



**USAID**  
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# Food Aid Quality Review Phase III

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Washington, DC

January 25, 2017

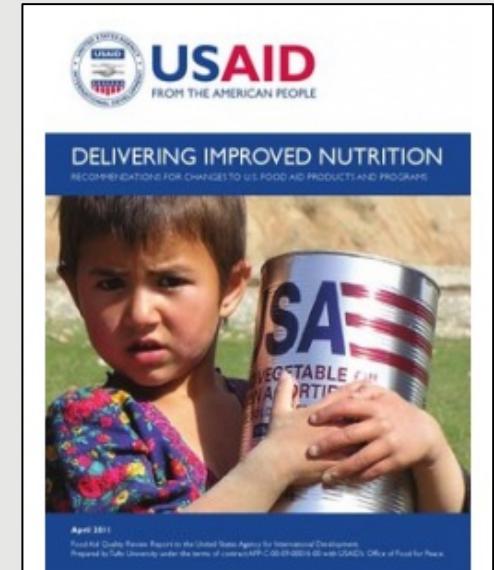
**Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy**  
**Tufts University**

# FAQR Objectives

- Helping USAID/FFP ensure that food aid products are evidence-based to achieve best outcomes (**fit for purpose**)
- Focus on **cost-effectiveness** of outcome, not just cost of the products
- **Efficiency gains** across USG and global food aid players

# Food Aid Quality Review - Overview

- FAQR Phase I: Title II food aid ‘fit for purpose?’
  - **April 2009 – October 2011**
  - *Delivering Improved Nutrition: Recommendations for Changes to U.S. Food Aid*
  - Scientific consultations
  - Identifying differences across specs.
- FAQR Phase II: Implement recommendations
  - **October 2011 – January 2016**
  - Multiple field studies
  - Stakeholder consultations
- FAQR Phase III: Implement recommendations
  - **February 2016 – January 2019**



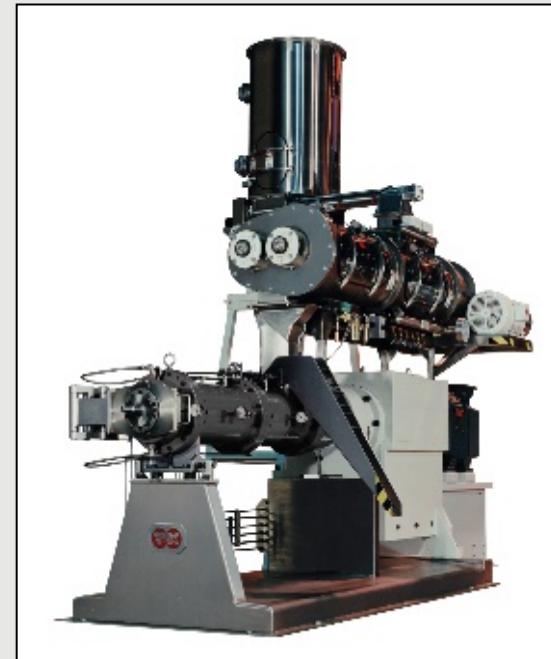
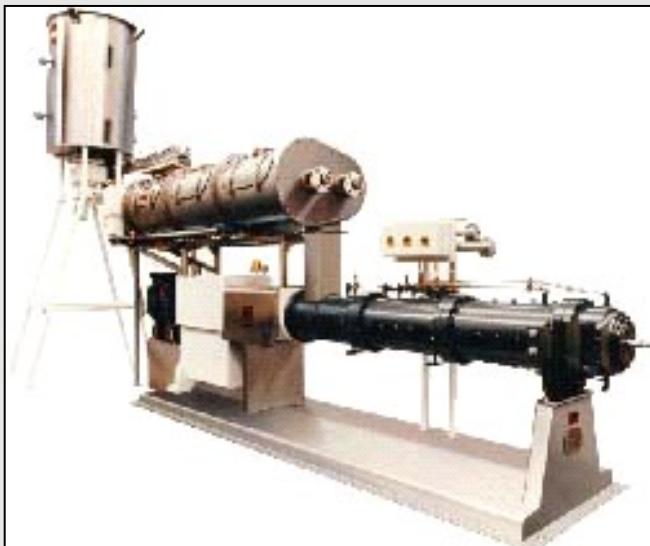
## **FAQR Phase III Work Streams**

