

Environmental Health - Pre-Packed Foods Labelling Advice

The labelling of foods is set out by Regulation (EC) No.1169/2011 and is enforced in Scotland by The Food Information (Scotland) Regulations 2014 (as amended).

This information sheet is intended as a very basic guide for the labelling of pre-packed foods.

The following information must be displayed on the label of pre-packed food (further details below on each):

- Name of food
- Ingredients list
 - The quantity of certain ingredients (QUID)
- Allergen Identification
- Weight
- Durability Indication
- Storage conditions and/or Conditions of Use
- Name and Address of Food Business
- Country of Origin or Place of Provenance of a food (if required)
- Alcoholic strength (if required)
- Nutritional Information (unless exempt)

In addition to this information, there are exemptions to the above and there are certain layout principles that should be adhered to. These are noted at the end of this leaflet.

Name of Food

This must be the name of the food, a customary name or an appropriate description of the food (in the absence of a name or customary name).

Ingredients List

There are certain principles that need to be followed:

- The list requires to be headed/named as “Ingredients”;
- It must detail the ingredients used from the largest quantity to the smallest quantity;
- If a food is named in the name of the food, then the % content must be displayed. This is known as Quantitative Ingredient Declaration (QUID) and can be calculated at the mixing bowl stage. Although not a UK source, please see a worked example of QUID and further information at www.fsai.ie/faq/quid.html;
- Ingredients that make up less < 2% of the final product do not require to be labelled; and

- Compound ingredients require to have their own ingredients lists detailed in brackets after them in the ingredients list.

Allergens

Allergens require to be labelled and appropriately highlighted (i.e. underlined, **bold text**, *italic text* etc.). The allergens that require to be indicated are:

- Cereal containing gluten
- Crustaceans (i.e. crab, lobster etc.)
- Eggs
- Dairy (i.e. milk, butter, cheese etc.)
- Fish
- Shellfish (i.e. mussels, cockles, etc.)
- Soya
- Peanuts
- Nuts (i.e. walnuts, hazelnuts, pecans, etc.)
- Celery
- Sesame (seeds, oil, etc.)
- Sulphites/Sulphates
- Lupin
- Mustard (powder, paste, kernels/seeds, salad leaves etc.)

These must be what you have put into the food. Where you have a compound ingredient that has been made within a premise that handles allergens and its packaging has a “may contain” statement, then in certain cases it may be advisable to carry this information forward. Further information can be found at:

www.foodstandards.gov.scot/downloads/What_to_consider_when_labelling_foods.pdf

Weight

The net weight of the product requires to be displayed. This must in metric form i.e. g, kg, ml, litre, etc., though imperial (oz, lb, etc.) can also be displayed secondary to this. The “e” mark noted on packing is from the Weights and Measures legislation and indicates the minimum weight that the product will be (contents plus packaging).

Durability Indication

Most foods require to have an appropriate date mark applied. These are as follows:

- Use by
 - This should be used for perishable foods that would be unsafe to eat past a certain point; and

- It should be displayed as a “Use By” date and be in the format dd/mm/yy.
- Best Before
 - This is for all other foods (unless exempt);
 - For a product with a shelf-life of less than 3 months, the date must be indicated as a “Best Before” date and should be displayed in the format “dd/mm/yy”;
 - For a product with a shelf-life of between 3 and 18 months, this can be displayed as the previous point or may displayed as a “Best Before End” date, in which it must be displayed in the format “mm/yy”; and
 - For a product with a shelf-life of over 18 months, this can be displayed as a “Best Before End” date and can be displayed either in the format “mm/yy” or just “yyyy”.

Exemptions to durability marking can include (but are not limited to):

- Alcoholic drinks that are above 10% abv
- Cooking salt
- Vinegar
- Bakery goods
- Wine

Storage conditions and/or Conditions of Use

Appropriate conditions of storage should be noted (i.e. keep refrigerated) and conditions of use should also be noted (i.e. once open keep refrigerated). Any specific conditions of use must also be indicated i.e. details of how to cook/reheat/microwave setting (wattage)/times/standing times/stirring/etc. These are important in terms of food safety.

Name and Address of Food Business

This should be the head office of the food business. The full address should be detailed.

Where a home caterer does not want their personal address detailed, then a postcode and other means of contact (i.e. phone number, email address, website etc.) may be acceptable.

Country of Origin or Place of Provenance of a food (if required)

Where a product has a geographical protection (i.e. Parma Ham, Arbroath Smokies, etc.) then this can be detailed. Where a product is made can also be noted (i.e. Isle of Skye Tablet, etc.), but it should not be misleading to the general public.

Alcoholic strength (if required)

If an alcoholic beverage has an alcohol content of more than 1.2% then this requires to be labelled.

Nutritional Information

The following values require to be labelled:

- Energy
- Fat (monosaturates, polyunsaturates etc.)
- Carbohydrates
- Sugar
- Protein
- Fibre

The values must be displayed per 100g or 100ml. Values per portion can be displayed in addition to this.

There are exemptions depending on particular foods (i.e. yeast, chewing gum, gelatine etc.), and there is a specific exemption for small businesses:

- Food, including handcrafted food, directly supplied by the manufacturer, of small quantities, to the final consumer or to local retail.

Further information on Nutritional Labelling can be found at:

www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-and-industry/safety-and-regulation/labelling/nutrition-labelling-requirements

Specific Foods

In addition to the labelling detailed above, particular foods will have extra requirements under their own labelling regulations. Examples of this include (but are not limited to):

- Cocoa and chocolate products
- Jam
- Irradiated food
- Sweetener
- High caffeine products
- Added Water
- Fish
- Frozen meats and fish

The regulations for these can be found by searching for them at www.legislation.gov.uk

Label Layout and Particulars

The label writing must adhere to a particular size:

- Where the surface area of the packaging is larger than 80cm², the font size minimum is 1.2mm
- Where the surface area of the packaging is less than 80cm², the font size minimum is 0.9mm

Certain information of the label but also been seen in the same “field of vision” – this is where you should be able to pick a product up and see certain bits of information (or their location) without having to turn the product over. The information that requires to be in the same field of vision are:

- Name of the food
- Date indication
- Net weight of food
- Alcoholic strength

This leaflet is intended as a guide, to enable you to put the basic information needed on your labels. For further reading please see: www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-and-industry/safety-and-regulation/labelling

Should you require more information then please use the following details to contact the

EH Service

Phone: 01349 886606

Email: envhealth@highland.gov.uk