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## **Processed Food Databank**

**(Sampling Round: December 2004 – February 2005)**

### **Summary**

The processed food databank was designed as a reference tool to provide indicative information on levels of sodium (salt) in a range of processed foods and has been used by the Agency to inform discussions with industry and other bodies aimed at encouraging a reduction in the salt content of processed foods. In addition, the databank includes information on levels of fat, sugar and a range of other nutrients in these processed food products. Data was collected from the labels of around 1000 products purchased in the UK between December 2004 and February 2005. The results are available in the databank that accompanies this report.

### **Background**

One of the Agency's key policy objectives is the reduction of average salt intakes in line with the recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition, published in its report 'Salt and Health' (May 2003).<sup>1</sup> The Agency's strategic plan also contains targets to reduce sugar and saturated fat intakes in line with dietary recommendations. The Agency is working closely with the food industry to effect the reformulation of processed food products.

The primary objective of the databank was to provide indicative information on the levels of sodium (salt) in a range of processed foods. However, as the Agency's Strategic Plan covers wider areas of work in nutrition, the databank also collected other information, including the declared levels of fat, sugar and a range of other nutrients in these processed foods. The databank includes types of processed foods that are major contributors to intakes of salt, fat and/or sugar in the diets of both adults and children.

The data obtained will be used to inform discussions with the food industry, and other bodies, aimed at encouraging reductions in the salt content of processed foods and to inform related areas of work in nutrition. This in turn will help consumers more easily choose a healthy diet and meet nutrient intake guidelines.

The data can also be used to inform policy development. For example, the databank was one of the sources of information used in testing the effect of nutritional criteria underpinning the Agency's signpost labelling proposals.

## **Methodology**

### *Sampling*

967 processed food products in 30 categories were purchased in the UK between December 2004 and February 2005. The products were purchased from retailers in the West Midlands, Devon, Surrey, Yorkshire and Greater London.

Market share data and the relative contribution of different processed food types to salt, fat and/or sugar intake in the diet were used to inform the sampling plan in order to gain a good coverage of processed foods in key product categories, i.e. categories contributing significantly to salt, fat and/or sugar intakes. The samples in the databank therefore represent a "snapshot" of the selected processed food categories. The databank is not intended to be exhaustive. The absence of a particular brand means only that the brand has not been included in the databank. No further meaning should be read into its absence from the report.

Types of processed foods that make very little contribution to salt, fat and sugar intakes in the diet, such as diet soft drinks, were not included in the databank. Product types that are not usually labelled, such as bread from in-store bakeries, were also not included.

30 categories of foods were included in the databank and these were divided into a number of sub-categories for ease of reference. The categories and sub-categories included in the databank were informed by both the categorisation of foods in the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS)<sup>1</sup> and the formats in which market share data were readily available for processed food products. In some instances specific sub-categories were selected for the potential insight they may offer on progress to reduce salt content for

those particular sub-categories. A full list of the categories and sub-categories in which products were sampled can be found in Annex 1.

As far as possible the approximate size (the number of products sampled) of a category was informed by its contribution to salt, fat and/or sugar intakes in the diet.<sup>1, 5</sup> Market share data was also used to inform category size for those categories where such intake data was not readily available, e.g. ready meals. A number of sub-categories were expanded to incorporate additional products where detailed product level market share data was available, e.g. pasta (not dried, not ready meals).

Market share information from Mintel and/or Taylor Nelson Sofres was used, where available, to inform the approximate proportion of each brand that made up each category and to select individual products within the category. Market share information was not available for 1 category (egg dishes) and 4 subcategories (savory biscuits, prepared meat portions, Yorkshire puddings and pickles). Other brands and own-label products were selected for each category to provide a wider coverage of the available market. All the major retailers are represented within the databank.

#### *Data collection*

Following sample purchase, information on the nutrient content and ingredients of samples was recorded from product labels. Other information to facilitate the identification of products was also recorded. A full listing of information recorded is included under the sub-tab entitled 'legend' within the databank. This contains a list of column headings, and where necessary, provides further information on the content of each column. No laboratory analyses were carried out.

