



Color Me Red

THE SHIFTING LANDSCAPE OF
SYNTHETIC DYES AND ARTIFICIAL
COLORS





Changes on the Horizon for Synthetic Dyes and Artificial Colors

In January 2025, the [FDA released a final judgment](#) to ban FD&C Red No. 3 and eliminate it from shelves by the end of 2027. In April 2025, the [HHS](#) and [FDA](#) introduced a plan to phase out petroleum-based synthetic dyes in the United State’s food supply, along with banning two additional synthetic dyes and requesting an acceleration on the Red No. 3 ban.

Timeline of Announcements and Deadlines

The timeline diagram features a dark blue background with four white boxes connected by a horizontal line. The boxes are arranged as follows: 'January 2025' (top left) with 'FD&C Red No 3 judgement' below it; 'End of 2026' (top right) with 'Target industry implementation timeline' below it; 'April 2025' (bottom left) with 'Judgement on other Certified Colors' below it; and 'End of 2027' (bottom right) with 'Original FD&C Red No 3 deadline' below it.

Date	Event
January 2025	FD&C Red No 3 judgement
April 2025	Judgement on other Certified Colors
End of 2026	Target industry implementation timeline
End of 2027	Original FD&C Red No 3 deadline

New Natural Dyes on track to be approved

- Calcium Phosphate
- Galdieria Extract Blue
- Gardenia Blue
- Butterfly Pea Flower Extract

Banned

Announced January 2025:

- FD&C Red No. 3

Announced April 2025:

- Citrus Red No. 2
- Orange B

Phased Out by end of 2026

Petroleum-Based Synthetic Dyes:

• FD&C Green No. 3	• FD&C Yellow No. 6
• FD&C Red No. 40	• FD&C Blue No. 1
• FD&C Yellow No. 5	• FD&C Blue No. 2

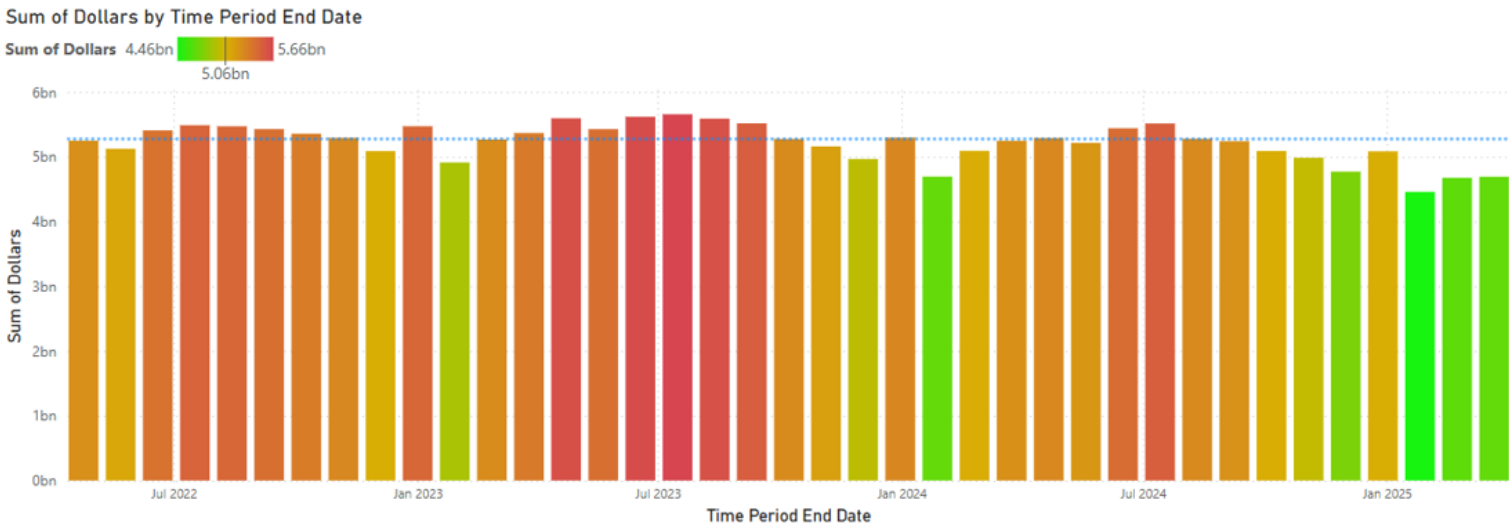


Why Insights Matter

Using SPINS best-in-class attribution, we can identify the shift in consumer trends and needs across aisles.

