



Labelling Requirements for Packaged Foods

In most circumstances foods for retail sale are required to be labelled in accordance with the Australian New Zealand Food Standards Code. Labelling is essential to ensure consumers have adequate information in relation to food to enable them to make informed choices.

The following is a summary only of the detailed labelling requirements outlined in the Code. Copies of the Code can be obtained from the Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ) website at: <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/code/Pages/default.aspx>

All packaged foods must specify the following:

- 1 **The name of the food** – The food must be labelled with an accurate name or description that indicates the true nature of the food. Names or descriptions should not mislead consumers.
- 2 **Premises and lot identification** – Labels must include information identifying the premises where the food was packed or prepared and the lot (batch). This requirement is usually satisfied if the product is properly date marked and shows the business address of the manufacturer or packer.
- 3 **Name and business address** - The name and business address (street number and street name) of the manufacturer, packer, vendor or importer of the food must be listed on the label. A post office box or similar address is not sufficient.
- 4 **Mandatory warning and advisory statements and declarations** – the main foods, food ingredients or components of an ingredient that can cause adverse reactions in some people (such as peanuts and other nuts, seafood, fish, milk, gluten, eggs and soybeans) must be declared on the label. This is usually done in the ingredient list.

There must also be an *advisory statement* on the label of products that contain unpasteurised milk, aspartame, quinine, kola drinks with added caffeine, guarana and phytosterol esters. *Warning statements* are required where people may be unaware of a severe health risk posed by an allergen such as bee pollen and royal jelly.

- 5 **Labelling of ingredients** – Ingredients, compound ingredients and additives must be listed from greatest to smallest by ingoing weight including added water. A compound ingredient means an ingredient of a food that is itself made up of two or more ingredients, e.g. spaghetti, which is made up of flour, egg and water. Food additives must be declared, either by class name and food additive number, e.g. colour (102), or by class name followed by the full name of the additive, e.g. colour (Tartrazine).

Meander Valley Council – Labelling Requirements for Packaged Foods

- 6 **Date marking** – Packaged food with a shelf life of less than two years must show a **‘best-before’** date. A food marked with a **‘best-before’** date can be sold after that date has expired, however the food may have lost quality and some nutritional value. Foods that should not be consumed after a certain date for health and safety reasons must have a **‘use-by’** date. Foods labelled **‘use-by’** cannot be sold after the date has expired. Bread with a shelf life of less than seven days can be labelled with a **‘baked on’** date.
- 7 **Health and safety advice** – When specific storage conditions are required in order for a product to keep its ‘use-by’ or ‘best-before’ date, manufacturers must include this information on the label, e.g. Refrigerate after opening.
- 8 **Nutritional information panel** – Food labels must contain a nutritional information panel listing the energy, protein, total fat, saturated fat, carbohydrate, sugars and sodium content of the food. A nutritional information panel must be in the prescribed format and must include the number of servings of the food in the packaged as well as the average quantity of the food in the serving size. A nutritional panel calculator to assist with calculating information for panels can be found at <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/industry/npc/Pages/Nutrition-Panel-Calculator-introduction.aspx> Additional nutrition labelling requirements apply if a specific nutrition claim is made, e.g. high in calcium. Provided no nutritional claims are made, the following foods do not require a nutritional information panel: small packages, herbs, spices, vinegar, salt, gelatine, tea, coffee, foods sold unpackaged or foods made and packaged at the point of sale (e.g. sandwiches and rolls).
- 9 **Percentage labelling** – Packaged foods which contain characterising ingredients or components must be declared on the label as a percentage of the final food. An ingredient or component is a characterising food is usually mentioned in the name of the food e.g. strawberry yoghurt.
- 10 **Country of origin** – The label must include a statement that identifies the country in which the food was made or produced or where the ingredients originated. If some ingredients do not originate from that country, a statement indicating that the food is made from imported or local and imported ingredients must be included.
- 11 **Legibility and print size** – Labels must be legible, in English, and in prominent type distinct from the background. A type size of 3mm or 1.5mm on small packages is required for warning statements.

LABELLING EXAMPLE

MEAT PIE

700g

Ingredients: Wheat Flour, Meat (Minimum 25%), Water, Animal and Vegetable Fat, Onion Powder, Hydrolysed Vegetable Protein, Egg, Thickener (410), Sugar, Mineral Salt (450), Colour (150a), Herbs, Preservative (223).

ALLERGY ADVICE: THIS PRODUCT CONTAINS GLUTEN.

FINEFOODIES TASMANIA
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Nutritional Information		
Servings Per Package – 4		
Serving Size – 175g		
	Quantity per 175g Serving	Quantity per 100g
Energy	1615kJ	923kJ
Protein	25.9g	14.8g
Fat-Total	20.6g	11.8g
-saturated	10.0g	5.76g
Carbohydrate	23.6g	13.5g
-sugars	1.2g	0.7g
Sodium	471mg	269mg

BEST BEFORE: 31 MAR 10
Store at or below -18°C