The following points should be taken into account when viewing the databank:

1. Where information on the labels required clarification (for example, as to whether nutrient information per 100g related to the product before or after cooking/preparation), or the label did not give any nutrient information, brand owners were contacted wherever possible to obtain this information. Where nutrient information was sourced directly from brand owners this is indicated in the databank.

2. Nutrient values and pack weights were converted to standard units for entry into the databank and therefore the format of information in the databank may differ from that of the information presented on the product labels from which the data was sourced. For example, all pack sizes in the databank are given in g or ml, thus a pack size of 1kg will be entered as 1000g.
3. Where a nutrient value was listed on the label as '0', 'nil', '-' or 'trace', this was indicated by a '0' in the databank.
4. Where no information was provided on the label this is indicated by a '-' within the databank.
5. Where nutrient information on more than one portion size, serving or number of product units was given both in the nutrition panel and elsewhere on the pack, nutrient information for the portion/serving/unit given in the nutrition panel was entered into the databank.
6. In all instances nutrient information per 100g *as sold* was entered, if declared on the label. Where nutrient information was also given for one or more portion/serving sizes or methods of preparation/cooking in the nutrient panel, the first set of such data was entered reading from left to right. For example, where nutrient information is given per 100g oven-baked and per 100g grilled, nutrient information for the first condition has also been entered in the databank.
7. A small number of samples purchased were multi-packs where each unit declared different nutrient levels (e.g. a multi-pack containing 4 different fruit-flavoured yoghurts). Where this was the case nutrient information was entered for one unit chosen at random.
8. Where nutrient information in the databank is given per the *same* units as the declared pack size the following default is entered in the conditions for nutritional data column; (*per 100g or ml*). For example, for a 500ml tub of ice-cream, where nutrient content is given in g *per 100ml* the following default will be indicated in the conditions for nutritional data column: *As sold (per 100g or ml)*. Where the nutrient information is given per *different* units to the declared pack size this will be stated in the conditions for

nutritional data column. For example, for a 500ml tub of ice-cream, where nutrient content is given in g *per 100g* the following will be indicated in the conditions for nutritional data column; *As sold (per 100g)*.

## Results and Interpretation

The processed food databank is available in an Excel format to accompany this report.

The databank contains nutrient information collected from the product labels of 967 processed food products in 30 categories and has provided a valuable resource to inform discussions with the food industry and other bodies, aimed at reducing the salt content of processed foods. In addition the databank has been used as a reference tool to inform areas of related work in nutrition, such as the development of on-pack nutrition signposting. These will in turn help consumers more easily chose a healthy diet and meet nutrient intake guidelines.

The processed food databank currently contains information from the labels of products sampled *between December 2004 and February 2005* and it is therefore likely that a number of products contained within the databank may have been reformulated or de-listed since the sampling round was undertaken. The databank does not contain information from the labels of products sampled after this date and therefore does not reflect any changes that may have been made to product composition or labelling since the sampling round.

Readers should contact the appropriate brand owners for the most up to date information on the nutrient composition and availability of products.

## References

1. Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (2003). *Salt and Health*. London: TSO.
2. Henderson, L. *et al* (2003). *The National Diet and Nutrition Survey: adults aged 19 to 64 years. Volume 3: Vitamin and mineral intake and urinary analytes*. London: TSO.
3. Department of Health (1994). *Nutritional Aspects of Cardiovascular Disease Report on Health and Social Subjects no 46*. London: HMSO.
4. British Nutrition Foundation. *Salt in the diet*. Briefing Paper (1994).

5. Henderson, L. *et al* (2003). *The National Diet and Nutrition Survey: adults aged 19 to 64 years. Volume 2: Energy, protein, carbohydrate, fat and alcohol intake.* London: TSO.