As the market evolves, we can see that shoppers are looking for better-for-you products to stock their pantries and nourish their families

Looking at the past 3 years of products containing artificial colors, we can see the downward shift.





What You Need to Know

What is a synthetic dye? Did the industry already have natural alternatives? Find answers here to some common questions around synthetic and natural colors.

What are petroleum based synthetic dyes?

These colors are a subset of synthetic (or artificial) colors that are derived from petroleum. They're used widely due to their uniform color. Examples are FD&C Yellow 6, FD&C Blue 1, and others. They're used in foods, drugs, and other consumables. [They require a warning label in the EU.](#)

What Natural colors are the FDA looking to approve?

Calcium Phosphate, Galdieria Extract Blue, Gardenia Blue, Butterfly Pea Flower Extract, as well as other natural color alternatives not named were identified as ingredients on a fast track for review and approval

Why are synthetic food dyes a concern?

Some studies show adverse effects of several synthetic colors, including irritability and restlessness in children to increased risk of cancer. They are also considered indicators of UPFs (ultra processed foods), which shoppers are increasingly aware of when making purchase decisions

Can other natural ingredients be used as food dyes?

Yes, currently ingredients such as beet powder, annatto extract, paprika oleoresin, and spirulina can be added to food products as sources of naturally-derived color. This means they are not synthetic and are derived from a natural food source





Red No. 3 Across Aisles

Red No. 3 is present in a large but shrinking set of products as brands gear up for the FDA judgement and more shoppers are checking labels. Across Food & Beverage, products that contain Red No. 3 are already seeing a steep decline in both dollars and units percent growth vs a year ago, outpacing total declines in Artificial Colors

