



REVIEW PAPER

## Fabricated foods: consumer demands for convenience

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The process of adding micronutrients (essential trace elements and vitamins) to food is referred to as food fortification or enrichment. As defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), fortification refers to “the practice of deliberately increasing the content of an essential micronutrient, *i.e.*, vitamins and minerals (including trace elements) in a food irrespective of whether the nutrients were originally in the food before processing or not, so as to improve the nutritional quality of the food supply and to provide a public health benefit with minimal risk to health,” whereas enrichment is defined as “synonymous with fortification and refers to the addition of micronutrients to a food which are lost during processing.” In US, fabricated or designed foods are most often referred to as “convenience foods.” Such foods are defined simply as those “to which services have been added to the basic ingredients to reduce the amount of preparation required in the home” (U.S.D.A., 1965). The “convenience foods” are essentially a single kind of fabricated or designed food. “Fabricated or designed foods” can be defined as foods built according to plan from individual components, natural or synthetic, to yield products having specified physical (textural), chemical and functional properties (Glicksmann, 1971). Food fortification was identified as the second strategy of four by the WHO and FAO to begin decreasing the incidence of nutrient deficiencies at the global level. The combination of animal

proteins with the substitute or extender plant (vegetable) proteins very clearly fits into the definition of the fabricated or designed foods. Such foods then become convenience foods for the affluent nations and supplementary foods for the protein deficient developing countries.

### Why fortification?:

Conceived for convenience and nurtured by necessity, substitutes and extenders for animal protein now stand at the threshold of their greatest growth. This growth will take place in two major areas each directed towards meeting the specific needs of the consumer – the leisure oriented citizen of the affluent nations and the protein-deficient inhabitant of the developing countries. Several surveys have repeatedly pointed out that most men and women do not ingest nutrients, they consume food. With this in mind the basic objective should be to make (fabricate or design) foods that will appeal to the consumer and will be accepted and consumed by him. The acceptance will vary from country to country and from region to region within a certain country depending on desires of needs of individuals. Fig. 1 shows the average daily consumption of protein for several countries (Stone, 1972). As a basis for high or low protein intake, Stone used the 1968 U.S. Recommended Allowance of 65 g of protein. The Recommended Daily Dietary Allowance for protein has been lowered to 56 g for a 70 kg male. This new dietary allowance is shown by a broken line in Fig. 1. Based on either the 56 or