

McDonald's says classic burgers no longer have artificial ingredients

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Almost two-thirds of sandwiches are now free of artificial products, which were removed from the company's cheese slices, Big Mac special sauce and several types of buns

McDonald's USA on Wednesday announced that its iconic burgers,

including the Big Mac and the Quarter Pounder with Cheese, no longer have artificial preservatives, artificial flavors or added colors from artificial sources.

Only the pickle slices still contain an artificial preservative, the American fast food giant said, noting that "customers are able to skip it if they prefer."

The changes are going into effect in all 14,000 US restaurants, the company's statement said.

It's a big attempt for McDonald's—oft vilified as a champion of junk food—to attract or retain customers concerned about their diets.

"From switching to 100 percent fresh beef in our quarter-pound burgers, cooked right when ordered, to removing [artificial preservatives](#) in our Chicken McNuggets, and committing to cage-free eggs by 2025, we have made significant strides in evolving the quality of our [food](#)," said Chris Kempczinski, the company's USA president.

As of now, almost two-thirds of the company's burgers and sandwiches are free of artificial products, which were removed from the company's cheese slices, Big Mac special sauce and several types of buns.

The move is a response to a growing trend of health-consciousness in the United States, particularly attuned to organic products as well as increased concern for product origin and quality.

It's also a way to meet competition from trendy burgers like Five Guys, which emphasizes freshness, or more traditional beef patties like Wendy's, which boasts the slogan "always fresh, never frozen."

Such moves are not easy to implement in the United States, where

McDonald's is generally one of few restaurants accessible to lower-class populations, with price factor often taking precedence over quality.

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