

# Label Buster

A guide to the labelling requirements of the Food Standards Code



## **Label Buster—A guide to the labelling requirements of the Food Standards Code**

Published by the State of Queensland (Queensland Health), March 2018



This document is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Australia licence. To view a copy of this licence, visit [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/au](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/au)

© State of Queensland (Queensland Health) **2018**

You are free to copy, communicate and adapt the work, as long as you attribute the State of Queensland (Queensland Health).

For more information contact:

Food Safety Standards and Regulation, Health Protection Branch, Department of Health, PO Box 2368, Fortitude Valley BC QLD 4006, email [foodsafety@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:foodsafety@health.qld.gov.au) , phone (07)3328 9310.

An electronic version of this document is available at [www.health.qld.gov.au](http://www.health.qld.gov.au).

### **Disclaimer:**

The content presented in this publication is distributed by the Queensland Government as an information source only. The State of Queensland makes no statements, representations or warranties about the accuracy, completeness or reliability of any information contained in this publication. The State of Queensland disclaims all responsibility and all liability (including without limitation for liability in negligence) for all expenses, losses, damages and costs you might incur as a result of the information being inaccurate or incomplete in any way, and for any reason reliance was placed on such information.

# Contents

Introduction.....	v
Food for retail sale.....	1
Exemptions from labelling requirements [1.2.1–6].....	1
Food for catering purposes.....	2
Exemptions from labelling requirements [1.2.1–12].....	2
Sale of other food (wholesale) [1.2.1–20].....	4
Labelling and other information requirements .....	4
Food identification [1.2.2].....	4
Name of the food .....	4
Lot identification [1.2.2–3].....	5
Name and business address .....	5
Vending machines .....	5
Mandatory warning and advisory statements and declarations .....	5
Mandatory warning statements [1.2.3–3] .....	5
Mandatory advisory statements [1.2.3–2] .....	6
Mandatory declarations [1.2.3–4].....	8
Statement of ingredients [1.2.4] .....	8
Common, descriptive or generic food names .....	8
Order of ingredients .....	10
Compound ingredients.....	10
Alternative ingredients .....	10
Food additives [1.2.4–7, schedule 7 & 8] .....	10
Date marking [1.2.5] .....	10
Form of date mark .....	10
‘Use By’ dates.....	11
‘Best Before’ dates.....	11
‘Baked On’ and ‘Baked For’ dates.....	11
Directions for use and storage [1.2.6] .....	11
Nutrition, health and related claims [1.2.7] .....	12
Health claims .....	12
Nutrition content claims .....	12
Endorsements .....	13
Nutrition information panel [1.2.8] .....	14
Characterising ingredients and components [1.2.10] .....	15
Country of origin requirements .....	15
Foods requiring pre-market clearance.....	16
Novel foods [1.5.1].....	16
Food produced using gene technology [1.5.2] .....	16
Irradiation of food [1.5.3].....	16
Presentation of food labels .....	16
Legibility [1.2.1–24].....	16
Print size [1.2.1–25].....	16
False/misleading claims.....	17
Altering a label [1.2.1–22] .....	17

Further Information.....	17
Appendices.....	18
Appendix 1–Example label .....	18
Appendix 2–Labelling checklist.....	19
Definitions.....	21

## Tables

Table 1	Additional labelling requirements for certain foods.....	3
Table 2	Substances requiring advisory statements [Standard 1.2.3–2].....	6
Table 3	Advisory statements for certain foods [Schedule 9 of the Code] .....	7
Table 4	Generic food names [Schedule 10 of the Code].....	9

## Introduction

This is a guide to the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code* (the Code) labelling standards for food sold in, or imported into, Australia and New Zealand. The Code sets out standards for the labelling of all food, and significant penalties apply in Queensland under the *Food Act 2006* (the Act), for non-compliance with the Code.

Chapter 1 of the Code contains the main labelling provisions and information that must be provided for foods, and the requirements for how this information must be presented. Chapter 2 of the Code includes additional labelling and information requirements that apply to specified foods. A reference number within square brackets, for example [1.3.1], in this guide, refers to the relevant standard in the Code.

Label Buster is current as of March 2018 and shows information up to and including amendment number 177 of the Code. It is recommended that you refer to the most current version of the Code for full details and note any changes.

## Food for retail sale

Food for retail sale is sale direct to the consumers. All food for retail sale (other than the exemptions listed below) must be fully labelled with the information set out in this guide.

