

Appendix R Primary and subsidiary food groups and disaggregation categories for NDNS 2019 to 2023

For this NDNS 2019 to 2023 report (years 12 to 15) the food grouping system has been reviewed and a new structure has been implemented to better align with government public health priorities and monitoring requirements. The structure has also been considered in respect of wider use of the NDNS data, such as to enable exploration of diverse research questions and to facilitate cross-country data comparisons.

Foods, drinks, and supplements in the NDNS Nutrient Databank (NDB) (UK_NDB_2, Years 13 to 15) (n=3,486) were categorised into a 3-tier food group structure, referencing established systems including FoodEx2, FAO/WHO Gift, FoodEXplorer, and food grouping systems used by [Food Standards Australia and New Zealand](#) and [US National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey](#). The consistency of food group names and structure across the new approach was maintained by aligning them with these systems, and by reviewing products on the food market and consumption rates among the NDNS population. The approach involved grouping the NDB foods according to various criteria, including distinctions such as added sugar, plant-based, meat-based, vegetable-based, wholegrain foods and complex dishes. The new food groups aimed to ensure similarity in consumption pattern and classification.

The updated NDNS food grouping system comprises 18 main categories under which sit 47 primary food groups (level 1) and 141 sub-groups (level 2) designed to facilitate primary requirements for the NDNS and government monitoring. Level 3 sub-groups (totalling 211) have been incorporated to support in-depth research requirements. The food groups were designated with a code (for example 1.1.), utilising a combination of numbers and a decimal point. The archived NDBs used for Years 12 to 15 will contain both the new and the previous food group structure for users' reference.

[Table R.1](#) in the accompanying tables presents the new food groups. The 'Description' column provides a summary of foods in each respective food group.

[Table R.2](#) presents the disaggregation categories. In order to determine total intakes of fruit, vegetables, meats and fish, all foods containing any of these food types have been systematically disaggregated into their components. For example, carrots may be eaten as an accompaniment to a main meal, but they may also be consumed as an ingredient within a stew, together with additional vegetables such as onions and celery. Disaggregated data allows the automated estimation of total intakes of fruit, vegetables, meat and fish in the NDNS, including the contribution from composite dishes. The disaggregation categories are unchanged from the [NDNS Years 9 to 11 report](#). Specific foods within each disaggregation category are listed, however this may not be an exhaustive list of all foods available.