permitted Fortification of Bread with Folic Acid) Food Standard 2012 (the Standard) came into force on 28th September 2012. This New Zealand only standard continues to permit the voluntary addition of folic acid to bread sold in New Zealand.

Standard 2.1.1 Cereals and Cereal Products of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code continues to require that where salt is added to bread, it will be iodised.

### **Expectations for operators**

#### Iodine

- When salt is added to bread baked in New Zealand, the salt must be iodised.
- Standard 2.1.1 Cereals and Cereal Products of the Code is the legislative basis for this requirement.
- See <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/foodstandards/foodstandardscode.cfm> for details
- Any bread made with iodised salt sold in a package will include iodine in the ingredients list.

#### Folic acid

- Bakers can add folic acid and L-methyltetrahydrofolate, calcium (L-MTHF) to bread under the New Zealand standard.
- Any fortified bread sold in a package will include folic acid or L-MTHF in the ingredients list.
- Refer to MPI **Fortification of bread with folic acid Q&A** for further information (provide link to Q&A)

### **Which breads are required to be made with iodised salt?**

- In standard 2.1.1 of the Code "**bread** means the product made by baking a yeast-leavened dough prepared from one or more cereal flours or meals and water". The definition of bread for the purposes of the mandatory addition of iodised salt is further defined in the Standard to exclude *pizza bases, breadcrumbs, pastries, cakes, biscuits or crackers*.

### **Which products are required to contain iodised salt?**

- Where salt is added, the following bread products must contain iodised salt:
  - plain white, white high fibre, wholemeal and multigrain bread loaves, buns and rolls
  - yeast-containing flat breads (e.g. pita bread, naan bread)
  - focaccia and pide (Turkish bread)
  - bagels (white, wholemeal, sweet)
  - topped breads, buns and rolls (e.g. cheese and bacon rolls)
  - sweet buns (e.g. raspberry buns, Boston buns)
  - fruit breads and rolls, and
  - yeast-containing baked English style muffins.

### **Which products are not required to contain iodised salt?**

- pizza bases;
- bread - crumbs;
- pastries;
- cakes, including but not limited to brioche, panettone and stollen;
- biscuits

- crackers

***What does this mean for third party auditors and territorial authorities?***

- During routine auditing and inspection, bakeries should be able to demonstrate:
  - Any salt added to bread products required to contain iodised salt is iodised
    - Check that the bakery has iodised salt in stock
    - Check that recipes indicate iodised salt is in use

***Which breads can be fortified with folic acid?***

Any bread which meets the definition for bread set out in standard 2.1.1 of the Code may have folic acid and L-MTHF added to it:

*“bread means the product made by baking a yeast-leavened dough prepared from one or more cereal flours or meals and water”*

***What does this mean for third party auditors and territorial authorities?***

- During routine auditing and inspection, bakeries should be able to demonstrate:
  - Whether or not folic acid or L-MTHF is being added to bread, and at what level.
    - Check whether the bakery has folic acid or L-MTHF or a folic acid/L-MTHF fortified flour/baking mix in stock
    - Check whether or not folic acid or L-MTHF is included in recipes and on batch records.
    - Check how much is being added, and that this amount is below the maximum level indicated in the standard (2.5mg/Kg)
    - Check that the results of any tests the bakery may have done for folic acid or L-MTHF levels in their bread are below the maximum level indicated in the standard.

***Are any declarations required on fortified bread?***

The labelling requirements continue to be regulated under the Code.

- Where bread requires labelling, when folic acid or L-MTHF is added this information must be included in the ingredient list.
- Where bread can be sold without a label, the retailer needs to be able to provide information to customers who ask, for example, whether folic acid or L-MTHF has been added.

***Can nutrition content and health claims be made on fortified bread?***

- Folate nutrition content claims can be made for bread containing folic acid or L-MTHF.
- A folate health claim can be made for bread fortified with folic acid. However certain compositional requirements must be met in conjunction with a folate declaration in the nutrition information panel (NIP) or made available to the customer on request (where bread can be sold without a label). Where L-MTHF is added to bread a health claim cannot be made.
- For further details refer to:
  - Standard 1.2.8 Nutrition Information Requirements
  - Standard 1.3.2 Vitamins & Minerals
  - Standard 1.1A.2 Transitional Standard – Health Claims

***What else might need doing in case of incorrect product labelling/information?***

For example if a bakery;

- claims a product contains folic acid or L-MTHF when it does not, or
- claims a product does not contain folic acid or L-MTHF when it does, or;



- labels a product containing folic acid or L-MTHF as 'natural';

This may constitute a breach of the Fair Trading Act. You should Contact the Commerce Commission by; Phone: 0800 943 600 or email: [contact@comcom.govt.nz](mailto:contact@comcom.govt.nz) or Click on the "Make a complaint" button on the website: <http://www.comcom.govt.nz/>

### ***New Zealand Association of Bakers (NZAB) Code of Practice***

The NZAB companies, through their Association have agreed that they will undertake to participate in a Code of Practice (CoP) developed in conjunction with the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) to guarantee a minimum level of breads be fortified with folic acid for NZ consumers.

The CoP is under development and is expected to include fortification of an agreed percentage of packaged breads and the addition rates of folic acid. It is also expected to include the Industry proposal to commission an independent audit of breads over the period of a year to ascertain folic acid levels and outline the range of breads containing folic acid. MPI is working with the Industry on the CoP which is expected to be available in early 2013.

**If you require any further information regarding anything in this communication, you can contact MPI on the number at the bottom of this page.**