

MINISTRY OF HEALTH OF MALAYSIA

GUIDELINES ON LABELLING OF “NATURAL COLOUR” ON LABELS OF FOOD PACKAGES FOR SALE IN MALAYSIA

1.0 OBJECTIVES

The objective of these guidelines is to provide the food industry, enforcement agencies and consumers with information in respect of the labelling of “**natural colour**” on labels of food sold in this country.

2.0 DEFINITION

Under Regulation 21 of the Food Regulations 1985, “**colouring substances**” means any substances that, when added to food, is capable of imparting colour to that food and includes colouring preparation.

3.0 LABELLING PROVISIONS ON FOOD COLOUR

Under Regulation 11 of the Food Regulations 1985, there shall be written in the label of any food product which has been added with food additive (colouring substance) the statement “**contains permitted colouring substance**”. This statement shall appropriately appear after the list of ingredients.

4.0 THE REQUIREMENT FOR LABELLING “NATURAL COLOUR”

4.1 The use of the statement “**natural colouring substance**” on food labels is permitted if the following requirements are followed:

- a. Food or food ingredient that used lead to natural colour formation or inherently natural to the food without any purification.
- b. Colouring substance which is specifically derived by appropriate traditional processes¹, physical processes² and chemical processes³ from plant, edible fruit and vegetables, animal or mineral origin in either its natural or processed form for human consumption.

4.2 The use of the word “**natural**” **only is permitted**. The words “does not contain artificial colour+or %free from artificial colour+and similar wordings are prohibited.

5.0 ENQUIRIES

Any enquiries may be forwarded to:

Senior Director for Food Safety and Quality
Ministry of Health of Malaysia
Tel: 603-8885 0797 Fax: 03-8885 0769
E-mail: fsq-division@moh.gov.my
Website: <http://fsq.moh.gov.my>

Note:

¹Traditional process includes but is not limited to grinding, cutting, maceration, solvent extraction, microbiological fermentation processes, heating, cooling and freezing, drying, filtration, distillation, rectification and others.

²Physical process includes but is not limited to absorption, adsorption, chromatography, ion-exchange, electrophoresis, ultrasonic treatment, centrifugation, reverse osmosis, crystallisation, precipitation, lyophilisation, enzymatic processes and others.

³Chemical process is intentionally triggered simple chemical reactions to render a colouring principle such as basidification, hydrolysis, salt formation, ester cleavage, chelate formation, cis/trans and other isomerisations.