- 1. Bioavailability, absorption (matrices)**
- 2. Food Aid Commodity Management System**
- 3. Food Aid Safety and Quality Systems and Supply Chain**
- 4. Interagency Coordination and Harmonization**
- 5. Knowledge Management**
- 6. Review of Food Aid Basket**
- 7. Cost-effectiveness tools**
- 8. Field Research: Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone**

# I. Bioavailability, absorption (food matrices): Overview

Ways to improve food digestibility and ability of consumers to absorb nutrients

- Physiological use of nutrients
- Amylase addition
- Extrusion techniques
- Other food ingredients (for shelf-life, digestibility)



# I. Bioavailability, absorption (food matrices): Relevance to the Food Aid Agenda

- Understand the ‘real’ effect of consuming the widely distributed food aid products on health outcomes of beneficiaries.
- Design and improve better food products that can carry energy and nutrition more effectively.
- Would help in achieving higher cost-benefit ratio in programming.

## **2. Food Aid Commodity Management System: Overview**

- Updating and streamlining the USAID/FFP commodities resources portal
  - Single websites/commodity management systems for FFP and USDA, updates on specifications, food quality feedback from field, etc.
- Developing and modernizing commodity reference guide fact sheets
- Creating harmonized specifications and templates for food aid commodities

## **2. Food Aid Commodity Management System: Relevance to the Food Aid Agenda**

- Stakeholder Online Resources: Commodities Resources Portal and Fact Sheets
  - This one-stop-shop for all-of-government and partner use will enhance real-time information access and sharing needed for system efficiency.
  - Raise the profile of the U.S. food aid basket and better share and present commodity information to stakeholders through updated and overhauled FFP Commodities Resource Portal, including modernized commodity fact sheets
- Harmonized Specifications and Templates
  - Harmonize food aid products among agencies (USAID, USDA, WFP, UNICEF, MSF) to make them interchangeable in programming and accepted by multiple agencies and programmers
  - Create specifications that apply to U.S. and non U.S. sourced products that are in line with industry practice standards and created with stakeholder input

## **3. Food Aid Safety and Quality Systems: Overview**

- **Improved Food Aid Packaging**
  - Enhancing/retaining nutrients in food aid products
  - Extending product shelf life
  - Improving transportability
  - Resisting pest infestation
  - Packaging as a vehicle for messaging
- **Supply Chain Oversight**
  - Role of pre-positioning in the pipeline
  - Improve the end-to-end efficiency of FFP supply chain
  - Analysis of prepositioning and emergency response operations
- **Food Safety and Quality Assurance feedback system**
  - Improve feedback system to identify incidents and provide information upstream on issues detected after arrival in country through the “last mile”, creating institutional memory of incidents and how incidents are addressed
- **Local and Regional Procurement (LRP)**
  - Auditing, Sampling, and Inspection to ensure the food safety and quality of LRP products

### 3. Food Aid Safety and Quality Systems: Relevance to the Food Aid Agenda

- Improved Food Aid Packaging
  - Identification of **innovative packaging materials, sizes and forms** will improve resistance to insect and rodent infestation, reducing product losses, meaning cost savings.
- Supply Chain Oversight
  - USAID will have **new data-driven decision-aid tools** that can quantify the impact of decisions for procuring and distributing food aid locally, regionally, or globally.
  - An improved supply chain positively affects the number of beneficiaries reached, total amount of commodities sent, lead times, **total cost of the program**, and **integrity of products** once they reach the end user.

### **3. Food Aid Safety and Quality Systems: Relevance to the Food Aid Agenda (cont.)**

- **Quality Assurance feedback system**
  - **Stronger and more user-friendly quality assurance feedback loops**, as well as promoting food safety and quality standards that can also be applied to local and regional food procurement
  - Identify incidents and provide information upstream on issues detected after arrival in country through the “**last mile**”
  - Create an **institutional memory** of food aid product incidents (be they product specific, packaging specific, storage/transport specific, etc.) and how specific incidents have been addressed
- **Quality Assurance for Local and Regional Procurement (LRP)**
  - USAID food aid procurement is adapting to include **more local and regional procurement (LRP) as a modality**
  - USAID wants to ensure the **food safety and quality** of LRP products, including that they follow U.S. food aid product specifications

## **4. Interagency Coordination and Harmonization: Overview**

- Continuation and institutionalization of:
  - i. USAID/USDA/other USG technical working groups
  - ii. Global (USAID, WFP, UNICEF, MSF) technical working group

## **4. Interagency Coordination and Harmonization: Relevance to the Food Aid Agenda**

- Harmonization process will help to resolve differences and harmonize approaches will last beyond the life of the FAQR.
- Agreement around international standards in the formulation, production, and use of food aid products drawing from both normative and scientific guidance is imperative to the success of the food aid agenda.

