HowGood Clean Label Methodology

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Who is HowGood?

HowGood is an independent research company and SaaS sustainability intelligence platform with the world's largest database on food product sustainability. For 18 years, HowGood has focused exclusively on agricultural production research and mapping global food systems. With over 90,000 agricultural emissions factors, HowGood's database enables the food industry to accurately measure, reduce, and communicate the impact of their products. HowGood's SaaS platform delivers automated and auditable sustainability data to some of the world's largest food companies to power their product carbon footprinting, corporate carbon accounting, impact reduction initiatives, and strategic sourcing decisions. Visit howgood.com for more information.

What is HowGood's research methodology?

HowGood has more than 18 years of research on global food supply chains. The team consolidates and analyzes findings from over 600 accredited data sources and certifications. These include a range of resources such as international frameworks, NGO guidance and standards reports, peer reviewed life cycle assessment studies, journal articles, academic conference proceedings and texts, aggregated commercial databases, targeted industry studies, NGO research, government publications, and news reports from reputable outlets. HowGood employs the most industry-recognized methodologies and incorporates the latest scientific research. Metrics and impact assessments are updated on an ongoing, iterative basis, making HowGood's platform the leading-edge tool for product sustainability. In turn, HowGood is able to provide impact assessments that are accurate, comprehensive, and the most up-to-date. Through HowGood's sustainability intelligence platform, Latis, we are able to scale this approach across products, brands, and the entire food industry.

What does the Clean Label attribute measure?

HowGood's Clean Label attribute recognizes food products that have a minimal number of minimally processed ingredients. A fewer number of ingredients that do not require high-intensity processing yields products with a much lower impact on the environment. Products that qualify for Clean Label have a simple formula with seven or fewer ingredients that are all minimally processed.

How long does a product qualify for the Clean Label attribute?

Products that qualify for Clean Label receive access to the attribute for public-facing communications for one year. At the end of the annual contract, products must be reassessed based on the current industry benchmark to re-qualify.

What does the Clean Label attribute mean for consumers?

The Clean Label attribute provides consumers with an indicator of the intensity of an ingredient's transformation, as indicated by the degree of processing involved in producing its ingredients. It's easy-to-digest and guides consumers toward decisions that are in line with their health goals and dietary preferences. By purchasing Clean Label products, consumers can take a step toward making more informed choices on what they choose to purchase.

What is HowGood's research methodology for calculating the Clean Label attribute?

The Clean Label product attribute rewards low-intensity ingredient processing. To receive the Clean Label attribute, products must only contain ingredients that are not dependent on commercial/industrial processing to exist. Minor heat or fermentation, mechanical processing (e.g., milling of grain), and physical extraction (e.g., expeller pressing of olives) are examples of low-intensity ingredient processes accepted for this attribute. The ingredient may be augmented by the food system but not created by it. Some ingredients ubiquitous in the food system used as supplements added in small quantities to enrich foods are included as minimally processed despite being

dependent on commercial/industrial processing, and constitute the notable exception to this rule.

HowGood's underlying methodology for calculating processing impact used in the Clean Label attribute involves:

1. **Data Collection:** HowGood draws on a diverse collection of data sources, including peer reviewed journal articles to identify the level of intensity applied in the production of food ingredients. For each ingredient processing type, or combination of processing types, HowGood researchers identify the relevant steps to transform the ingredient, including the energy and chemical inputs required. Our experts identify when an ingredient only requires low-intensity processing. HowGood also maintains a record of and references the NOVA classification system on the level of ingredient processing. NOVA is limited in its coverage of ingredients compared to the breadth of the HowGood library, hence its use as a reference.

2. **Ingredient Mapping:** Once the data is collected and analyzed, HowGood conducts a proprietary process of mapping each ingredient to its source crop, animal or material. Using LCAs, peer reviewed studies, and other sources, HowGood then applies the most likely processing type that would be used to take the source crop and transform it into the ingredient. For example, all-purpose flour would be mapped to the crop wheat. The processing of wheat into all-purpose flour would involve milling and (likely bleaching as well).

3. **Data Aggregation**: HowGood, to date, has mapped nearly every ingredient, chemical and material (33,000 in total) in the CPG food industry, including where and how it is produced. This mapping is used to aggregate data across geographic regions or ingredient categories and develop industry-average impact profiles for processing types and energy usage across every ingredient.

Based on the ingredient mapping process, HowGood assigns a default location and corresponding industry-average profile for every ingredient in a product. If deeper levels of data granularity are available (from a specific supplier, industry partner, or publication), these specifics are applied.

What data sources does HowGood use to assess processing impact?

NOVA Food Classification System	Food Processing Technology
Palm Oil Innovation Group	Cradle to Cradle
EcoInvent LCA Database	ELCD
United States Department of Agriculture	Codex Alimentarius (WHO/FAO)
Australian Certified Organic	Non-GMO Product Certified
Humanity United	Everything Added to Food in the US
ESU World Food Database	Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research
International Journal of LCA	Meat Atlas
Open LCA	European Food Additives Database
Sustainability Consortium	Food Additives Database