

Food Dive

NuTek petitions FDA for clarification of potassium chloride name

By [Carolyn Heneghan](#) | July 4, 2016

Dive Brief:

NuTek Food Science LLC filed a citizen petition with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration last week concerning guidance regarding the term "potassium salt."

The organization has requested that the FDA recognize "potassium salt" as an additional common or usual name for "potassium chloride."

The term is meant to reduce consumer confusion over "potassium chloride," which is a naturally occurring salt compound similar to sodium chloride, or conventional salt. According to the petition, consumers may incorrectly associate "chloride" with chlorine or other chemicals.

Dive Insight:

As companies reformulate products to remove or reduce salt, manufacturers face drastic impacts on flavor, functionality, or safety of a product because of salt reductions. Potassium chloride, or potassium salt, has been one way manufacturers have reduced the amount of conventional salt in a product while maintaining these other characteristics.

Though the [FDA's sodium reduction targets are voluntary](http://www.fooddive.com/news/fda-announces-proposed-sodium-reduction-targets/420133/) (<http://www.fooddive.com/news/fda-announces-proposed-sodium-reduction-targets/420133/>), pressure from consumers, public health advocates, competition, and other stakeholders may force more brands to rethink and retool their products with less salt.

At the same time, because the salt is made from potassium rather than sodium, using potassium chloride would also enable manufacturers to increase the potassium content in their products. This could improve the health benefits of the product listed on its label, as the FDA will soon require manufacturers to label potassium per the [Nutrition Facts panel overhaul](http://www.fooddive.com/news/4-food-and-beverage-categories-facing-steep-challenges-from-fdas-nutrition/420182/) (<http://www.fooddive.com/news/4-food-and-beverage-categories-facing-steep-challenges-from-fdas-nutrition/420182/>).

But when manufacturers have used potassium chloride in the past, consumers haven't always understood that "chloride" isn't associated with the chemicals they imagine. NuTek's suggestion could help manufacturers industrywide with a salt reduction strategy that is more palatable for consumers reading ingredients labels.

As a drawback, without understanding the ingredient, consumers could still steer clear of any products labeled with "potassium salt" if they are avoiding salt altogether.

Recommended Reading

Law360 (subscription): [Potassium Chloride Should Be Potassium Salt On Food Labels](#)

<http://www.law360.com/articles/812392/potassium-chloride-should-be-potassium-salt-on-food-labels>

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