



## Labeling Foods as Protein Sources

Current dietary guidelines have advocated for the inclusion of more plant protein in the diet, and food marketers are looking for ways to identify their products as “good” or “excellent” sources of protein. However, there are different methods for determining protein quality, each with its own definitions.

### Protein Digestibility-Corrected Amino Acid Score (PDCAAS)

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) uses the PDCAAS method, as described in a 1991 FAO report. PDCAAS is a numerical value based on the true fecal protein digestibility (TFPD%) of the protein in question and the amino acid score of the protein, which is measured as the lowest ratio value of the food-based amino acid content (mg AA/g protein) relative to a reference amino acid pattern.

“Good source” = 5g (10% of daily value) or more per reference amounts customarily consumed (RACC)

“Excellent source” = 10g (20% of daily value) or more per RACC

### Digestible Indispensable Amino Acid Score (DIAAS)

The DIAAS method is conceptually similar to the PDCAAS method; however, DIAAS uses updated amino acid reference patterns, sets the score as the lowest value for ileal digestible amino acids (end of small intestine), and does not cap values when they are higher than 1.0.

“Excellent” protein source = 100% or more

“Good” protein source = 75%-99%

No protein claim = Less than 75%

