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Walmart Unveils “Great For You” Icon

Icon to appear on hundreds of food items and provide simple way to make healthier food choices; Update on progress made over past year

WASHINGTON, D.C., Feb. 7, 2012 – A year after pledging to develop a front-of-pack label that would give its customers an easier way to identify healthier food, Walmart, the nation’s largest food retailer, unveiled the [“Great For You” icon](#) at an event today in Washington, D.C. The icon, part of the company’s [healthier food initiative](#), is an effort to implement a transparent, summary icon for its private label brand products backed by rigorous nutrition criteria. “Great For You” will initially appear on select Walmart Great Value and Marketside items, as well as on fresh and packaged fruits and vegetables at Walmart U.S. stores nationwide this spring. By extending “Great For You” to fruits and vegetables and nutritious food options the company will make it easier for its customers to build healthier diets.

“Walmart moms are telling us they want to make healthier choices for their families, but need help deciphering all the claims and information already displayed on products,” said Andrea Thomas, senior vice president of sustainability at Walmart. “Our ‘Great For You’ icon provides customers with an easy way to quickly identify healthier food choices. As they continue to balance busy schedules and tight budgets, this simple tool encourages families to have a healthier diet.”

“Today’s announcement by Walmart is yet another step toward ensuring that our kids are given the chance to grow up healthy,” said First Lady Michelle Obama. “Just over a year ago, Walmart committed to save shoppers a billion dollars in their cost of fruits and vegetables and the fact that Walmart exceeded this number is a real accomplishment and a milestone in our efforts to support families eating better. In addition, the healthy seal will be another tool for parents to identify the best products for their kids. Giving parents the information they need to make healthy choices is a key piece of solving childhood obesity.”

Items with the “Great For You” icon must meet rigorous nutrition criteria informed by the latest nutrition science and authoritative guidance from the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Institute of Medicine (IOM). Developed in consultation with food and nutrition experts from the public and private sectors as well as leading health organizations, the “Great For You” nutrition criteria are available to the public on the web (www.walmartgreatforyou.com), representing a collaborative and transparent effort to develop a trusted and reliable system for consumers. The icon will also be made available to national brand products that qualify and can be complementary to other nutrition labeling systems being used by the food industry.

“Walmart’s effort to bring healthier food to kitchen tables nationwide was inspired by our customers and informed by the latest food science and policy,” said Leslie Dach, executive vice president of corporate affairs at Walmart. “Last year we stood with the First Lady and showed how Walmart, working with its suppliers, the public sector and non-governmental organizations, can truly make a difference in people’s lives.”

Dach added: "We are proud to announce that after a year of working with nutrition stakeholders, meaningful progress is being made. We have the opportunity to address an issue many feel is too complicated or too hard to tackle and to demonstrate that it doesn't have to be."

The icon serves as a guide to help people make incremental changes to their diet by encouraging more nutritious food choices. The science-based criteria use a two-step process: Step one focuses on encouraging people to eat more fruits, vegetables, fiber-rich whole grains, low-fat dairy, nuts and seeds and lean meats. Examples of these items include brown rice, 1 percent milk, raw almonds and 93 percent lean ground beef. Step two limits the amount of total, trans and saturated fats, sodium and added sugars that can be found in items such as sweetened oatmeal, granola bars, flavored yogurt and frozen meals.

"When it comes to food, our customers want a variety of choices, but they also want help identifying healthier options. Customers asked us to make healthier food choices easy while keeping prices low," said Jack Sinclair, executive vice president of grocery for Walmart. "The nutritionists we engaged told us to make the criteria tough and significant. We feel confident the 'Great For You' icon balances those objectives, and will become an important tool Walmart shoppers can use to fill their pantries with healthier food at prices our customers can afford."

The criteria have undergone an extensive evaluation process using thousands of grocery items to help ensure that only nutritious items in each grocery category receive the "Great For You" icon. One evaluation compared Walmart's criteria with what people in America commonly consume using the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey of more than 4,000 food items.

The development of the "Great For You" icon is part of an initiative Walmart launched in 2011 to make food healthier and healthier food more affordable. The initiative includes reformulating packaged food to reduce sodium and added sugars and eliminate industrially produced fats by 2015; making healthier food more affordable by providing savings on produce and reducing the price premium on better-for-you food items; developing solutions for food deserts; and increasing charitable support for nutrition education programs.

"At a time when obesity rates are the highest ever for Americans, especially Hispanics, Walmart's new 'Great For You' symbol will help make eating healthy the easier choice," said Janet Murguía, president and CEO of the National Council of La Raza. "In order to successfully help Latino children and families eat healthier, we hope other food companies will follow in Walmart's footsteps and commit to increasing access to healthier food at a lower cost."

Over the past year, Walmart has been working with private label brand and national brand suppliers to make progress on its goals. To date, some of the highlights include:

Reformulating thousands of everyday packaged food items by 2015

Walmart has been working to reduce sodium and added sugars in 165 food items. Some of the items reformulated in the last year include:

- 15 percent sodium reduction in Great Value ketchup
- An average of 15 percent sodium reduction in Great Value canned vegetables, including corn, green beans and carrots
- More than 70 percent sodium reduction in fresh steaks, roasts and other muscle cuts of beef

Thomas added: "These reductions are a clear sign of how we can make meaningful changes to the food we sell by making simple modifications to the products in our stores. We can significantly reduce sodium and sugar without having to sacrifice quality and taste."

These efforts also include developing a survey of more than 20,000 food items in key categories, such as grain, dairy, soups and beverage products to establish a benchmark to track the progress being made on the reformulation of Great Value and national brand packaged food items. Progress toward the company's goals will be reported in Walmart's annual [Global Responsibility Report](#).

Making healthier food choices more affordable

The company surpassed one of its key goals, helping customers save \$1.1 billion by offering low prices on fruits and vegetables. In addition, the company has been working to make healthier food choices more affordable by reducing or eliminating the price premium on more than 350 better-for-you items, such as low-sodium lunch meat, reduced-fat peanut butter and fat-free salad dressing.

Providing solutions to address food deserts by building stores

As part of its commitment to provide solutions to food deserts, Walmart announced it would provide more than 1.3 million people living in more than 700 USDA designated food deserts with access to fresh and healthy food. The company said it will open between 275 and 300 stores in areas serving food deserts by 2016. Since its commitment in July 2011, Walmart has opened 23 stores in areas serving food deserts and anticipates opening between 50 to 60 Walmart stores or Neighborhood Market locations in those areas in 2012.

Increasing support for nutrition education programs

Over the past year, Walmart and its Foundation have provided more than \$13 million in grants to nutrition education programs. This figure includes [yesterday's announcement of \\$9.5 million in grants](#) to organizations, such as Share Our Strength, the National 4-H Council and Action for Healthy Kids, to name a few. The recently announced grants will promote healthy eating habits that will impact nearly 300,000 individuals this year.

For more information on "Great For You" and nutrition criteria, visit: www.walmartgreatforyou.com.

About Walmart

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (NYSE: WMT) serves customers and members more than 200 million times per week at more than 10,000 retail units under 69 different banners in 27 countries. With fiscal year 2011 sales of \$419 billion, Walmart employs 2.2 million associates worldwide. Walmart continues to be a leader in sustainability, corporate philanthropy and employment opportunity. Additional information about Walmart can be found by visiting <http://walmartstores.com> and on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/walmart>. Online merchandise sales are available at <http://www.walmart.com> and <http://www.samsclub.com>.

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