Red No. 3

\$2.9b
Total Sales
52Wk

-9.9%
Dollars %
Change, Yago

-12.4%
Units % Change,
Yago

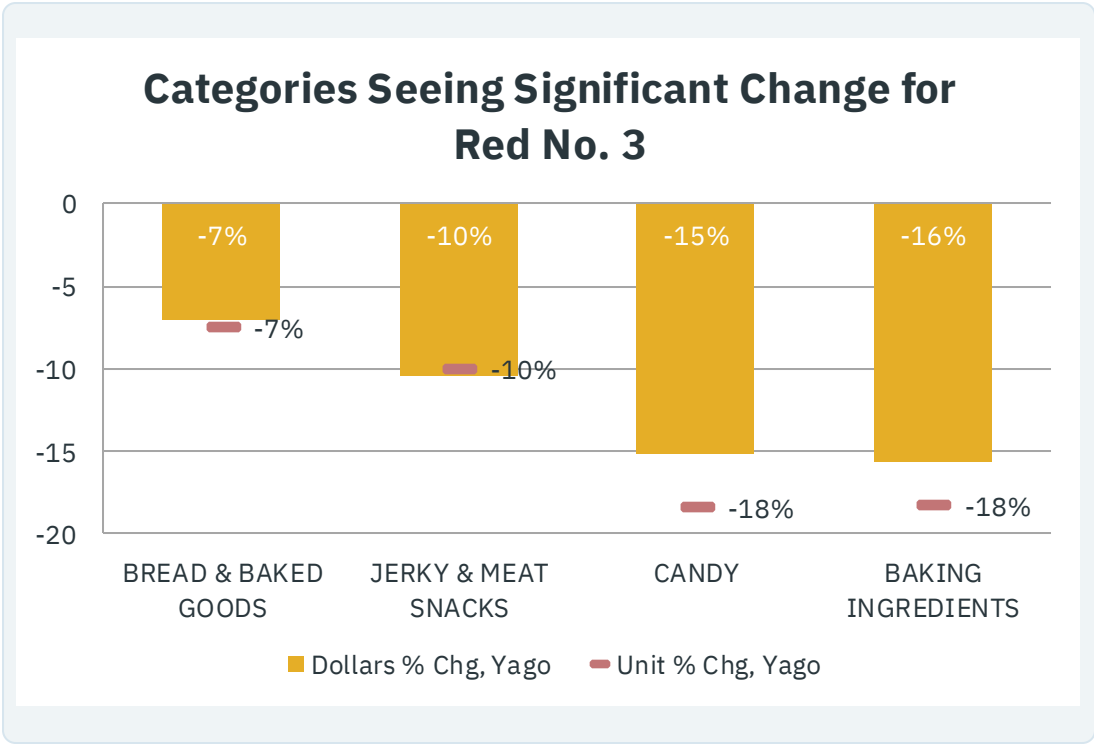
Artificial Colors

\$67b
Total Sales
52Wk

-4.9%
Dollars %
Change, Yago

-7.9%
Units % Change,
Yago

The growth decline is accelerating even faster in certain categories as shoppers become more aware of the health impacts of Artificial Colors, Synthetics Dyes, and their relationship with Ultra Processed Foods (UPFs).

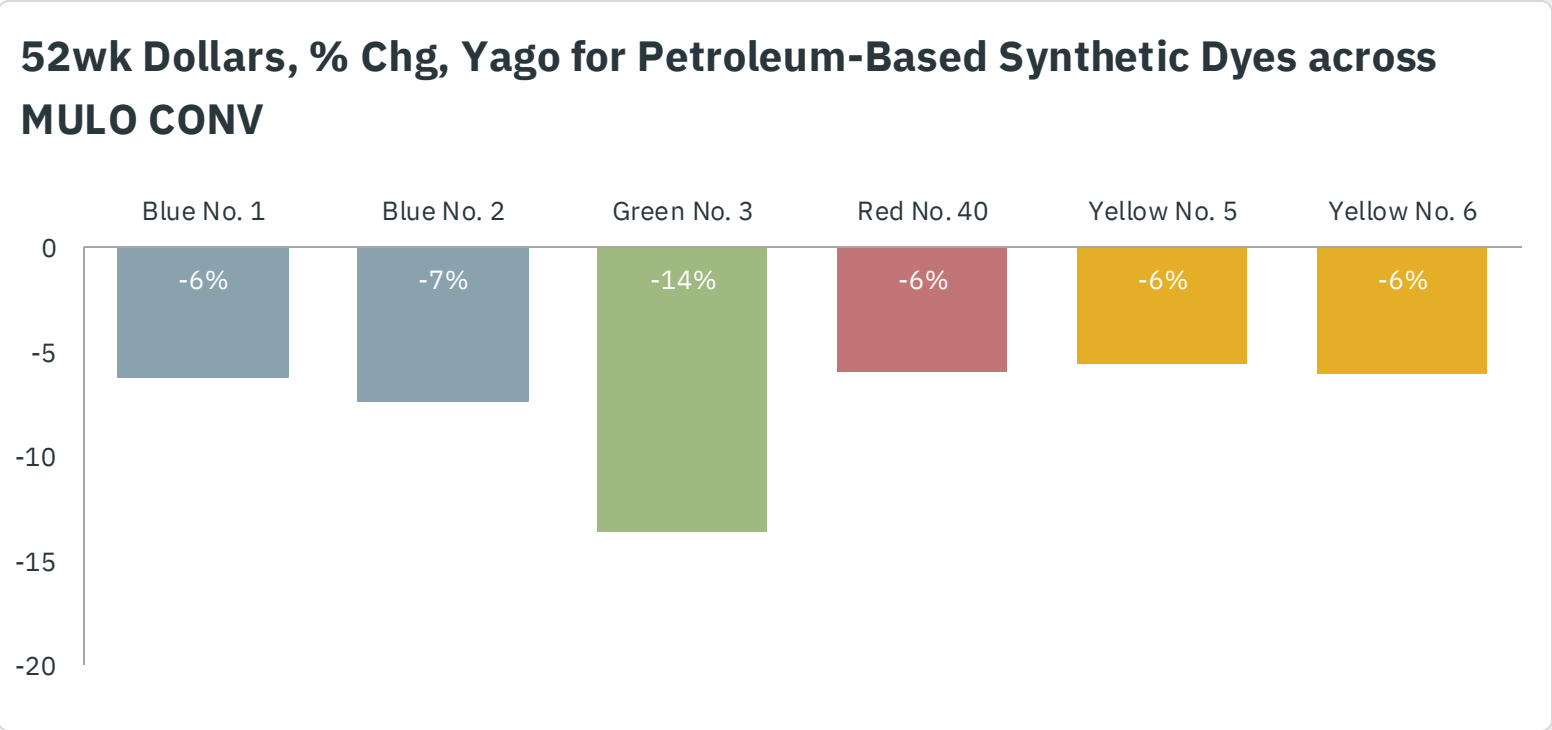




Shades of Change for Artificial Colors

While shoppers might be the most familiar with the FD&C Red No. 3 ban on the horizon, they’re already purchasing fewer products containing other petroleum-based synthetic colors.