## **5. Knowledge Management: Overview**

- **Evidence Summit** to share evidence with a wide audience on the cost-effectiveness of specialized foods in the context of the results of implementation of FAQR recommendations on products, processes, and programming
- **Research Engagement on Food Innovation for Nutritional Effectiveness (REFINE):** enhance accessibility to, and exchange of, operational and policy-relevant research on food-supported interventions that improve nutrition.
- **FAQR Communications**
  - Communications Strategy
  - Revamped FAQR website
  - Twitter **@FoodAidQuality**
  - Media Kit
  - Press Releases
  - Evaluation

<http://refinenutrition.org/>

The screenshot shows the REFINEREFINE website interface. At the top, there is a blue header bar with the REFINEREFINE logo, navigation links for "Ongoing Studies", "Research Gaps", "Library", "About Us", "Links", and a search icon. Below the header is a world map where numerous countries are marked with blue location pins, indicating the presence of ongoing studies. A green callout box at the bottom left of the map area encourages users to click on map points to get started. To the right of the map, there is a summary section with two large boxes: one blue box showing "58 Ongoing Studies" and another green box showing "25 Countries". Further down, a section titled "Research Gaps" features a donut chart illustrating the distribution of gaps across various categories: Composition (14), Acceptability (9), Use (1), Efficacy (2), Effectiveness (23), Cost (6), Innovation (36), and Communication (1). At the bottom right, the USAID logo is displayed.

REFINE

Ongoing Studies Research Gaps Library About Us Links

58 Ongoing Studies

25 Countries

Research Gaps

Composition (14)

Acceptability (9)

Use (1)

Efficacy (2)

Effectiveness (23)

Cost (6)

Innovation (36)

Communication (1)

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## 5. Knowledge Management: Relevance to the Food Aid Agenda

- FAQR III's knowledge sharing activities ensure that evidence generated by FAQR and other research is accessible to stakeholders, promoting evidence based policy making and practice within the food aid agenda.
- **REFINE:**
  - The first knowledge-sharing mechanism that disseminates emerging evidence relevant to food aid;
  - Also highlights ongoing knowledge gaps and study priorities to help improve operational practice
  - Lays a foundation for evidence-based policy making
  - Promotes a focus for future research investments

## 6. Food Aid Basket: Overview

Review the existing USG food aid basket with focus on:

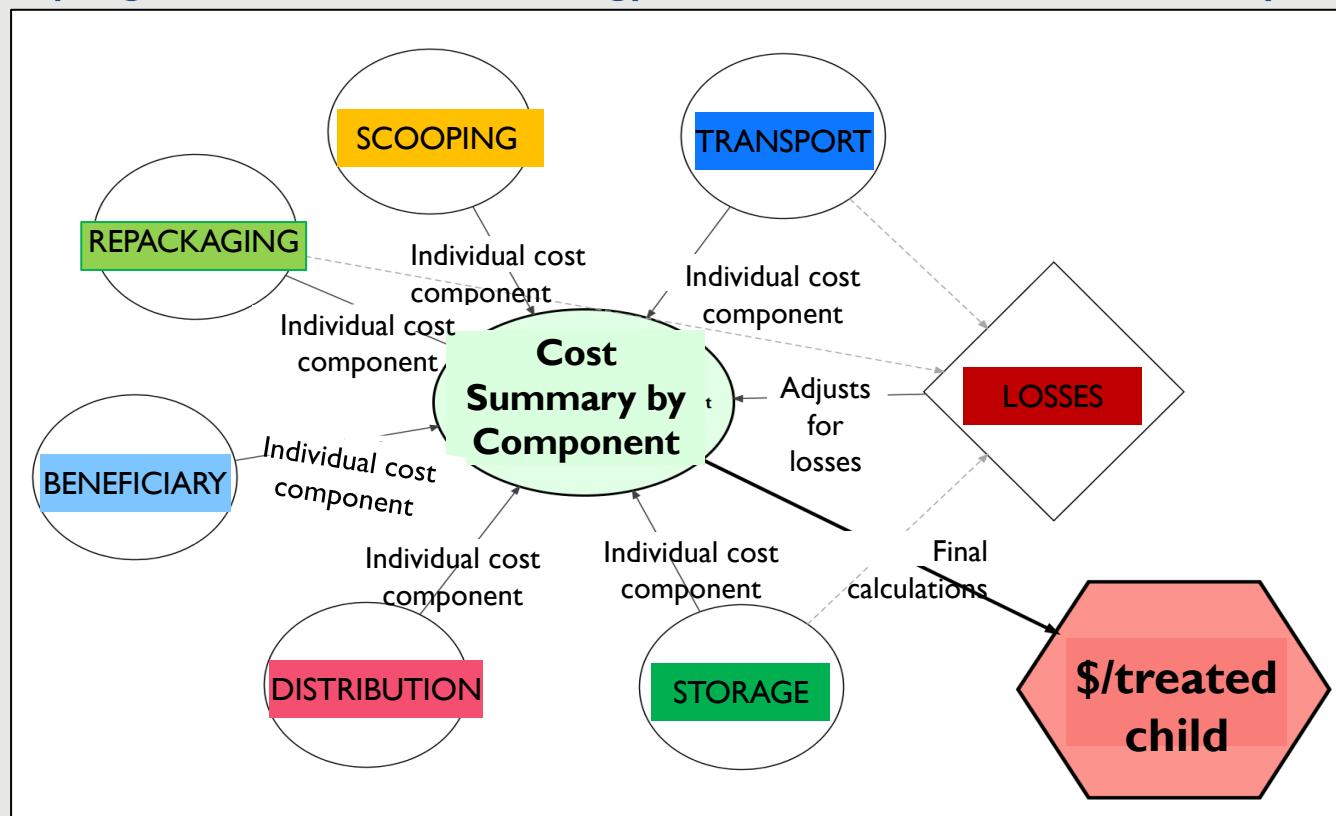
- Enhancing the food basket with existing commodities
- Assessing new products
- Exploring dual-use products for emergency response
- Developing a strategy to deploy new specialized food aid products
- Providing food and ration technical guidance
- Institutionalizing an independent technical body to advise future food basket decisions

