

# QSAI & ACA update special meal guidelines



## Inflight dining

The [Quality & Safety Alliance for Inflight Services \(QSAI\)](#) and the [Airline Catering Association \(ACA\)](#) announced the release of updated the QSAI Special Meal (SPML) Codes, Definitions, and Interpretation Guidelines (version 2.0) this month. The guidelines elevate onboard catering industry standards to ensure the dietary preferences and needs of all passengers are met, the press release said.

The updated guidelines go into effect on January 1, 2024, with a 12-month grace period for QSAI partners and catering organizations to adapt to the new requirements. Future menu developments for airlines should be based on the Updated QSAI Special Meal Codes, Definitions, and Interpretation Guidelines (version 2.0).

“In recent years, Special Meal Codes and Definitions have lagged behind changing international requirements, causing confusion within the industry when creating Special Meal menus,” the press release said.

To address this, QSAI enables its members to collaborate with onboard food suppliers to set international industry standards based on up-to-date scientific, regulatory and industry information.

The QSAI alliance of airlines and railways was charged with establishing Special Meal requirements for the onboard food industry. Medina Quality (MQ), QSAI’s scientific and regulatory advisor and an IATA Strategic Partner, conducted a global review of current regulatory, dietary and religious requirements to gain a better understanding of passengers’ needs.

More than 40 onboard caterers and QSAI Airline Alliance members, including Air Canada, Air France, Air Tahiti Nui, All Nippon Airways, Eurostar International, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, Singapore Airlines and Virgin Atlantic, were surveyed as part of the review. The results were used to create the updated<sub>1</sub>

## Special Meal Codes and Definitions.

QSAI finalized the new Special Meal Codes and Definitions in collaboration with an ACA task force, that was also working on initiatives to update these requirements for caterers. The result is a version of the Special Meal Codes and Definitions that reflects the current state of the industry.

"Given the growing demand from travellers for Special Meals, updating these Codes and Definitions is a crucial step towards enhancing the onboard catering experience for all passengers, regardless of their dietary or religious needs and preferences," said David Medina, COO of Medina Quality. "This collaborative effort reflects our commitment to ensuring that travellers receive food that meets the highest standards of quality and safety."