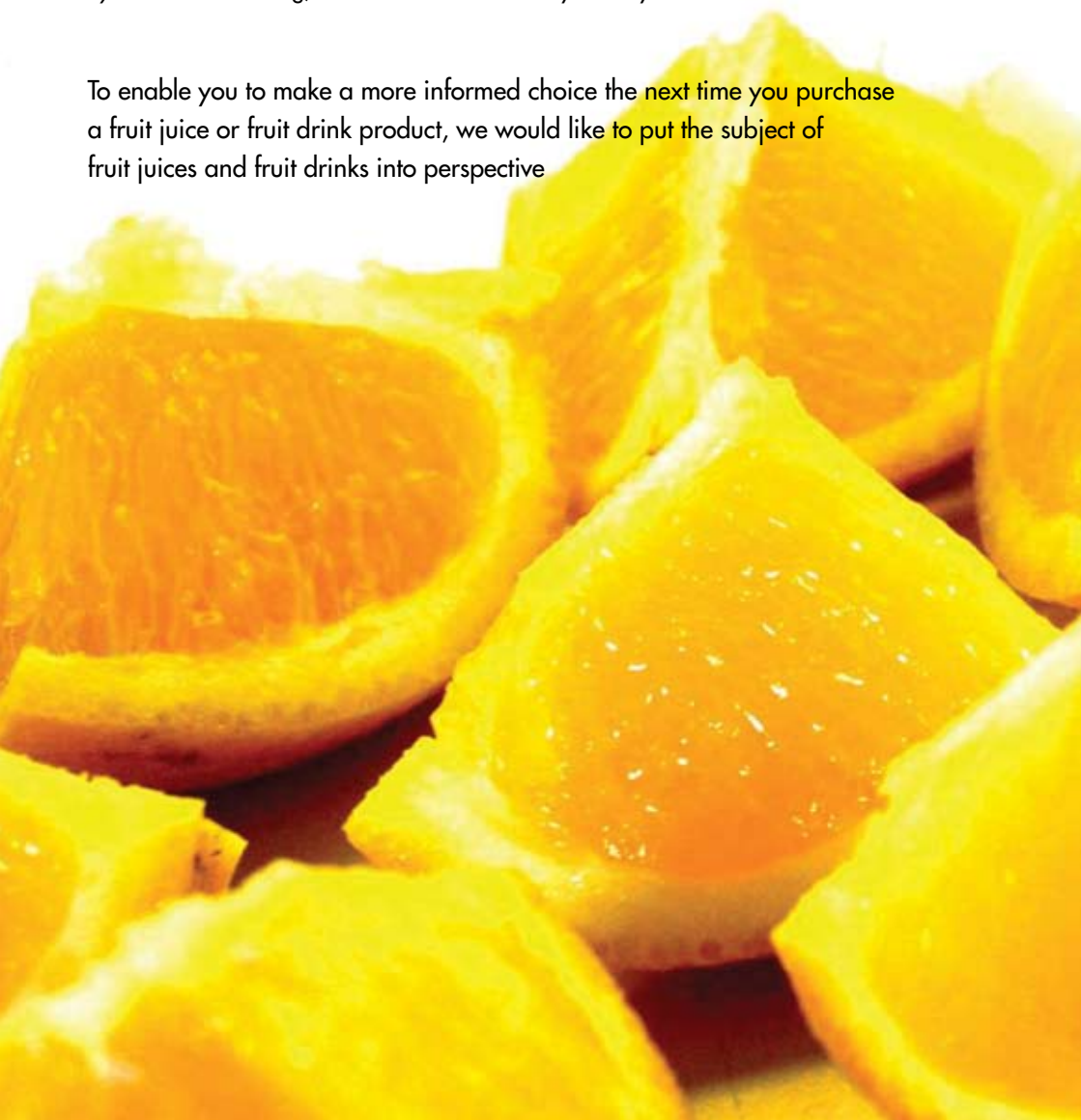


Know your fruit juices and drinks

by Theo van Rensburg, Directorate of Food Safety Quality Assurance

To enable you to make a more informed choice the next time you purchase a fruit juice or fruit drink product, we would like to put the subject of fruit juices and fruit drinks into perspective



South African consumers have quite a large array of products to choose from when purchasing fruit juice and fruit drink products. But how many consumers are actually aware of what the difference between a fruit juice, fruit nectar, fruit drink or fruit flavoured drink is?

To enable you to make a more informed choice the next time you purchase a fruit juice or fruit drink product, we would like to put the subject of fruit juices and fruit drinks into perspective.



Theo van Rensburg

The Fruit Juice and Drink Regulations were promulgated on 7 November 1980 and subsequently amended in 1984 and 1995, and are (a) administered by the Directorate Food Safety and Quality Assurance and (b) enforced by the Directorate Agricultural Products Inspection Services within the National Department of Agriculture. These regulations prescribe among others, specific marking and compositional requirements for fruit juices and drinks. The aim of these regulations is:

- The classification of fruit juice and drink according to the actual juice content of the product
- The setting up of specific compositional and labelling requirements
- To inform the consumer and to enable him/her to make an informed choice
- To prevent the consumer being misled by faulty or misleading labelling.

The following products fall under the definition for "fruit juice and drink" and are thus regulated: Any substance which is intended to be used as a drink, whether with or without the addition of any other substance, and –

- Which is solely or partially prepared from fruit or which in appearance, flavour and taste resembles juice derived from fruit, or
- On the container of which there appears any depiction or reference to fruit, but does not include wine and other fermented products.