### **Further Information**

This survey report is held in the Dr Elsie Widdowson Library and Information Service at the Food Standards Agency headquarters in London. If you would like further copies (a small charge for photocopying will be made), please contact:

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## Annex 1

### Processed food databank product categories Sampling round: December 2004 to February 2005

Category and subcategory		Notes
1.	<b>Pizza</b>	<b>The following sub-categories include chilled and frozen pizzas. Pizzas with fish were not sampled</b>
1.1	Pizza (with meat)	Includes pizzas with meat toppings e.g. pepperoni
1.2	Pizza (no meat)	Includes pizzas with cheese and vegetable toppings e.g. margherita
2.	<b>Pasta (not ready meals, not plain dry)</b>	
2.1	Dry recipe pasta	Includes dry pasta and sauce products requiring addition of other ingredients e.g. water, milk and/or butter
2.2	Fresh unfilled pasta	Includes fresh pasta without a filling e.g. fresh lasagne sheets
2.3	Stuffed pasta	Includes fresh pasta with a filling e.g. tortellini
2.4	Canned pasta	Includes canned cooked pasta in sauce e.g. spaghetti hoops, ravioli
3.	<b>Ready Meals</b>	<b>The following sub-categories include a combination of ready meals, meal centres and/or part meals.</b>
3.1	Fish based ready meals (chilled)	Includes fish pies, bakes, fish portions in sauce. Does not include other fish-based 'meal centres' such as fish fingers.
3.2	Fish based ready meals (frozen)	
3.3	Vegetable based ready meals (chilled)	Includes products such as vegetarian curry, jacket potatoes and filling, vegetable pie. Does not include other vegetable based 'meal centres' such as vegetable burgers and sausages.
3.4	Vegetable based ready meals (frozen)	
3.5	Chinese/South East Asian ready meals (chilled)	Includes products such as sweet and sour chicken with rice
3.6	Chinese/South East Asian ready meals (frozen)	
3.7	Indian ready meals (chilled)	Includes products such as chicken tikka masala with rice
3.8	Indian ready meals (frozen)	

3.9	Italian ready meals (chilled)	Includes meat and vegetarian lasagnes and spaghetti bolognese
3.10	Italian ready meals (frozen)	
3.11	Traditional British ready meals (chilled)	Includes products such as Shepherd's Pie
3.12	Traditional British ready meals (frozen)	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Rice (not ready meals, not plain dry rice)</b>	
4.1	Frozen rice dishes	Includes stir fry rice dishes
4.2	Microwavable rice	Includes rice products that can be heated in the microwave
4.3	Dry savoury rice	Includes dry savoury rice products requiring the addition of water
<b>5.</b>	<b>Bought sandwiches (pre-packed)</b>	<b>Includes pre-packed ready to eat sandwiches</b>
5.1	Cheese-based sandwiches	Includes sandwiches in which cheese is the main filling component e.g. Ploughman's sandwich
5.2	Egg-based sandwiches	Includes sandwiches in which egg is the main filling component e.g. Egg (30%) and bacon (10%) sandwich
5.3	Chicken or turkey-based sandwiches	Includes sandwiches in which chicken or turkey is the main filling component e.g. Chicken (20%) and bacon (10%) sandwich
5.4	Meat-based sandwiches (not poultry)	Includes sandwiches in which meat is the main filling component. Also includes those in which meat is not the main component but is classified as meat-based traditionally or by the brand owner e.g. Bacon (10%), lettuce and tomato (20%) sandwich
5.5	Other seafood-based sandwiches (not tuna)	Includes sandwiches in which other seafood (not tuna) is the main filling component e.g. Prawn sandwich
5.6	Tuna-based sandwiches	Includes sandwiches in which tuna is the main filling component e.g. Tuna and sweetcorn sandwich
<b>6.</b>	<b>Buns, cakes, pastries and biscuits</b>	
6.1	Buns, cakes and pastries	Includes buns, cakes and pastries e.g. cakes, cake bars, bakewell tarts, mince pies, fruit pies etc.