This significant drop across Multi-Outlet and Convenience is indicative of the white-space opportunity and market readiness of the average shopper for more Better-For-You choices





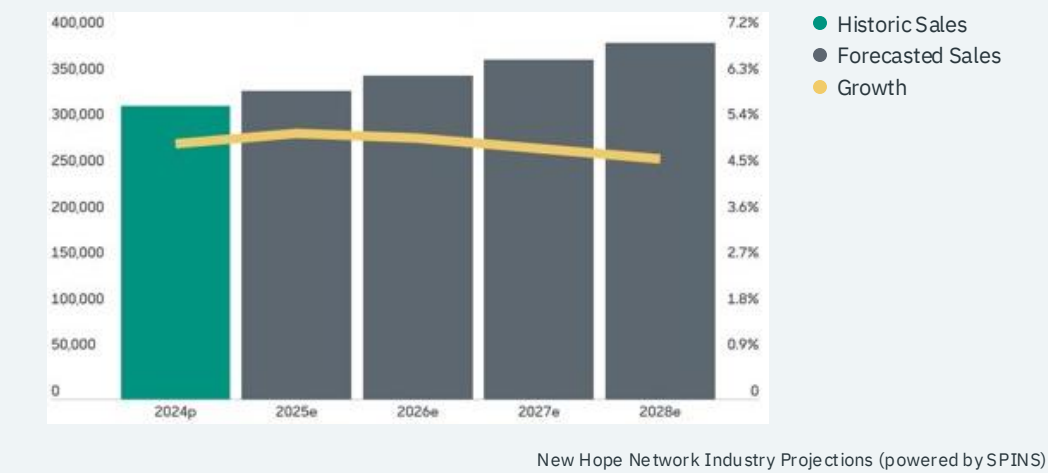
A Natural State of Mind

When looking for alternatives to artificial ingredients, shoppers increasingly turn to naturally positioned products. The natural channel continues to rise across categories, with strong projections into the future. Keeping up with this growing demand is vital as growth continues to push towards more clean-label and better-for-you options

CATEGORY	DOLLARS	\$, % CHG	UNITS, % CHG
Shelf Stable Baking Ing's	\$3.9B	+8.6%	+4.1%
Ref. Yogurt & PB Yogurt	\$9.6B	+7.5%	+5.1%
Shelf Stable Rice Cakes	\$396M	+6.6%	+2.4%
Snack Bites & Energy Gels	\$54.0M	+5.9%	+8.9%
Soda	\$34.2B	+5.2%	+0.2%
Milk	\$7.6B	+4.3%	+0.2%
Refrigerated Condiments	\$1.2B	+2.9%	+1.3%
Jerky & Meat Snacks	\$3.4B	+2.4%	-1.8%
Drink Mixes & Concentrates	\$313.6M	+2.1%	-3.6%
Fz Ice Cream & Novelties	\$11.4B	+0.0%	-0.2%

NPI sales hit nearly \$320B in 2024 with growth across virtually every department. Growth is expected at 5% per year hitting \$384B by 2028

Natural and organic product industry sales and growth, 2024p-2028e





Brands shine with a natural ethos

Shoppers aren’t just shifting away from artificial colors. Some of the largest disruptors and innovators over the past decade differentiated themselves with a steadfast ethos focused on a more comprehensive clean ingredient concept, unlocking the power of the clean label in categories from soda and candy to supplements and mac & cheese.



CATEGORY	Natural Brands % \$ Change, Yago	Total Category % \$ Change, Yago
SODA	+67.5%	+5.6%
SS MACARONI & CHEESE	+12.5%	+5.1%
PROTEIN SUPPS & MEAL REPLACEMENTS	+29.0%	+11.0%
PERFORMANCE NUTRITION	+32.2%	+18.5%

Our Team



Brittany Moore

Program Manager,
Product Intelligence



Jacob Knepper

Sr. Data Analyst, PI
Strategy & Solutions



Veronica Eckl

Data Analyst, Product
Intelligence R&D



THANK YOU

Reach out to growth@spins.com
with any questions