In co-operation with manufacturers, consumers, the retail and various other role-players, the following classification system, based on the actual percentage



TABLE 1: Classification system based on the actual percentage fruit juice the product contains in the ready-to-drink form

Classification	Description
1.A. Fresh fruit juice/puree	<p>From some fruit (eg apricot, guava, peach, etc) a juice cannot be obtained, in which case it is called a puree and has a pulpy appearance. Fresh fruit juice/puree is the product that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) contains 100% juice/puree (b) contains no additives (c) has not been subjected to any preserving methods other than chilling (d) is intended to be sold for consumption within 2 hours of extraction (manufacturers may apply for an extension of this time restraint if the cold chain is maintained from the factory to the shelf). <p>Depictions of the fruit used may be present on the label.</p>
1.B. Fresh fruit juice/puree blend	<p>The same as in A above, except that it is a mixture/blend of two or more fruit species.</p>
2.A. Fruit juice/puree (Sweetened or unsweetened)	<p>Unsweetened Fruit juice/puree contains 100% juice/puree. It may also contain certain permitted additives, eg preservatives. Seeds, bits of seed and bits of husks may not be present.</p> <p>Sweetened Fruit juice/puree contains either permitted natural sweeteners (not exceeding 5%) or artificial sweeteners. Apart from other permitted additives, eg preservatives, this class of fruit juice may also contain added water. The minimum percentage fruit juice varies according to the type of fruit as illustrated below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orange, peach, pear, pineapple – Min 90% Granadilla, guava – Min 80% Lemon, grapefruit – Min 70% <p>Depictions of the fruit used may be present on the label.</p>
2.B. Fruit juice/puree blend (Sweetened or unsweetened)	<p>The same as in A above, except that it is a mixture/blend of two or more fruit species.</p>
3.A. Fruit nectar	<p>A Fruit nectar contains less fruit juice than the class Fruit juice/puree. The minimum percentage fruit juice once again varies according to the type of fruit, eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apple, orange, grape – Min 50% Peach, pear – Min 40% Apricot – Min 35% Granadilla, guava, lychee, mango – Min 20% Lemon, lime – Min 12,5% <p>Depictions of the fruit used may be present on the label.</p>
3.B. Fruit nectar blend	<p>The same as in A above, except that it is a mixture/blend of two or more fruit species.</p>
4.A. Fruit squash	<p>A Fruit squash is a concentrated fruit drink that has to be diluted to a minimum ratio of 1 to 3 to produce a suitable drink. The fruit juice content are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum 24% fruit juice in the undiluted form, and minimum 6% fruit juice in the diluted form. <p>Depictions of fruit are not allowed on the label.</p>
4.B. Fruit squash blend	<p>The same as in A above, except that it is a mixture/blend of two or more fruit species.</p>
5.A. Fruit drink	<p>A Fruit drink contains less fruit juice than the class Fruit nectar.</p> <p>The minimum fruit juice content required is 6%.</p> <p>Depictions of fruit are not allowed on the label.</p>
5.B. Fruit drink blend	<p>The same as in A above, except that it is a mixture/blend of two or more fruit species.</p>
6. Fruit flavoured drink	<p>This class contains either (a) less than 6% fruit juice, or (b) no fruit juice at all, ie only flavourants. Products covered under this class include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit flavoured carbonated soft drinks • Fruit flavoured mineral or spring water • Fruit flavoured sports or energy drinks • Fruit flavoured syrups <p>Depictions of fruit are not allowed.</p>

fruit juice the product contains in the ready to drink form, was developed:

- Fresh fruit juice/fresh fruit juice blend
- Sweetened and unsweetened fruit juice/ sweetened and unsweetened fruit juice blend
- Fruit nectar/fruit nectar blend
- Fruit drink/fruit drink blend
- Fruit squash/fruit squash blend
- Fruit flavoured drink

Each of these classes can be summarised as in Table 1.

For many years, tomatoes used to be the only vegetable juice on the market, but other vegetables are becoming popular additions to the pure juice market. They provide novel tastes and are perceived to be particularly healthy. Vegetable juice is treated as a "juice" and the products are marked in the same manner as for the fruit juice/ puree or blended fruit juice/puree classes.

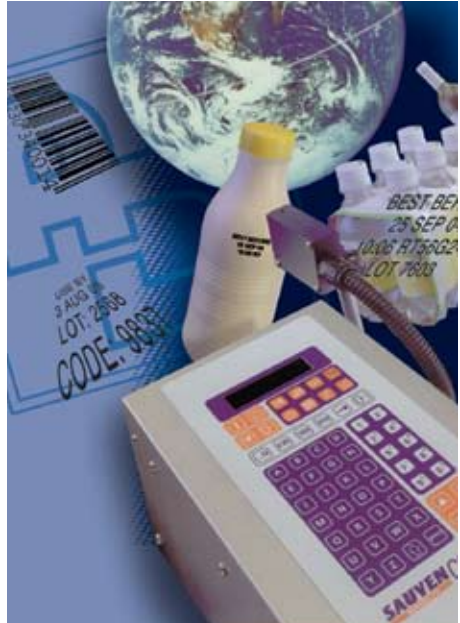
I trust that the above explanation will provide the ultimate consumer (and the manufacturers, packers and retailers) with a better understanding of what the differences are between the various classes of fruit juices and fruit drinks. However, should you need any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the following persons nearest to you:

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