## 6. Food Aid Basket: Relevance to the Food Aid Agenda

- **Modernizing the collection of food aid products used in projects and programs administered by the Office of Food for Peace will lead to more efficient, effective, and cost-effective programming**
- Key policy issues this work stream addresses:
  - Food aid products are **consistent with current research & prevailing expert opinion** of what works in nutrition-focused interventions
  - Food aid products allow for various food baskets that are **sufficient and appropriate** to their programming contexts
  - Sudden onset emergencies are responded to with appropriate, cost-effective food aid

## 7. Cost-Effectiveness Tools: Overview

- Developing a strategy for assessing cost-effectiveness of new modalities of response to emergencies
- Developing of cost-effectiveness tools
- Developing the cost methodology and cost-effectiveness analysis plan



## 7. Cost-Effectiveness Tools: Relevance to the Food Aid Agenda

- **Optimal decision making** around food aid policy and programming requires crucial evidence in **cost and cost-effectiveness** of using specialized food aid commodities
- **Building capacity** within USAID and USDA (through new tools, study protocols, and training) for considering products not just on price for ton of a food, but on the real cost of effective intervention

## 8. Field Research: Overview

- **Ongoing Field research in Sierra Leone:** The study compares the relative effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of four food aid products for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition in Sierra Leone.
  - Sub-study on Body Composition
  - Sub-study on Environmental Enteropathy
  - Sub-Study on Neurocognitive Function
- **Ongoing Field research in Burkina Faso:**  
To test the relative effectiveness and cost effectiveness of four supplementary foods in the prevention of MAM and stunting in normal programmatic settings.



## **8. Field Research: Relevance to the Food Aid Agenda**

- **Efficacy, effectiveness, cost-effectiveness**
  - Determinants of recovery/optimal growth (drivers of relapse, sustained recovery, body mass, cognitive development, long bone growth)
- **Programming innovations**
  - Role of SBCC, last mile concerns, true costing of interventions in emergency/non-emergency settings
- Capacity strengthening of local community health workers, health and nutrition promoters, and beneficiary mothers
- The study results will guide decisions about **what commodities to use** in supplementary feeding programs

## **The current and last phase of FAQR to 2019 is essential to:**

- i) Complete rigorous field-testing of new products,
- ii) Roll out new tools that assess product cost-effectiveness under emergency and non-emergency conditions,
- iii) Establish strategic options for accelerating responses to sudden-onset crises,
- iv) Establish new food safety standards to be included in product specifications, and finally
- v) Map out future directions for industry partnership with government on food aid.

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‘FAQR aims to establish information systems, tools, data-gathering and evidence-sharing platforms, that will support US government-wide actions for coming decades’