KETO Certified® Standards

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KETO Certified Standards 2027.
Standards. The Paleo Foundation.

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SPEARHEAD



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Statement of Purpose

When Dr. Peterman first standardized the Ketogenic Diet in 1925, it was strict in its requirements; 1 gram of protein per kilogram of body weight, 10-15 grams of carbohydrates per day, filling the rest of the remaining calories with fat. Unfortunately, Dr. Peterman didn't make any specific requirements about the source of the carbohydrates, or what foods should have been allowed or restricted, leaving much room for speculation.

While public acclaim and medical advocacy for the ketogenic diet is growing, it has not been the primary therapeutic option historically, even though it largely eliminated the need for drugs. While there are many explanations for why this may have occurred, one point rings clear: the ketogenic diet can be extremely difficult for patients to adhere to and can cause serious adverse effects.

The KETO Certified Standards were developed with the concerns for tolerability and the most common adverse effects of the Ketogenic Diet in mind. The KETO Certified Program is aligned with The Paleo Foundation's mission to help improve the tolerability of historically difficult yet incredibly therapeutic diets.

Diet Tolerability

The Four major factors that influence the tolerability of the Ketogenic Diet on an individual level:

AVAILABILITY: Product Offerings, Location and Limitation of Products

AFFORDABILITY: Socio-Economic Limitations, Distribution Limitations

PALATABILITY: Product Variations, Ideological Acceptance

CONVENIENCE: Cultural Acceptance, Ease of Identification

KETO Certified

PROGRAM STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATIONS 2027

U.S. Reg. No. 6171595

1. KETO Certified Label

The "**KETO Certified**" requirements are outlined herein. These standards apply to all products certified by The Paleo Foundation for the KETO Certified program. Only certified products following these standards are explicitly given the rights to use KETO Certified logos, trademarks, certification marks, or other design marks hereinafter referred to as "KETO Certified label".

1.1 **Applicability**. The KETO Certified label was developed and trademarked by The Paleo Foundation to identify food products that meet the standards of the ketogenic diet. The KETO Certified label is a certification mark with use permitted only to those who have entered into a contractual agreement with the Paleo Foundation. The KETO Certified label was designed to establish an easily identifiable mark indicating that a product has met the strictures of the ketogenic diet and merit use of the KETO Certified label.

1.2 Guidelines

1.2.1 **Promotional Materials**. The KETO Certified label is allowed to be used on any company advertising materials, including packaging, promotional materials, point-of-purchase materials, websites, sales literature, banners, and company stationery, provided that the use of the KETO Certified label complies with the guidelines outlined in this document. If a company wishes to present the logos in a manner other than as described as outlined in section 1.3, The Paleo Foundation must approve the request and give written permission to the producer.

1.2.2 **Display**. Producers may display the KETO Certified label only on products that have been certified by The Paleo Foundation.

1.2.3 **Agreement**. Producers must have a contractual agreement with The Paleo Foundation to use the KETO Certified label.

1.2.4 **Stationary**. Producers may only use the trademark on company stationery if the entire product line has been audited and KETO Certified.

1.2.5 **Logo Placement**. If the entire product line has been audited and granted permission to use the KETO Certified label, producers may display the KETO Certified label on their entire website. If the entire product line was not certified, the KETO Certified label may appear on a page containing the audited and certified KETO Certified products only. Products that have not been audited and KETO Certified are not permitted to appear on the same page as the KETO Certified label, as this could mislead consumers.

1.3 Use of the KETO Certified Label

1.3.1 **Affadavit**. To complete the application process, the applicant must sign an affidavit stating that all answers and statements provided in their application were true to the best of their knowledge.

1.3.2 **Inspection and Audit**. The Paleo Foundation retains the right to inspect, audit, and require HPAEC-PAD net carbohydrate analyses on the producer's products to verify that all requirements are met.

1.3.3 **Authorization**. Use of the registered KETO Certified label is only permitted after audit and certification of the applicant's products by The Paleo Foundation.

