

## What's the Meaning of This?

Need a primer to “speed read” labels on food packages? Common label terms may seem unclear or confusing if you're unfamiliar with their meanings. And the launch of an increasing variety of better-for-you foods and beverages in the marketplace brings a whole new array of labels and, perhaps, some unfamiliar new terms.

Being label savvy is your key to navigating through today's supermarket. With so much useful package information, labels can be your one-stop resource for choosing products that are in step with your individual and family nutrition and health goals.



Balsamic Chicken Salad

### Sorting Through Some Common Label Claims

You've likely seen *nutrient content claims*, signaling the nutrient level in a labeled serving-size of various foods. Words, usually on the front of the package, such as *excellent*, *good*, *reduced* or *-free* are clues that can help us choose foods with a little or a lot of certain nutrients or food substances. And the Nutrition Facts on labels are the perfect spot to get important nutrient and calorie details.

You also may be interested in the meaning of other food label language. Here are some examples:

#### ➤ *Statement of Identity:*

- **100% Juice:** 100% Juice is either juice that has been directly expressed from a fruit or vegetable (in other words, fresh squeezed), or a juice from concentrate. Sometimes, non-juice ingredients are present at low levels (e.g., citric acid, flavor). If that's the case, the presence of the additives is disclosed as part of the product name or immediately after the words “100% Juice” on the front of the package.

- **Juice Concentrate** is juice from a fruit or vegetable that is concentrated through the evaporation of water.
- **Juice from Concentrate** is juice that has been concentrated and returned to its original state with the addition of water.

#### ➤ *Allergen Information:*

- **Contains [name of common allergen]:** One way to label the presence of allergens including milk, egg, celery, fish, Crustacean and mollusk shellfish, tree nuts, wheat, peanuts, seeds and soybeans in a food or beverage.

#### ➤ *Statement of Fact*

- **Contains prebiotics:** Contains non-digestible food ingredients that are often classified as dietary fibers. Prebiotics help promote digestive health by selectively helping to promote the growth of good bacteria in the intestinal tract.
- **Contains probiotics:** Contains micro-organisms similar to those that exist naturally in the digestive system and are important to health function. Probiotics are *live cultures*, or healthful bacteria. When eating foods that contain them, the healthful bacteria are added to the digestive tract.
- **Gluten free:** Although a definition has been proposed by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), it has not yet been finalized. For now, gluten sensitive consumers should read the ingredient list carefully and contact the manufacturer to identify products that are appropriate for them.

#### ➤ *FDA- Regulated Terms:*

- **Healthy:** A food low in fat and saturated fat, with 60 milligrams or less cholesterol per serving, 480 milligrams or less sodium per serving, and at least 10% of the Daily Value (DV) for vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, iron, protein or fiber.
  - For fruits, vegetables and enriched cereal products: Must meet criteria above for fat, saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium. Not all necessarily need to have 10% DV or more of the other nutrients noted above.
  - For main dishes and meals: Must meet criteria above, except that a serving must have 600 milligrams of sodium or less.
- **No added sugars:** No sugars added during processing or packing, including ingredients that contain added sugars (e.g., jelly).
- **Sugar-free:** Less than 0.5 grams sugars per serving. (It doesn't mean calorie free.)
- **Whole grain:** Includes cereal grains (intact, ground, cracked or flaked) with all the grain's main components—endosperm, germ and bran—in the same relative proportions as in the intact grain. Barley, buckwheat, bulgur, corn, millet, rice, rye, oats, sorghum and wheat are examples of whole grains.

### More Label Lingo

Here are a few more terms for your label primer. These help you know how the food is produced.

- **Fresh:** Used alone, this term generally means that a food is unprocessed, meaning it is in its raw state and has not been frozen, heated or subject to other forms of preservation.
- **Fresh Frozen:** Food that is frozen quickly after harvest, while fresh.
- **Organic/certified organic:** Produced with little or no synthetic fertilizers or pesticides. Animal products must be produced with organic feed, without growth hormones and

antibiotics, and have free outdoor access.