### Exemptions from labelling requirements [1.2.1–6]

Food for retail sale is exempt from certain labelling requirements where the food is:

- not in a package
- made and packaged on the premises from where it is sold
- packaged in the presence of the purchaser
- whole or cut fresh fruit and vegetables (other than seed sprouts or similar products) in a package that does not obscure their nature or quality
- delivered packaged and ready for consumption at the express order of the purchaser (e.g. take away pizza), except when the food is sold from a vending machine
- sold at a fund raising event
- displayed in an assisted service display cabinet.

Food for retail sale that is exempt from the full labelling requirements, as outlined above, must still provide the name of the food and certain other information in accordance with Standard 1.2.1 – 9. Further information also needs to be displayed for certain foods, **Table 1** provides details of what information is required in these situations.

If a food that requires a label has more than one layer of packaging, only one label is required (on the outer package). However, if the food is sold in individual portion packs not designed for individual sale, with a package surface area greater than 30cm<sup>2</sup>, the individual portion pack must also be labelled with certain warning statements and declarations in accordance with the Code (see **Mandatory warning and advisory statements and declarations**).

Any required information for food in the exemption categories must accompany or be displayed with the food, declared to the purchaser, or be provided to the purchaser upon request.

## Food for catering purposes

Food for catering purposes is food for use in restaurants, canteens, schools, caterers or self-catering institutions, where food is offered for immediate consumption. All food for catering purposes (other than the exemptions listed below) must be fully labelled with the information set out in this guide.

### Exemptions from labelling requirements [1.2.1–12]

For food required to bear a label that is in more than one layer of packaging, the labelling information does not need to be on the outer package if the name of the food and lot identification are on the outer package, and the name and address of the supplier is either:

- in a label on the outer package; or
- in documentation accompanying the food.

Food for sale is not required to bear a label with the information in this guide, if the food is:

- not in a package; or
- whole or cut fresh fruit and vegetables in packages that do not obscure their nature or quality (does not include seed sprouts or similar products).

For food that is not required to bear a label, the labelling information set out in this guide must still be provided to the caterer with the food. Further information may also need to be provided for certain foods, as outlined in **table 1**.

**Table 1 Additional labelling requirements for certain foods**

If the food product:	Labelling requirement
Contains any of the foods detailed in table 2 or table 3	Mandatory advisory statements and declarations for the corresponding product (explained in this guide and Standard 1.2.3)
Is royal jelly or contains royal jelly as an ingredient	Mandatory warning statement <i>'This product contains royal jelly which has been reported to cause severe allergic reactions and in rare cases, fatalities, especially in asthma and allergy sufferers'</i> (see Standard 1.2.3)
Is produced using gene technology	The statement <i>'genetically modified'</i> where certain criteria are met and under the conditions stated in Standard 1.5.2
Makes nutrition claims such as 'low fat', 'high fibre' or 'source of calcium'	Nutrition information panel (see Standard 1.2.8 and Schedule 12)
Contains a food or ingredient that has been irradiated	A statement about the irradiated food that meets the criteria stated in Standard 1.5.3
Makes a nutrition, health or related claim	Certain declarations (see Standard 1.2.7)
Contains a characterising ingredient(s) or component(s) e.g. strawberry jam, and is unpackaged or packaged on the premises where it is sold	The proportion of that ingredient(s) which must be calculated in accordance with Standard 1.2.10
Is unpackaged whole, cut or processed fruit or vegetables, fish or fish products (includes seafood), certain meat or meat products, or a mix of these foods	Country of origin labelling (see Standard 1.2.11)
Contains offal (kidney, brain etc.)	Declaration of the presence of offal (see Standard 2.2.1)
Makes a claim relating to the fat content of meat product e.g. 'lean meat'	Statement of the percentage of fat (see Standard 2.2.1)
Contains raw meat joined or formed into the semblance of a cut of meat	A declaration and cooking instructions (see Standard 2.2.1)
Contains unpackaged fermented comminuted manufactured meat and/or fermented comminuted meat products	Specific words describing the type of meat (see Standard 2.2.1)
Contains raw fish joined or formed into the semblance of a cut or fillet of fish	A declaration and cooking instructions (see Standard 2.2.3)
Contains kava	Specific warning statements (see Standard 2.6.3)
Is or contains edible oils	A process declaration (see Standard 2.4.1)
Is fruit or vegetable juice blends	The name and percentage of the juice in the blend (see Standard 2.6.1)
Is packaged water and electrolyte drinks	Certain information as specified in Standard 2.6.2
Is infant formula or food for infants	Required statements and certain labelling requirements (see Standards 2.9.1 and 2.9.2)
Is a formulated meal replacement or supplementary food	Required statement and certain labelling requirements (see Standard 2.9.3)
Is a formulated supplementary sports food	Required statement and certain labelling requirements (see Standard 2.9.4)
Is a reduced sodium salt mixture or salt substitute	Required information (see Standard 2.10.2)
Is a formulated caffeinated beverage	Declarations and advisory statements (see Standard 2.6.4)
Is a special purpose food or amino acid modified food	Required information (see Standard 2.9.6)
Contains a vitamin or mineral that has been used as a nutritive substances	Certain restrictions on claims that can be made (see Standard 1.3.2)
Contains alcohol	Statements about alcohol content are regulated (see Standard 2.7.1)



