

# Evaluation of Updates to the Nutri Score Algorithm for Fish, Meat and Dairy Substitutes

Garay Buranakarl\*

Department of Nutrition, Central South University, Changsha 410078, China

## Introduction

The nutri-score algorithm has become a well-known method for assessing the nutritional value of food items in the quest for clearer food labeling and healthier eating choices. Nutri-Score, which was first created in France, gives food products a color-coded label that goes from a (green) for healthier selections to E (red) for less nutrient-dense ones. Although the system was first created for conventional food categories, it has recently undergone revisions to meet the increased need for plant-based substitutes for dairy, meat, and fish. This article explores the ramifications of these alternative products for consumer health and dietary decision-making, delving into the nuances of Nutri-Score algorithm revisions. Understanding the fundamentals of the algorithm is crucial before getting into the details of Nutri-Score upgrades for other goods. Energy content, saturated fat, carbohydrates, salt, protein, fiber, and the percentage of fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, and oilseeds are just a few of the nutritional elements that Nutri-Score takes into account. The awarded letter grade is determined by combining these weighted components to create an overall score.

At first, the main focus of nutri-score was on conventional food items, like packaged goods and processed foods that are frequently seen in supermarkets. However, there was a need to modify the algorithm to more correctly reflect these dietary choices as customer preferences changed toward plant-based diets and alternative protein sources [1,2].

## Description

Taking into consideration variations in nutritional composition when compared to conventional meat products is one of the major issues in updating Nutri-Score for meat substitutes. Although meat substitutes frequently have reduced cholesterol and saturated fat content, they may also have higher sodium and processed chemical contents. Therefore, it is necessary to carefully consider recalibrating the algorithm to appropriately assess the nutritional content of these goods. In order to better reflect the healthfulness of plant-based protein sources, the weighting of different nutritional components has been refined in recent updates to the nutri-score for animal substitutes. For example, while modifying thresholds for sodium and additives frequently present in processed meat alternatives, more focus may be given on the quality of protein and fiber content. By doing this, Nutri-Score hopes to give customers a better knowledge of the relative nutritional benefits of meat substitutes in comparison to those originating from animals [2].

The wide variety of products available, from lab-grown fish proteins to plant-based seafood alternatives, presents another special difficulty for the Nutri-Score algorithm when it comes to fish replacements. The nutritional makeup of fish replacements might differ greatly from that of traditional fish, which are well-known for their lean protein profile and omega-3 fatty acid content.

**\*Address for Correspondence:** Garay Buranakarl, Department of Nutrition, Central South University, Changsha 410078, China, E-mail: garay.bur@kari.cn

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**Received:** 02 November, 2024, Manuscript No. VTE-25-158921; **Editor Assigned:** 04 November, 2024, PreQC No. P-158921; **Reviewed:** 16 November, 2024, QC No. Q-158921; **Revised:** 21 November, 2024, Manuscript No. R-158921; **Published:** 28 November, 2024, DOI: 10.37421/2376-1318.2024.13.338

Nutri-Score updates for fish substitutes aim to address this heterogeneity by differentiating between goods that imitate the nutritional advantages of fish, such as omega-3 enrichment in algae-based substitutes, and those that mainly rely on processed components and added fats. The algorithm aims to direct consumers toward healthier fish substitutes that comply with dietary requirements for cardiovascular health and sustainability by integrating particular parameters for assessing omega-3 content and protein quality [3].

Plant-based milks, cheeses, and yogurts are examples of dairy substitutes that have become increasingly popular among consumers looking for lactose-free and vegan-friendly products. However, depending on elements like component composition, processing techniques, and fortification, these products' nutritional profiles might differ significantly. Reevaluating the weighting of important nutritional components and adding criteria specific to plant-based dairy substitutes are two ways that Nutri-Score updates for dairy alternatives seek to resolve these disparities. Dairy milk, for instance, is prized for its calcium and vitamin D content, but plant-based substitutes could need further fortification to sufficiently match these nutritional advantages. Nutri-Score aims to give consumers thorough assistance when selecting plant-based dairy substitutes by modifying scoring standards to take fortification levels and protein quality in dairy alternatives into account [4].

When assessing alternative products, consumers need to be aware of the algorithm's limitations and subtleties as Nutri-Score expands to include a wider range of food categories. Individual dietary preferences, cultural factors, and ethical values cannot be replaced by the system, even though it provides a useful tool for comparing the nutritional content of items within a given category. Furthermore, customer knowledge and involvement are key factors in determining how well Nutri-Score updates for substitute items work. When it comes to openly sharing nutritional data and following established protocols for determining Nutri-Score evaluations, manufacturers are essential. Similarly, consumer education programs are crucial for encouraging well-informed choices and equipping people to handle the constantly changing food labeling environment. The intricacy of dietary preferences and nutritional considerations is reflected in the varied consumer reactions to Nutri-Score upgrades for substitute items. While some people applaud the algorithm's broader application, others have reservations about its capacity to fairly evaluate the nutritional value of plant-based alternatives and the possibility of oversimplification. The way the Nutri-Score system handles processed alternatives is one point of controversy. Critics contend that some plant-based alternatives, Even though they are less nutrient-dense than whole-food alternatives, they may nevertheless obtain favorable evaluations, especially if they are heavy in sodium, additives, and refined components. To solve this problem, Nutri-Score criteria must be continuously improved to give whole-food sources priority and to motivate consumers to carefully examine ingredient lists and processing techniques [5].

## Conclusion

Furthermore, it is impossible to ignore the social and cultural influences on food preferences. Although Nutri-Score offers a uniform framework for evaluating nutritional quality, it might not adequately represent the various dietary habits and culinary customs of various communities. In addition to Nutri-Score programs, efforts to support dietary variety and inclusion should highlight the need of culturally appropriate nutrition education and universal access to reasonably priced, nutrient-dense foods. To sum up, improvements to the Nutri-Score algorithm for meat, fish, and dairy substitutes are a big step in encouraging people to eat better and improving product label clarity.

By adjusting the evaluation standards to take into consideration the distinct nutritional characteristics of substitute goods, the goal of Nutri-Score is to enable customers to make wise choices that support their sustainability and health objectives. To guarantee the precision and applicability of Nutri-Score assessments in a constantly evolving food environment, however, ongoing research and cooperation between stakeholders are crucial. In the end, we may work toward a healthier and more sustainable future for everybody by using Nutri-Score as a tool to encourage dietary diversity and nutritional awareness.

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## Acknowledgement

None.

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## Conflict of Interest

There are no conflicts of interest by author.

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**How to cite this article:** Buranakarl, Garay. "Evaluation of Updates to the Nutri Score Algorithm for Fish, Meat and Dairy Substitutes." *Vitam Miner* 13 (2024): 338.