- **100% organic.** All ingredients (except for water and salt) are organically produced.
- **Organic.** The product contains at least 95% organically produced ingredients (except for water and salt). The remaining 5% are not available in organic form, or they appear on an approved list of ingredients.
- **Made with organic ingredients.** At least 70% of the ingredients are organically produced.

### Dietary Guidance ... at a Glance

The United States Department of Agriculture provides updated dietary guidance every five years through its *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. These statements give public health advice about living a healthful lifestyle to the general population. Statements like: “Carrots are good for your health” or “Make at least half your grain choices whole grains” are meant to encourage eating patterns and overall food choices that promote health. Usually these label statements are about an entire food category, such as fruits, vegetables or whole grains, rather than about a nutrient or a substance in food.

To clarify, dietary guidance statements reflect science-based nutrition advice and are often based on the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. Such statements differ from health claims or structure-function claims. *Health claims* identify how a specific food or food component (e.g., whole grains, soluble fiber or soy protein) is linked to reducing health risks. And *structure-function claims*, such as “calcium builds strong bones,” describe how a specific nutrient or food substance affects or maintains the body's normal structure or function.

To appear on a food label, dietary guidance statements do not need US FDA review or authorization. However, they must be truthful and non-misleading.

As you make choices in the grocery store, look for these dietary messages and label terms. They're your reminder about the

benefits of good nutrition and are another way to help you select food products that are right for you and your family.

*Kraft Healthy Living recipes include nutrition information to help you see how a serving fits into your healthful eating plan.*

## Balsamic Chicken Salad

Prep: 10 min.  
Total: 10 min.

- 1/4 cup KRAFT Mayo Light Mayonnaise
- 1 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- 1 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts, cooked, chopped
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 2 green onions, chopped
- 4 cups baby spinach leaves
- 1/4 cup ATHENOS Crumbled Reduced Fat Feta Cheese
- 24 TRISCUIT Crackers

**COMBINE** mayo and vinegar in medium bowl. Add chicken, peppers and onions; mix lightly.

**COVER** four plates with spinach; top with chicken mixture and cheese.

**SERVE** with crackers.

Makes 4 servings.

### Nutrition Bonus:

The red pepper and spinach team up to provide an excellent source of both vitamins A and C in this colorful chicken salad.

**Nutrition Information Per Serving:** 340 calories, 13g total fat, 3g saturated fat, 75mg cholesterol, 480mg sodium, 24g carbohydrate, 4g dietary fiber, 2g sugars, 30g protein, 60%DV vitamin A, 110%DV vitamin C, 8%DV calcium, 15%DV iron

**Exchange:** 1-1/2 Starch, 4 Meat (L), 1 Fat

Dietary Exchanges based on *Choose Your Foods: Exchange Lists for Diabetes* © 2008 by the American Diabetes Association and the American Dietetic Association.

## Bubbly Iced Tea

Prep: 5 min.  
Total: 5 min.

- 1 tub CRYSTAL LIGHT Iced Tea Mix
- 1 qt. (4 cups) water
- 1 bottle (1 L) diet carbonated lemon-lime beverage, chilled

**PLACE** drink mix in large plastic or glass pitcher. Stir in water until mix is dissolved.

**STIR** in carbonated beverage.

**SERVE** immediately over ice cubes in tall glasses.

Makes 2 qt. or 8 servings, 1 cup each

### Substitute:

Substitute orange-flavored seltzer for the lemon-lime beverage.

### Make Ahead:

Prepare as directed except do not stir in the carbonated beverage. Store in refrigerator until ready to serve. Add carbonated beverage just before serving.

### Special Extra:

Garnish with sprig of mint.

### Nutrition Bonus:

This flavored iced tea is low calorie and sugar free.

**Nutrition Information Per Serving:** 5 calories, 0g total fat, 0g saturated fat, 0mg cholesterol, 15mg sodium, 0g carbohydrate, 0g dietary fiber, 0g sugars, 0g protein, 0%DV vitamin A, 0%DV vitamin C, 0%DV calcium, 0%DV iron.

**Exchange:** Free

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