1.3.4 **Prohibited Use**. Use of the KETO Certified label for any product that does not meet each of the KETO Certified requirements, that has not been audited, or that has not been given explicit permission, is strictly prohibited.

1.3.5 **Misuse**. Misuse of the KETO Certified Label will result in immediate suspension of the agreement and/or prosecution.

1.3.6 **Orientation**. The KETO Certified label must be :



① Upright

② Complete

③ Clearly Visible

2. Carbohydrate Content

The allowed carbohydrate content for the KETO Certified program is based on the USDA standard serving size and normal consumption of a food product. Products are assigned a class based on these parameters, and assessed eligibility by their respective category.

2.0.1 **Meal**. Meal and Meal Replacement products must not contain more than 10g net/effective carbohydrates per serving. For products which contain minimally processed, whole-food ingredients or ingredients with reduced digestibility, 12g net carbohydrate per serving is permissible.

2.0.2 **Snack**. Snack products must not contain more than 6g net/effective carbohydrates per serving. For products which contain minimally processed, whole-food ingredients or ingredients with reduced digestibility, 8g net carbohydrate per serving is permissible.

2.0.3 **Condiments**. Condiments must not contain more than 2g net/effective carbohydrates per 0.5 oz (14.175 g) of serving weight, so a 29 g serving is limited to 4.09g. Products that qualify for the condiment allowance in Section 2.1 may contain 3g net carbohydrate per 0.5 oz.

2.0.4 **Auxillary Category**. The Auxiliary Category products are those which do not fit the "normal use" criteria of meals, meal replacements, snack products, or condiments. Auxiliary Category products will be judged on an individual, per-product basis for their eligibility of the KETO Certified label.

2.1 Allowed Carbohydrate Content

Product Type	Net Carbohydrate Allowance
Meals and Meal Replacements	10g per serving
Snacks	6g per serving
Condiments	2g per .5 oz

Meals, Meal Replacements, and Snacks which contain minimally processed, whole-food ingredients, or a high concentration of ingredients that result in reduced digestibility are allowed an additional 2grams to be permissible for the KETO Certified program. Condiments are allowed an additional 1g per 0.5 oz for minimally processed, whole-food ingredients, reduced digestibility, or low-usage threshold for the product (such as hot sauce). The additional 1g applies once per 0.5 oz, so a qualifying condiment is limited to 3g net carbohydrates per 0.5 oz, scaled to its serving weight.

Quantification of Net Carbohydrates for KETO Certified eligibility may also be determined using a High-Performance Anion Exchange Chromatography with Pulsed Amperometric Detection (HPAEC-PAD) assay performed by an ISO accredited lab.

Determining condiment eligibility. Condiment eligibility is assessed on declared label values, taking into account the rounding range of each declared value used to calculate net carbohydrates. If a declared net carbohydrate value is within 0.5g of the applicable limit, or its rounding range includes the limit, eligibility must be confirmed by HPAEC-PAD, or an equivalent method, performed by an ISO accredited lab, and the lab result decides eligibility over label and formulation values. For example, a label value of 4g may represent up to 4.49g, which exceeds the 4.09g limit for a 29 g serving. The licensee must also provide a signed statement of unrounded net carbohydrates and serving weight for the current formulation. The Paleo Foundation may verify any result under Section 1.3.2. A failing result may be confirmed by one retest from a different production lot.

2.2 Prebiotic Fiber

2.2.1 **Prebiotic Fiber**. Prebiotic Fiber is adjusted for when net carbohydrate is calculated for KETO Certification eligibility. Product formulations and may be required for accurate dietary fiber calculations. Prebiotic fibers are fermentable fibers that selectively contribute to the growth and maintenance of commensal bacterial species such as Bifidobacteria and Lactobacilli.

In the simplest terms, a prebiotic is a selectively fermented ingredient that allows specific changes, both in the composition and/or activity in the gastrointestinal microflora that confers benefits upon host well-being and health.

The three criteria of prebiotics are that they must be: (a) Resistant to gastric acids, hydrolysis by mammalian enzymes, and gastrointestinal absorption; (b) Fermented by large intestinal microflora; and (c) selectively stimulate the growth and/or activity of intestinal bacteria associated with health and well-being.

