

Guideline for Research and Innovation Support Requests in the Field of Food and Feed

Introduction

The Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA) launched its **Fourth Strategic Plan (2023–2027)**, built on three main pillars:

1. Product Safety
2. Local and International Partnerships
3. Operational Excellence

As part of strengthening local and international partnerships, The Saudi Food and Drug Authority is working to foster collaboration and enhance cooperation with local and international entities to support research and innovation in the field of food and feed. This includes outlining the procedures for submitting research and innovation support requests, as well as the services provided by SFDA in this regard, in alignment with the strategic objective to "Support Research and Innovation" in the food sector.

Accordingly, SFDA is pleased to launch this Guidance Document for submitting Research and Innovation Support Requests in the field of Food and Feed.

Purpose of the Guide

To provide support for research and innovation in the field of food and feed, and to clarify the services provided by SFDA. These services aim to enhance partnerships and cooperation with researchers and innovators from both local and international entities and universities within the Kingdom.

Scope:

This guide outlines the process for submitting research and innovation support requests in the field of food and feed, along with the services provided by SFDA.

Target Group:

Researchers and innovators at local and international institutions and universities operating within the Kingdom) in the field of food and feed.

Definitions

The following definitions specify the words and phrases used in this Guideline, which considered as standard definitions, although they may have different meanings in other contexts or documents.

- **The Authority:**

The Saudi Food and Drug Authority.

- **Applicant:**

Researchers and innovators at local and international institutions and universities within the Kingdom) in the field of food and feed.

- **Relevant Department:**

All executive departments within the Food and Feed Sector responsible for responding to inquiries according to their area of specialization.

- **Research:**

An analytical, organized, and systematic investigation of specific hypotheses, aimed at identifying the nature of relationships between variables in a particular phenomenon related to the fields of legislation and risk assessment related to food and feed.

- **Innovation:**

New or non-traditional methods or techniques used in the creation or development of products in the field of food and feed.

▪ **Food:**

Any product intended for human consumption, whether raw, fresh, processed, or semi-processed. Food shall also include any substance that is used for manufacturing, preparing, or processing food.

▪ **Feed:**

Materials prepared to feed animals, whether composed of one material, mixed, processed, semi-processed, or raw, or a material used in the manufacturing, preparing, or processing of feedstuff, either from permissible animal or plant sources or from aquatic organisms.

▪ **Innovation in the Field of Food or Feed:**

The systematic practice of developing or improving a product, service, process, or organizational method in fields related to food and feed.



Services Provided by

the Saudi Food and Drug Authority
Related to Research and Innovation

1. Guidelines for Submitting Requests for Novel Food Approvals:

Requirements:

- The product must comply with the technical regulation SFDA.FD 5013 titled “General requirements for novel foods.”
- Application file must include:
 - A cover letter to SFDA
 - Table of contents
 - Status of evaluation by an international authority (if available)
 - Description of the novel food
 - Technical and scientific data
- For traditional foods from other countries outside the Kingdom, the file shall include:
 - Compositional data
 - Consumption history
 - Suggested use for the Saudi market

Target Group:

Private sector.

Support Mechanism:

Evaluation of novel food registration requests.

Submission Method:

- Attach all required documents. If file size is too large, coordinate with the relevant department via email.
- Send the request to: NFE@sfda.gov.sa

Processing Time:

90 working days from the date the request is accepted.

2. Guidelines for Requests to Evaluate Health and Nutrition Claims:

Requirements:

- If the claim falls under the permitted claims according to the technical regulation SFDA.FD GSO 2333 titled “Requirements of Food with Nutritional and Health Claims”, then no application is required for claim evaluation.
- The claim must not be listed among the prohibited claims, such as:
 - Claims related to the amount or percentage of weight loss.
 - Testimonials by doctors or health professionals, etc.
- The claim must not fall outside the scope of the regulation GSO.SFDA.FD 2333 titled “Requirements of Food with Nutritional and Health Claims”.
- The application file must include:
 - A proposed wording of health claim.
 - Characteristics and description of the effect
 - Scientific data and evidence, which must not be based on summaries, news articles, magazines, newspapers, general consumer publications, or book chapters intended for the general public.
- A separate request form must be submitted for each claim.
- The claim must be clear and not misleading to the consumer.
- The application must be in Arabic.

Target Group:

Private sector.

Support Mechanism:

Evaluation of health and nutrition claims.

Submission Method:

- Attach all required documents.
- Send the request to: hnc@sfda.gov.sa

Processing Time:

90 working days from the date the request is accepted.

3. Guidelines for Submitting Requests for Novel Feed Approvals:

Requirements:

- The application must include:
 - Packaging label
 - Statement of product components
 - Scientific file with:
 - Safety studies for feed, workers, users, and environment
 - Technical file with:
 - Description of active and inactive ingredients
 - Manufacturing process
 - Product quality assurance procedures

Target Group:

Private sector.

Support Mechanism:

Evaluation of Novel Feed product requests.

Submission Method:

- Attach all required documents.
- Send the request to: fppsd@sfda.gov.sa

Processing Time:

90 working days from the date the request is accepted.

4. Guidelines for Services Provided by the National Nutrition Committee:

Services Provided:

- Conducting studies and research related to nutrition.
- Developing methodologies and scientific tools to support decision-making, such as:
 - Scientific recommendation issuance methodology
 - Critical self-assessment tools for studies
- Developing scientific guides and tools to enhance nutritional value, such as:
 - Food classification models
 - Food chain guides

Target Group:

All segments of society.

Support Mechanism:

Provision of services by the National Nutrition Committee.

Submission Method:

- Attach all required documents.
- Send the request to: NNC-research@sfda.gov.sa

Pathway for Research and Innovation Support

Requests for Research and Innovation Support in the Field of Food and Feed:

Requirements:

- The request must be related to the field of food or feed.
- The expected outcomes from the research or innovation must have an impact on:
 - Legislation, and/or Public health, and/or Nutrition, and/or Society, and/or Economy.

Target Group:

All local and international entities and universities within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Support Mechanism:

Provision of:

- Technical support in legislation
- Scientific support in risk assessment relevant to food and feed research and innovation

Submission Method:

- Submit the request by filling out the form in Annex 1.
- For research and innovation inquiries related to food or feed, fill out the form in Annex 2.
- Send the request to: Food.Cons@sfda.gov.sa

Processing Time:

30 working days from the date the request is accepted.

Note: Support does not mean acceptance or approval of the innovative product registration. The product will be subject to full evaluation upon formal registration request and may be rejected.



Annex (1): Research and Innovation Support Request Form

Applicant Information				
Name	Mobile Number	Email Address	Entity	Entity Name
			Local/International Entity or University	

Research or Innovation Support Request Information	
Field	Type
Food / Feed	Research / Innovation

Research or Innovation Support Request
Description
<i>(To be completed by the applicant)</i>



Annex (2): Research and Innovation Inquiry Form

Applicant Information				
Name	Mobile Number	Email Address	Entity	Entity Name
			Local/International Entity or University	

Research and Innovation Support Inquiry Information		
Field	Type	Inquiry Description
Food / Feed	Research / Innovation	

