CERTIFIED FOR SPORT® FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the purpose of the Certified for Sport® program?

NSF's Certified for Sport® program meets the growing demands of athletes, coaches and all those concerned about banned substances in dietary supplements and functional foods. We verify that these products do not contain unsafe levels of contaminants, prohibited substances or masking agents, and that what is on the label matches what is in the product. By doing so, the Certified for Sport® certification program provides consumers with safer choices when selecting dietary supplements and functional foods.

2. What are the basic components of the Certified for Sport® certification?

The basic components of certification include recurring on-site manufacturing facility audits, product formulation reviews, label claim testing, contaminant testing and testing for more than 270 athletically banned substances.

3. What does NSF inspect during facility audits of manufacturers?

Our expert auditors visit the facilities and assess all relevant aspects of the U.S. regulations as well as additional items we have determined as critical. These include:

- Personnel
- Physical plant and grounds
- Equipment and utensils
- Production and process control systems
- Holding and distribution
- Return of product
- Product complaints
- Records and recordkeeping
- Recall procedures

Our auditors have an average of more than 15 years of auditing experience.

4. What does the NSF toxicology review consist of?

The toxicology review is driven by FDA requirements and the NSF/ANSI 173 standard. In in-depth process, our toxicologists review the full product formulation, all raw material ingredients and product labels. Once testing has concluded, an evaluation of the test reports is completed by microbiologists, chemists and toxicologists.

5. What is the difference in evaluating/testing a product labeled with a Nutrition Facts panel vs. a Supplement Facts panel?

Nutrition facts panels have different FDA labeling requirements than supplement facts panels. While our toxicologists evaluate these different requirements specific to product type, both product types have the same test requirements regarding pesticides, contaminants, toxins, heavy metals and athletically banned substances.

6. Why would a functional food or beverage need to be certified?

These types of products are fortified, sometimes substantially, with the same types of ingredients used in supplements. These ingredients can potentially carry the same risks of contamination as they do in supplements and are often at even higher risk of microbial contamination.

7. What types of products are not eligible for product certification?

Products marketed as a sexual enhancement or as fat burners are not eligible for certification. Products are evaluated by our toxicologists to confirm that the product formula and label contain only legal dietary ingredients. Products that exceed the upper intake limit of any ingredient such as caffeine, as determined by our toxicologists, are not eligible for certification.

8. How does NSF verify/check propriety blends?

We receive the product formulation that specifies each ingredient used and the amount of each ingredient used in the propriety blend.

9. Does NSF review and test label claims?

Yes. Label claims are reviewed by toxicologists to determine a set of verification tests in order to confirm the number of dietary ingredients, marker constituents and nutritional declarations as listed on the label and then verified through product testing.

10. How are testing athletes and supplements similar?

They are not comparable. Athletes are tested for banned substances through samples of their blood and urine. These test materials are very different from those of which protein powders, multivitamins and other dietary supplements are made. While blood and urine are relatively consistent from person to person, supplements can vary greatly product to product. There are hundreds if not thousands of ingredients that can be combined into an even greater number of products. The complexity can be staggering.

11. Does NSF test for every substance on the WADA or MLB banned substance lists?

No, the sport banned substance lists (e.g. WADA, NCAA, NFL, etc.) are purposely open ended to account for new substances and for various methods of administration (e.g. injection, inhalation, etc.). The Certified for Sport® program tests products that you eat or drink and is specific to substances that are orally bioavailable or would represent an doping risk if ingested.

12. Does a lab need to be WADA accredited to test supplements?

No. In fact, WADA does not accredit any labs for commercial product testing. In WADA's Code of Ethics for Laboratories, WADA states that a "laboratory shall not engage in analyzing commercial material or preparations (e.g. dietary or herbal supplements) unless specifically requested by an Anti-Doping Organization or WADA as part of a research program or results management process." There is no WADA standard for dietary supplement testing.

We conduct routine analyses in an ISO/IEC 17025-accredited lab according to U.S. FDA standard methods, AOAC official methods and USP monographs. NSF has 20 years of experience in dietary supplement testing that is supported by a team of chemists, toxicologists, microbiologists and public health professionals.

13. What exactly does NSF test for in the Certified for Sport® program?

- Over 270 substances prohibited in sport[1]
- Label claim accuracy
- Aflatoxins (by HPLC)
- Heavy metals (arsenic, cadmium, chromium VI, lead and mercury)
- Aerobic bacteria
- Yeast/mold
- *Enterobacteriaceae*
- *Salmonella spp.*
- *Escherichia coli*
- *Staphylococcus aureus*

Some products require additional testing:

- Aristolochic acid (products in the *Aristolochiaceae* family only)
- *Periploca sepium* (*Eleutherococcus senticosus* only)
- *Digitalis lanata* (*Plantago lanceolata* only)
- *Teucrium chamaedrys* (*Scutellaria lateriflora* only)
- *Pseudomonas* (liquid products)
- Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs; fish oils only)
- Polychlorinated dibenzo-para-dioxins (PCDDs; fish oils only)
- Polychlorinated dibenzofurans (PCDFs; fish oils only)
- Dioxin-like PCBs (fish oils only)
- Pesticides (products containing botanicals)

1 NSF is continuously expanding the number of substances being tested. NSF engages USADA, MLB and NFL, among others, to identify emerging substances, as well as engaging in our own intelligence work. NSF validates the analytical methods for these new substances. If the method is a new method, it is added to our ISO/IEC 17025 scope.

14. Are products containing hemp and hemp-derived CBD eligible for NSF's Certified for Sport® certification?

No. Currently hemp and hemp-derived CBD products are not eligible for NSF certification under this program. NSF's Certified for Sport® program tests for more than 270 athletic banned substances, including THC, which is currently on the WADA list of prohibited substances. Additionally, some sports organizations still consider natural cannabinoids prohibited substances, of which THC and CBD are generally classified as such. For these reasons, products containing hemp or hemp-derived CBD are not eligible for the NSF Certified for Sport® certification.

Have more questions?

Please email us at **certifiedforsport@nsf.org** or call toll free **800-NSF-MARK** (800-673-6275).