The non-digestible carbohydrates can be broken down into groups, and include:

Resistant Starches	Oligosaccharides	Polysaccharides
Resistant starches (Types I, II, III, IV, V)	Non-digestible oligosaccharide fibers, including fructooligosaccharides, galactooligosaccharides, xylooligosaccharides, isomaltooligosaccharides, and lactulose).	Non-digestible polysaccharide fibers, including cellulose, hemicellulose, polydextrose, beta-glucans, pectins, mucilages, galactomannans, glucomannans, chitin, and chitosan.

3. Allowed Ingredients List

3.1 **Allowed Ingredients**. The following ingredients are eligible for use of the KETO Certified label, provided that they do not exceed total carbohydrate criteria for their product type. Allowed ingredients will be amended from time to time as necessary. These ingredients include, but are not limited to:

Meats and Seafood	Fruits and Vegetables	Nuts and Seeds
All meats and seafood are allowed in the KETO Certified program.	All vegetables and fruits including berries are allowed provided that they meet the carbohydrate requirements of the KETO Certified Program.	All nuts and seeds are allowed.
Protein	**Milks**	**Oils and Fats**
Gelatin, collagen, bone broths, protein concentrates, isolates, and hydrolysates including whey, casein, egg white, pea, chickpea, soy, peanut, and hemp proteins.	All nut milks are allowed. Other allowed milks include, but are not limited to: hemp milk, almond milk, coconut milk, cashew milk, rice milk, soy milk, and tiger nut Milk.	All animal fats and nut oils are allowed. Other allowed oils include red palm oil*, avocado oil, olive oil, coconut oil, mid- and high-oleic sunflower oil, cocoa butter, and peanut butter.
Dairy	**Flavors and Coloring**	**Sweeteners**
All dairy is allowed. Full fat dairy is ideal.	Allowed flavors include essential oils, oleoresins, extracts*, distillates*, and ingredients that contain flavoring derived from spices, fruits, vegetables and other plant material, meat or insect derivatives, insect oils, and stearic acid*.	Honey, stevia (Reb A), coconut sugar, date sugar, fruit juice, monk fruit (lo han guo), inulin, tagatose, cane sugar, allulose, and sugar alcohols are allowed.

Coffee and Teas	Stabilizers and Emulsifiers	Spices
All coffees and teas are allowed in the KETO Certified Program.	All food-grade hydrocolloids, anti-caking agents, stabilizers, and emulsifiers are permissible.	All spices are allowed.
Supplements	**Chocolate**	**Grains and Legumes**
Allowed supplements include but are not limited to vitamin and mineral supplements, MCT oil, omega 3s, vitamin D, digestive enzymes, exogenous ketones, electrolytes, creatine, caffeine, HMB, BCAAs.	Chocolate and cocoa powder are allowed in KETO Certified Products provided that the end-product meets the carbohydrate requirements of the KETO Certified program.	All grains and legumes are allowed in the KETO Certified program provided that the end-product meets the carbohydrate requirements of the KETO Certified program.

4. Exogenous Ketones

4.1 **Exogenous Ketones**. In 2020, the KETO Certified Standards with regard to exogenous ketone supplementation was changed after a review from the Paleo Foundation Standards Team to be allowed in the KETO Certified program. These include naturally-derived beta-hydroxybutyrate compounds such as beta-hydroxybutyrate mineral salts, medium-chain triglycerides, and ketone esters.

5. Disallowed Ingredients

5.1 **Disallowed Ingredients**. The following are completely disallowed ingredients in the KETO Certified Program. Additional ingredients may be added or removed from this list based on new information or research.

Partially-Hydrogenated Oils	Sweeteners	Artificial Flavors
Partially-hydrogenated trans fats such as soybean, margarine, and vegetable oils.	Artificial sweeteners such as saccharin, cyclamate, acesulfame, aspartame, and sucralose. Polyols are permitted.	Artificial flavors are not allowed in the KETO Certified program.

For further questions regarding items on this list, or items that are not listed, please contact us at info@paleofoundation.org



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