

# Food Labelling, Getting it Right?

The Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) Food Standards Code outlines your food labelling and information requirements (Chapter 1 of the Code) that are relevant to all foods and sets out which requirements apply in different situations. The Code also includes specific labelling and information requirements that apply to certain food products only (Chapter 2 of the Code).

## When do I need to label my product?

All food products are required to be labelled **unless** the product is:

- Unpackaged
- Sold from premises where the product is made and packaged
- Packaged in the presence of the customer
- Cut fruit or vegetables
- Sold at a fundraising event

## What am I required to list on my label?

**Food identification.** Labelling of foods must include the name of the food, the lot identification of the food and the name and business address of the supplier of the food. Figure 1 (3, 9)

**Nutritional information panel.** Nutritional information must include the average amount of energy, protein, fat, saturated fat, carbohydrates, sugar and sodium in a serve of food or per 100g. If a nutritional content or health claim is being made about a particular nutrient or substance in the food, the amount must also be shown. Figure 1 (1). FSANZ's Nutrition Panel Calculator (NPC) helps food manufacturers calculate the average nutrient content of their food products and prepare a nutrition information panel.

**Ingredients list.** Ingredients must be listed in descending order (by ingoing weight). Food must show the percentage of key or characterizing ingredients/components e.g. chocolate chip biscuits which contain 42% chocolate. Figure 1 (2,6)

**Allergen information.** The following ingredients must be declared or listed if present in the food: **peanuts, tree nuts, crustacea, fish, milk, eggs, sesame, soy, wheat and lupin**. Sulphites (if added at 10mg or more per kg of food) and cereals containing gluten (wheat, oats, barley, rye and spelt) also are required to be declared. Figure 1 (4)

**Date marking.** Food that is required to be consumed before a certain date for safety reasons must be labelled with a use by date. A best before date is required for foods which have a shelf life of less than two years. Figure 1 (5)

**Food additives.** Food additives must be noted in the ingredient list by their class (thickener/ colour) followed by the food additive name or number. Figure 1 (8)

**Directions for use and storage.** Where specific storage conditions are required to ensure the safety of the food, these conditions must be included on the label (e.g. ice-cream – Store below -18degrees). Figure 1 (9)

**Legibility.** All labels must be truthful, in English and prominent. Figure 1

**Declarations.** A food product that contains 1.15% alcohol by volume must include a statement about the alcohol content. This does not apply to products that contain less than 0.5% alcohol by volume.

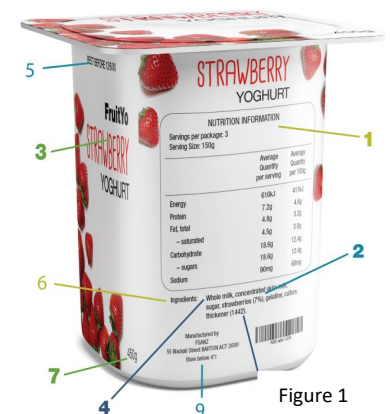


Figure 1



## Health Claims. What are they and can I make them?

Health claims are claims which state, suggest or imply that a food or property of a food has or may have a health effect. Claims cannot be therapeutic in nature, and must not refer to prevention, diagnosis, cure or alleviation of a disease, disorder or condition. The following are two types of permitted health claims:

- High level health claims refer to a nutrient or substance in a food and its relationship to a serious disease or to a biomarker of a serious disease.
- General level health claims refer to a nutrient or substance in a food, or the food itself and its effect on health. A list of approved general level claims can be found [here](#).

## Best Before vs USE BY date. Is there a difference?

**Yes!** A food marked with a “Best Before” date can be sold past the date listed provided it is still safe for consumption. Best Before dates generally refer to food quality. Items with Best Before dates include shelf stable items such as jams, confectionary and canned foods. A USE BY date is different from a Best Before date. If a manufacturer believes that for food safety reasons a food should not be consumed past a certain date a USE BY date mark is required. Foods Labelled with “USE BY” must not be sold past the date displayed.

## Why do I have to put my business address on my label?

Contact details such as manufacturer address and phone numbers are required in the case of a food recall. In the event that a consumer was to find a problem with a product they would be able to contact your business to alert you. A full business address is required to be placed on a label, including the street number, street name, town or suburb and state. A post office box, email address or similar is not sufficient.

## Country of origin

Country of origin labelling requirements applies to most food offered for retail sale in Australia if it is:

- in a package
- unpackaged seafood, particular meats, fruit and vegetables, nuts, spices, herbs, fungi, legumes, seeds or a mix of these foods, or
- fresh fruit and vegetables in transparent packaging.

Country of origin labelling will feature a kangaroo in a triangle logo to help you quickly identify that the food is of Australian origin and/or a bar chart and text identifying the proportion of Australian content in the food (if any). These foods can only claim to be **produced** or **grown** in Australia if they contain 100 per cent Australian ingredients.



### Accessibility

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If English is not your first language and you need the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS), please call 13 14 50.

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Note: This information is a general summary and cannot cover all situations. Food businesses are required to comply with all of the provisions of the Food Standards Code and the *Food Act 2001 (ACT)*