DECIPHERING THE CODE: SOY'S SIMPLE FACTS ON LABELING

CLEAN LABELING

Nutrition Facts

FDA: "25 grams of soy protein a day, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may reduce the risk of heart disease."

Certified Organic (contains)	
Pesticides	0%
Fertilizers	0%
GMO	0%
Gluten Free (contains)	
Gluten Protein	0%
Kosher Pareve (contains)	
Animal Products	0%
Dairy Products	0%
Protein Concentrations	
Flour	< 65%
Concentrate	65% - 90%
Isolate	> 90%
De-fatted (contains)	
Fat-free	99%

Many foods at the supermarket, especially soyfoods, often come in packages displaying a handful of labels or claims. In the soyfoods industry, many terms are used to describe seed source, growing and processing methods, production, and marketing of products.

For example, the FDA, after rigorous scientific research and reviews, approved a health claim: *"25 grams of soy protein a day, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may reduce the risk of heart disease."*

When selecting the best option for you and your family, it is important to know what each label on a soyfood means. Read the packaging carefully as every product and manufacturer differ.

- **"Certified Organic"** is a regulated term under the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.[1,2] Products with the USDA Certified Organic seal have been produced, processed, and handled (i.e. use of pesticides, fertilizers, processing aids, and GMO ingredients)following approved methods authorized by law.
- **"Gluten-free"** labeling claims that a product contains no ingredients made from the protein gluten. Gluten is a component of wheat and often used as a filler in products to maintain their shape or texture. While there is no science to prove that a gluten-free diet is beneficial for weight loss or disease prevention in a healthy population, those with diagnosed Celiac disease should follow these labels carefully.
- **"Kosher Pareve,"**often symbolized by a K in a circle or star, indicates a product does not contain any dairy or meat products, a helpful tool for vegans.
- **"Soy Flour"** is less than 65% protein by weight, and the most common source of soy protein found in packaged foods, especially in organic foods.
- **"Soy Protein Concentrate"** contains 65% to 90% protein.
- **"Soy Protein Isolate"** is a food ingredient that has been separated, or isolated, from the other components of the soybean, making it 90% to 95% protein and nearly carbohydrate and fat-free.
- **"De-fatted"** is often a term used to describe soy flour products. This means that the soybean has undergone processing to remove 99% of its natural oils, making it lower in fat than its full-fat counter-parts.

Sources:

[1] Agriculture, National Organic Program. Electronic Code of Regulations. Title 7 Agriculture Section 205 National Organic Program. http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=6f623e1de5457587ccdfec12bc34ed1c&rgn=div5&view=text&node=7:3.1.1.9.32&idno=7#7:3.1.1.9.32.7.354

[2] United States Department of Agriculture. Agricultural Marketing Service. National organic program. http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELDEV3004443.

ALLERGENS

Although soy has been listed as one of the eight major allergens, its frequency is substantially lower than the other seven. The College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology (CAAI) estimates that approximately 0.4% of American children under the age of 18 are allergic to soy, whereas in children with known allergies, more prevalent allergens reported are milk (32%), followed by peanuts (29%), eggs (18%), and tree nuts (6%).[1]
Researchers recently found that nearly 70% of patients had outgrown their soy allergy by the age of 10, but an individual's level of IgE may be the predictor of whether the allergy will persist.[2]
Soy allergy symptoms are usually mild[3]; and an anaphylaxis reaction to soy is extremely rare, according to CAAI. Foods containing soy will list them in an ingredient list and identify them as an allergen. If you have an allergy, it's important to know where to look.

Sources:

[1] American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology. Soy Allergy. http://www.acaai.org/allergist/allergies/Types/food-allergies/types/Pages/soy-allergy.aspx.
[2] Gupta RS, Springston EE, Smith B, et al. Geographic variability of childhood food allergy in the United States. *Clin Pediatr* (Phila) 2012;51:856-61
[3] Nowak-Wegrzyn A, Conover-Walker MK, Wood RA. Food-allergic reactions in schools and preschools. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med.* 2001:155;790-5.

GENETIC ENGINEERING

The USDA reported that 93% of all soybean crops planted in the U.S. were genetically engineered, according to 2012 data from the USDA Economic Research Service.[1] The U.S. Department of Commerce calculates that U.S. production of soy protein for human consumption is slightly less than 1% of total soybean production, though these figures do not include whole non-GMO soybeans used in the production of soymilk, tofu, and other products (such as edamame) as this data is not collected.
Many soyfoods manufacturers use soybeans and/or ingredients from soybeans that have not been genetically engineered or that are certified organic, which by USDA organic regulations exclude genetic engineering methods. These soyfoods make a statement on the label, such as "organic" or "made from non-GMO soybeans." Check with the soyfood manufacturer for more information about specific products.

Source:

[1] United States Department of Agriculture. Economics, Statistics, and Market information System. Acreage. http://usda01.library.cornell.edu/usda/nass/Acre//2010s/2012/Acre-06-29-2012.pdf.