6.2	Savoury biscuits	Includes crackers, crispbreads, rice cakes and other savoury biscuits
6.3	Sweet biscuits	Includes filled and unfilled sweet biscuits
<b>7.</b>	<b>Desserts</b>	
7.1	Yoghurt and fromage frais	Includes flavoured yoghurts and fromage frais
7.2	Ice cream	Includes tub ice-cream and individual bars/lollies
7.3	Other ambient and chilled desserts and processed pudding products	Includes other ambient and chilled desserts e.g. mousse, jelly, crème caramel, rice pudding, custard
7.4	Other frozen desserts (not ice cream)	Includes other frozen desserts e.g. frozen cheesecake, fruit pies, gateaux, strudel
<b>8.</b>	<b>Soup</b>	
8.1	Soup – instant dried	Includes dried soup products packaged in individual cup sachets and requiring the addition of water.
8.2	Soup – ready made chilled/fresh	Includes chilled/fresh soup products
8.3	Soup – ready made wet ambient	Includes canned ambient soup products
<b>9.</b>	<b>Bread</b>	<b>The following categories exclude bread that is not labelled e.g. non pre-packed bread from in-store bakeries.</b>
9.1	White bread	Includes pre-packed white sliced bread and rolls
9.2	Brown bread	Includes pre-packed brown sliced bread and rolls
9.3	Wholemeal bread	Includes pre-packed wholemeal sliced bread and rolls
9.4	Other bread	Includes pre-packed speciality bread and rolls e.g. pitta, tortillas and baguettes
<b>10.</b>	<b>Meat products</b>	
10.1	Bacon – pre-packed	Includes all types of bacon e.g. back, streaky, smoked and unsmoked
10.2	Canned meat products	Includes canned meat e.g. hotdogs, corned beef
10.3	Meat burgers (not poultry)	Includes meat burgers. Excludes poultry burgers
10.4	Meat products with pastry	Includes meat and poultry products with pastry e.g. meat and poultry based pies, sausage rolls
10.5	Meat slices/rashers and pate (chilled pre-packed, not bacon)	Includes poultry and meat (cured and uncured) slices, rashers and paté

10.6	Prepared meat portions (not ready meals)	Includes raw and pre-cooked meat portions and kebabs with a sauce or glaze
10.7	Coated chicken and turkey products	Includes coated poultry products e.g. kiev, nuggets
10.8	Pork sausages – economy	Includes ‘economy’ range pork sausages
10.9	Pork sausages – healthy eating	Includes ‘healthy eating’ range pork sausages making a fat content claim on the label
10.10	Pork sausages - premium	Includes ‘premium’ range pork sausages
10.11	Pork sausages - standard	Includes ‘standard’ range pork sausages not falling into categories 10.8 to 10.10
10.12	Other sausages	Includes all other meat sausages e.g. beef, chicken, turkey, and pork combined with other meats
<b>11.</b>	<b>Breakfast cereals</b>	
11.1	Wholegrain and high fibre breakfast cereals	Includes wholegrain and/or high fibre cereals e.g. muesli, branflakes
11.2	Hot breakfast cereals	Includes cereals that are consumed hot e.g. porridge oats
11.3	Other breakfast cereals (not wholegrain/high fibre/hot)	Includes other breakfast cereals not containing wholegrains and/or high fibre levels e.g. corn flakes
<b>13.</b>	<b>Cheese</b>	
13.1	Natural soft cheese (not re-formed)	Includes full and reduced/low fat soft cheeses
13.2	UK regional cheeses (not cheddar)	Includes UK regional cheeses e.g. Stilton, Wensleydale, Red Leicester
13.3	Cheddar	Includes mature, medium and mild cheddar
13.4	Re-formed cheese	Includes cheese spread, slices and other re-formed cheese
13.5	Other natural cheese	Includes other natural cheeses not falling into the natural cheese categories above.
<b>14.</b>	<b>Fat spreads</b>	<b>Includes butter and fat spreads classified according to polyunsaturated fatty acid content and percentage total fat content.</b>
14.1	Butter	
14.2	PUFA fat spread (62-80% fat content)	

