



Adding Color and Flavor to Your Tortillas

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- **Color Legislation Recap**
- **Retailer Positioning**
- **Seasoning Blends for Tortillas**
 - **Market Status**
 - **Components**
 - **Optimization**
 - **Usage**

Petroleum Based Dye Phase Out



- In January 2025, the FDA officially revoked the authorization for FD&C Red No. 3 in food and ingested drugs. This marks the first major synthetic dye to be federally prohibited since the inception of the MAHA initiative.
- Subsequently, in April 2025, the FDA released a plan to phase out Petroleum Based Dyes completely.

FDA NEWS RELEASE

HHS, FDA to Phase Out Petroleum-Based Synthetic Dyes in Nation's Food Supply

For Immediate Release: April 22, 2025

Petroleum Based Dye Phase Out

Letter to the Food Industry on “No Artificial Colors” Labeling Claims

- February 5, 2026

FDA intends to exercise enforcement discretion as to section 403(a)(1) of the FD&C Act should a firm use certain voluntary labeling claims on foods intended for human consumption that do not contain any FD&C Act certified colors. **This means that FDA does not intend to take enforcement action against a firm under section 403(a)(1) of the FD&C Act should the firm make one of the voluntary labeling claims listed below** on foods intended for human consumption that do not contain any colors listed in 21 CFR part 74:

Approved Claims:

- Made without artificial food colors/colorings
- No artificial color/colors/coloring
- No added artificial color/colors/coloring

Retailer Positioning

Tracking Food Industry Pledges to Remove Petroleum Based Food Dyes

Real Colors. Real Progress.



On April 22, 2025, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Food and Drug Administration [announced](#) a bold national initiative to phase out petroleum-based food dyes (certified color additives) from the American food supply – marking a significant milestone in the Trump Administration's efforts to Make America Healthy Again.

Retailer Positioning

Industry Tracker: Pledges to Remove Petroleum-Based Food Dyes

American Bakers
Association

[ABA Member List](#) 

- Eliminate the use of certified FD&C colors in all baked goods provided to K-12 schools through the National School Breakfast, Lunch, and Competitive Foods Programs by the beginning of the 2026-2027 school year.
- Eliminate certified FD&C colors from baked goods across the United States by **December 2028**

In progress

Walmart, Inc.

All Walmart private brand foods in the U.S. are included, such as: Great Value, Marketside, Freshness

- Walmart U.S. is removing certified color additives and more than 30 other ingredients — like certain preservatives, artificial sweeteners and fat substitutes — from its private brand foods, to be completed by January 2027.

In progress

Nestlé USA

All products in the U.S.

- Eliminate FD&C colors in U.S. food and beverage portfolio by mid-2026.

Complete

Petroleum Based Dye Phase Out

Summary

- The U.S. is not implementing a single sweeping legal ban of artificial dyes (yet). The movement is currently being encouraged by the FDA with strong industry support
- The FDA has acted to facilitate the transition to natural colors by:
 - Showing the industry it can and will revoke the safe status of artificial dyes
 - Providing guidance for front of pack claims that highlight the removal of artificial colors
 - Fast tracking approval of new natural colors
- So far there has been strong industry commitment to eliminating synthetic dyes and other additional ingredients. Examples include: Walmart, Aldi, Kroger, Target, etc.

Popular Tortilla Flavors

- **Spinach Pesto**
- **Tomato Basil**
- **Jalapeno Cheddar**
- **Red Chili**
- **Chipotle**
- **Sundried Tomato**
- **Salsa**
- **Garlic and Herb**
- **Butter**
- **Honey Wheat**



What is a Seasoning Blend?

Four Main Components:

- 1. Carrier**
 - Makes up most of the blend/provides bulk and aids in distribution (ex: Flour, Starches, Maltodextrin)
- 2. Spices**
 - Provides taste, visual appeal, texture, and aroma (ex: onion and garlic powder, dried basil, or parsley)
- 3. Flavor**
 - Enhances and rounds out overall taste (Synthetic/Natural Flavors and Extracts)
- 4. Color**
 - Gives the blend its visual appeal and helps identify the flavor profile (ex: Yellow 5, Blue 1, Annatto, Red Beet)

Spices and Vegetable Powders

- **In tortilla manufacturing, adding spices can impart visual appeal and texture, along with color and flavor.**
 - Fine particle powders such as spinach can help provide background color, while large particles such as basil or parsley can create a speckled visual appeal.
 - Spicy powders from hot peppers such as jalapenos can help create a lingering heat.



