



Voluntary Standards for the Labeling of Meat Alternatives in the United States

1) Purpose of Voluntary Standards

The Plant Based Foods Association (PBFA) has developed suggested nomenclature for the wide range of plant-based and vegetarian meat alternatives currently in the marketplace. PBFA developed these voluntary standards to promote consistency in labeling across the category.

2) Definitions and guidelines for meat alternatives

Meat Alternative: A solid food produced mainly with plant-based ingredients that may have textural, flavor, appearance or other characteristics typically associated with animal-meat based products but that is free of meat from any animal.

3) Labeling of meat alternatives

- a) **References to types of animal-meat:** Meat alternatives may be identified on their labels with words that describe a characterizing flavor, texture, usage, or style, including, but not limited to, words such as “meat,” “hamburger,” “sausage,” “chicken,” “pork,” “ham,” etc., as long as the rest of this section is satisfied.
- b) **Forms of product:** Meat alternatives may also be described by the shape or form they take such as “nuggets,” “tenders,” “burger,” “patties,” etc.
- c) **Qualifiers:** The label should clearly indicate that the product is plant-based or vegetarian by using one or more of the following words or phrases, or a comparable qualifier:
 - (i) **Plant-Based:** Consists mainly of ingredients derived from plants and does not contain animal ingredients of any kind. *
 - (ii) **Vegan:** Does not contain animal ingredients of any kind.
 - (iii) **Meatless:** Does not contain meat from any animal.
 - (iv) **Meat-Free:** Does not contain meat from any animal.
 - (v) **Vegetarian:** Consists mainly of ingredients derived from plants but may contain small amounts of animal-derived ingredients, such as eggs or milk, but does not contain meat from any animal.
 - (vi) **Veggie:** Short form of “vegetarian.”

- (vii) Additional acceptable qualifiers include: “Made from Plants,” “Veggie-based,” or other similar terms.
- d) The terms described in 3(c) should appear either in the statement of identity or otherwise in a prominent position on the principal display panel.

4) Adoption

Recommended within one year of release of this document.

*The Plant Based Foods Association, in cooperation with NSF (<http://www.nsf.org/services/by-industry/food-safety-quality/label-claims/certified-plant-based>) has developed a process that allows companies to certify that products are plant-based even though they may contain ingredients not of plant or animal origin as long as individually or combined these ingredients do not exceed ten percent of the product formula (excluding water and salt).

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