14.3	Non-PUFA fat spread (62-80% fat content)	
14.4	PUFA reduced fat spread (41-60% fat content)	
14.5	Non-PUFA reduced fat spread (41-60% fat content)	
14.6	PUFA low fat spread (<39% fat content)	
14.7	Non-PUFA low fat spread (<39% fat content)	
<b>15.</b>	<b>Baked beans</b>	
15.1	Baked beans in tomato sauce (no additions)	Includes standard and reduced salt/sugar baked beans in tomato sauce
15.2	Baked beans in tomato sauce (with meat)	Includes baked beans in tomato sauce with meat additions e.g. Baked beans and pork sausages in tomato sauce
<b>16.</b>	<b>Vegetable dishes (not ready meals)</b>	<b>Includes vegetable 'meal centres' such as vegetarian sausages and burgers, mince and other 'meat style' products. Does not include vegetable-based ready meals such as vegetable pie.</b>
<b>17.</b>	<b>Processed fish and shellfish products and dishes (not ready meals)</b>	<b>Includes canned fish and other processed fish and shellfish products, such as fish fingers. Does not include fish-based ready meals.</b>
17.1	Canned fish	Includes canned fish in oil, brine, springwater and sauce
17.2	Other processed fish and shellfish products and dishes (not canned)	Includes coated and other processed fish and shellfish products e.g. fish fingers
<b>18.</b>	<b>Crisps and savoury snacks</b>	
18.1	Crisps and other savoury snacks	Includes crisps and other savoury snacks made from potato, rice, wheat, oats and corn
18.2	Nuts	Includes salted and coated nuts
<b>19.</b>	<b>Instant hot snacks (e.g. pot noodles)</b>	
<b>20.</b>	<b>Miscellaneous</b>	
20.1	Stocks	Includes meat and vegetable stocks

20.2	Yorkshire puddings	
<b>21.</b>	<b>Table sauces and pickles (not cook-in sauces)</b>	
21.1	Brown sauce	Includes standard and other varieties of brown sauce e.g. hot and spicy brown sauce
21.2	Ketchup	Includes standard and reduced sugar/salt tomato ketchup
21.5	Pickles	Includes sweet pickle and piccalilli
<b>22.</b>	<b>Cook-in and pasta sauces</b>	
22.1	Ambient wet pasta sauces	Includes ambient pasta sauces e.g. carbonara, pesto
22.2	Ambient wet cook-in sauces (not pasta)	Includes non-pasta ambient cooking sauces e.g. chinese, indian and mexican sauces
22.3	Dried cooking sauces	Includes dried cooking sauces requiring the addition of water
22.4	Fresh chilled cooking sauces	Includes fresh chilled sauces e.g. tomato and mascarpone
<b>23.</b>	<b>Egg dishes</b>	<b>The following sub-categories include chilled and frozen products</b>
23.1	Quiche (with meat or fish)	
23.2	Quiche (no meat or fish)	
<b>25.</b>	<b>Drinks (not dried beverages)</b>	
25.1	Carbonated soft drinks (not diet)	
25.2	Still soft drinks – concentrated (not diet)	Includes still drinks requiring the addition of water e.g. concentrated squash
25.3	Still soft drinks – ready to drink (not diet)	Includes still drinks not requiring the addition of water
<b>26.</b>	<b>Potato products (not crisps)</b>	<b>The following sub-categories include frozen potato products</b>
26.1	Chips	Includes standard, healthy living, oven, microwave, straight and crinkle cut chips.
26.2	Other potato products	Includes other processed potato products e.g. roast potatoes, croquettes, waffles
<b>27.</b>	<b>Canned vegetables</b>	

27.1	Canned vegetables – prepared peas and beans	Includes standard and no added salt/sugar peas and beans
27.2	Canned vegetables – sweetcorn	Includes standard and no added salt/sugar sweetcorn
27.3	Canned vegetables - other	Includes other canned vegetables e.g. carrots. Excludes canned tomatoes
<b>28.</b>	<b>Confectionery</b>	
28.1	Chocolate	Includes chocolate bars, filled bars, assortments
28.2	Gum and jelly confectionery	Includes gum and jelly confectionery e.g. pastilles
28.3	Other confectionery	Includes other sugar confectionery e.g. mints, toffee popcorn
<b>29.</b>	<b>Dried beverages</b>	
29.1	Chocolate drinks	Includes malted and plain drinking chocolate
<b>30.</b>	<b>Preserves, spreads and sandwich fillings</b>	
30.1	Jam, chocolate and peanut based spreads	Includes jam, marmalade, peanut and chocolate-based spreads
30.2	Other spreads, pastes and sandwich fillings	Includes cheese, meat and seafood-based sandwich fillers and spreads
30.3	Yeast, vegetable and meat extracts	
<b>31.</b>	<b>Dressed salads</b>	<b>Includes dressed salads e.g. coleslaw</b>