Flavor/Aroma Compounds

- Aroma compounds are created through natural extraction and chemical synthesis. Different flavor compounds are then mixed to mimic naturally occurring food aromas.
- In tortillas, the baking process can cause flavor loss as flavor compounds vaporize. Aroma compounds can be made to be more bake stable and help to restore lost flavor or boost existing flavor.
- The aroma of the tortilla is often the first thing you notice when you take a bite of your tortilla or wrap.
- Due to their high potency, it is typically more cost efficient to use a compounded flavor rather than a spice to drive the flavor profile of your tortilla.

Other Flavors

- **Savory** – In addition to salt, savory enhancing ingredients such as yeast extract can increase the richness of the overall flavor and have a lingering presence.
- **Sweet** – In addition to sugar, high intensity sweeteners such as sucralose or stevia can be used to help keep calories and carbs low. Allulose can be used to give a sugar like sweetness, with 10x less calories per gram.
- **Masking** – Masking compounds can help eliminate specific off flavors such as bitterness and acid.
- **Acid** – Adding an acid typically is not recommended, since it could change the appearance of the tortilla due to reactions with baking powder. However, using citric acid instead of fumaric acid can help aid in creating a lime/limón flavor profile.

Color

- **Color pigments help to provide color consistency that spices and vegetable powders cannot do on their own. They also allow for the ability to create unique, bright, signature colors that cannot be achieved otherwise.**
 - While natural colors may be more appealing to retail customers, synthetic colors can offer a cost, brightness, and shelf stability that can be difficult to achieve with natural colors.



Color

- People eat with their eyes 1st
 - Helps give clues to the flavor profile of the food before consuming it
 - Color affects perceived flavor intensity
 - Gives brands their own distinct identity



