

Nutrient data available via phone apps, websites

March 20 2012, By Rosalie Marion Bliss



Among the thousands of apps for iPhone, iPod Touch, Android, Windows Phone 7, and BlackBerry, many are nutrition/health related and are based on the download and import of the BHNRC national nutrient databases. Credit: Stephen Ausmus.

Health-conscious owners of "smart phones" and home computers are thumbing and clicking their way to nutritious food choices. A downloadable version of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) flagship National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference (SR), listing more than 7,600 food items, is being downloaded and incorporated into

a variety of free and for-fee consumer-oriented smart phone "apps" and interactive websites.

The SR and other [nutrient](#) databases are managed by the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center (BHNRC) in Beltsville, Md. ARS is USDA's principal intramural scientific research agency.

The BHNRC Nutrient Data Laboratory, headed by nutritionist Joanne Holden, provides [free](#) electronic access to SR in a variety of formats online from its web site. There are hundreds of free and for-fee apps for iPhone, iPod Touch, Android, Windows Phone 7, and BlackBerry handheld devices. Many of these apps are related to nutrition and health, and are based on the download and import of BHNRC national nutrient databases.

Non-governmental and governmental nutrition websites also incorporate BHNRC nutrient data. For example, the BHNRC's national nutrient databases are available for download and use within interactive software products provided by commercial weight-loss enterprises. The most prominent government source is [SuperTracker](#), which can be found at [ChooseMyPlate.gov](#), where individuals can easily create their own customized healthy dietary plan to ensure that they get their required daily vitamins and minerals, while consuming age- and gender-appropriate daily portions and calorie levels.

The new and improved USDA "SuperTracker" tool provides users with free diet and physical activity assessment and planning tools. SuperTracker demonstrates how a person's diet and physical activity compare to the Dietary Guidelines, recommended intakes for nutrients, and [physical activity](#) guidelines. Users can get a free nutrient-by-nutrient report, complete with a status (over, under, acceptable) for single nutrients.

A user friendly, searchable version of SR was made available for download directly onto personal computers (PCs) and laptops free of charge in 2003. To download the nutrient database software, go to the Nutrient Data Laboratory [Home Page](#). Then click "Download search programs for use on your PC without connecting to the Internet."

More information: [Read more](#) about the authoritative ARS national nutrient data in a three-part series featured in the March 2012 issue of *Agricultural Research* magazine.

Provided by USDA Agricultural Research Service

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