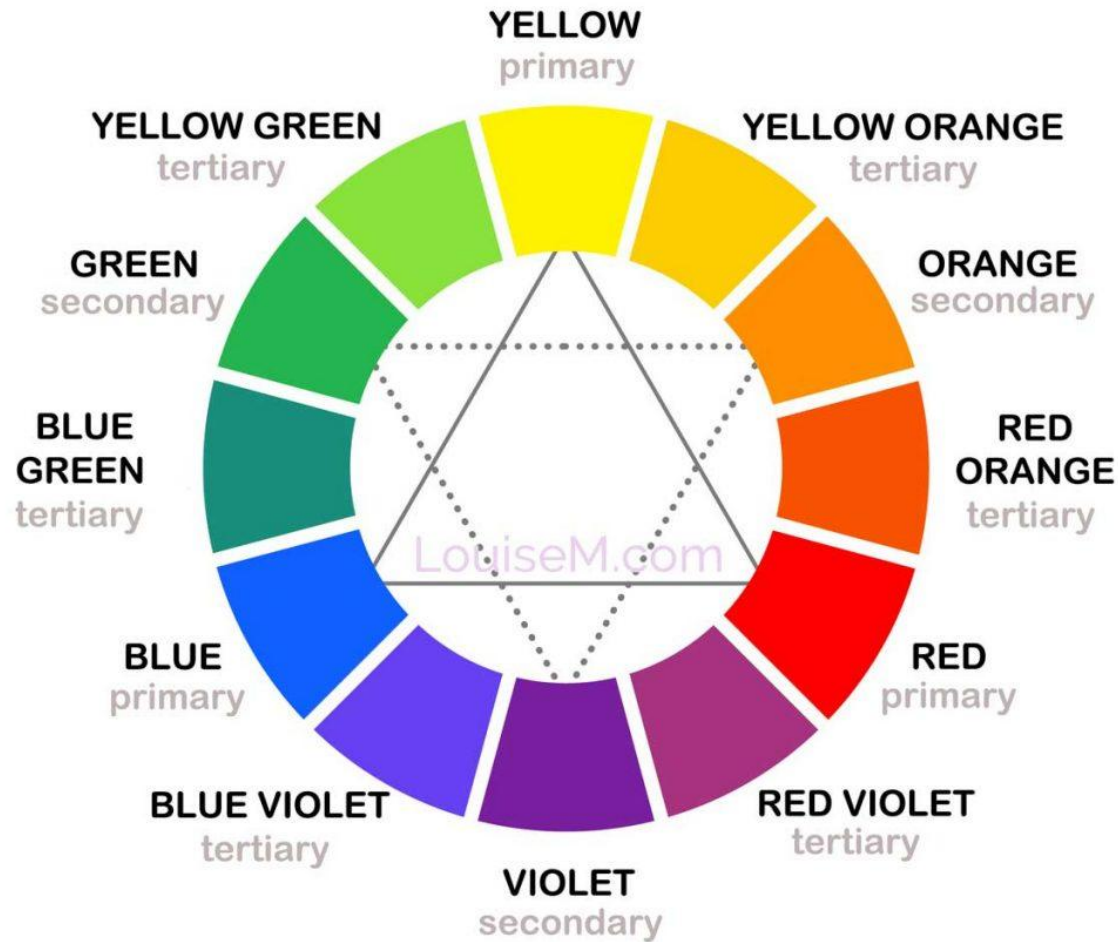
Color – Brand Identity



Color – Brand Identity



Color Wheel



12 Color Wheel

Synthetic vs Naturals: Reds

Synthetic

Red No.40

Paprika Oleoresin

- Orange-Red Shades
- Heat Stable
- Light Stable
- Potential Aroma/Flavor impact
- May see labeled as “Paprika Oleoresin (Color)”



Red Beet

- Pink-Red Shades
- Heat Stable up to 300F
- Heat Stable Options*
- Light Stable
- May see labeled at “Fruit/Vegetable Juice (Color)” or “Red Beet (Color)”



Synthetic vs Naturals: Yellows/Oranges

Turmeric

- Bright Yellow
- Heat Stable
- Light Sensitive
- Potential Aroma/Flavor impact
- May see labeled as "Turmeric (Color)"



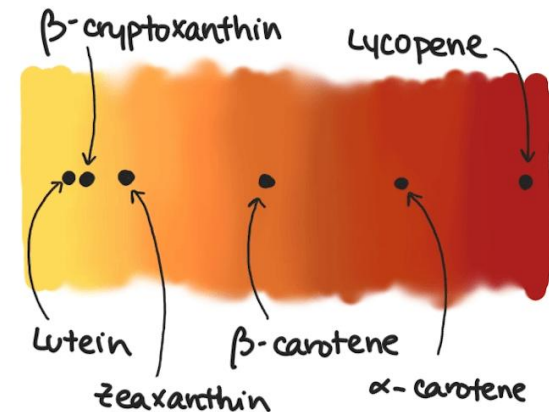
Synthetics

Yellow No. 5

Yellow No. 6

Beta Carotene

- Yellows-Oranges
- Heat Stable
- Light Stable
- May See Labeled as "Beta Carotene (Color)"



Synthetic vs Naturals: Blues

Blue Spirulina

- Light Blue
- Heat Sensitive above 170F
- Light Sensitive
- Potential Aroma/Flavor impact
- May see labeled as “Spirulina Extract (Color)”



Synthetics

Blue No. 1

Blue No. 2

Butterfly-Pea

- Light-Dark Blue
- Heat Stable
- Light Sensitive
- Regulatory Limitations*
- May see labeled as “Butterfly Pea Extract (Color)” or “Fruit and Vegetable Juice (Color)”



Synthetic vs Naturals: Green Blends

Blue Spirulina Blends

Light-Dark Green

Heat Sensitive above 170F

Light Sensitive

Potential Aroma/Flavor impact

Synthetic

Blue 1/Yellow 5

Blue 1/Yellow 6

Green No. 3

Butterfly-Pea Blends

Light-Dark Blue

Heat Stable

Light Sensitive



Natural Green Color Stability

Day 0



Day 7 (Direct Light)



*Green blends are made with spinach and parsley powder, butterfly pea and turmeric, or butterfly pea and beta carotene

Artificial and Natural Color Options

- The low cost, shelf stability, and range of choices, make artificial colors great for tortillas. However, with the FDA, several states, and many retailers looking to phase them out over time it is important to become familiar with the natural alternatives. Food service is likely to stay with artificial colors for now, except in cases where it is not allowed by the state.
- Natural color options continue to improve in quality and availability, however, cost and stability remain a challenge. New natural color alternatives that will expand market options are under review with the FDA, and are likely to be relevant to the tortilla industry.

Thank you!