## Sale of other food (wholesale) [1.2.1–20]

Packaged food that is not for retail sale, catering purposes or intra company transfer (i.e. food for wholesale) is required to bear a label containing the **Food identification** information below.

The label may be:

- on the package; or
- if there is more than one layer of packaging, on the outer package; or
- if the food is in a transportation outer, clearly discernible through the transportation outer.

Sale of other food (wholesale) that is unpackaged is not required to bear a label.

However, the purchaser of the food may request further information from the supplier to enable them to comply with the labelling and compositional requirements of the Code.

## Labelling and other information requirements

### Food identification [1.2.2]

#### Name of the food

Food must be labelled with a name or description that indicates the true nature of the food and include any additional words required by the Code. Where the Code specifically states the name of a food is a 'prescribed name' then that name must appear on the label.

The name may also include a process that the food has undergone

Prescribed names are [1.2.2–2]:

- fermented processed meat—not heat treated [2.2.1]
- fermented processed meat—heat treated [2.2.1]
- fermented processed meat—cooked [2.2.1]
- fermented manufactured meat—not heat treated [2.2.1]
- fermented manufactured meat—heat treated [2.2.1]
- fermented manufactured meat—cooked [2.2.1]
- follow-on formula [2.9.1]
- formulated meal replacement [2.9.3]
- formulated supplementary food [2.9.3]
- formulated supplementary food for young children [2.9.3]
- formulated supplementary sports food [2.9.4]
- honey [2.8.2]
- infant formula [2.9.1].

### Examples:

- fruit and nut muesli
- English muffin
- roast chicken roll
- smoked salmon

### Lot identification [1.2.2–3]

The lot identification means a number or other information that identifies the premises where the food was prepared or packed and the lot that the food is part of. No specific form of words is required and this requirement is usually satisfied if the product is properly date marked and shows the name and business address of the manufacturer or packer. When this is not sufficient, additional information that is part of a system devised by the manufacturer or packer must be used [1.2.2].

Foods exempt from bearing lot identification, other than those exempt from the labelling provisions, include individual portions of ice cream or ice confection and food in small packages where the bulk package or the bulk container in which the food is stored or displayed for sale, includes lot identification.

### Name and business address

For food recall and contact purposes, food labels must include the name and business address in Australia or New Zealand, of the supplier (manufacturer, packer, vendor or importer) of the food. A business address is the street address, or a description of the location, of the premises where the business is being operated. A post office box or similar postal address is not sufficient.

### Vending machines

For food sold from a vending machine, it is an additional requirement that labels displayed in or on the vending machine, clearly state the name and business address of the supplier of the vending machine.

## Mandatory warning and advisory statements and declarations

Labels must bear warning and advisory statements and declarations as prescribed in the Code, where necessary.

### Mandatory warning statements [1.2.3–3]

Royal jelly or food containing royal jelly must be labelled with a specific warning statement as set out in the Code. For products that are exempt from full labelling, the warning statement must be displayed on or in connection with the display of the food.

The required statement is:

*'This product contains royal jelly which has been reported to cause severe allergic reactions and in rare cases, fatalities, especially in asthma and allergy sufferers'.*

## Mandatory advisory statements [1.2.3–2]

Mandatory advisory statements, as set out in **table 2** and **table 3**, must appear on the label of a food. For food that is not required to bear a label, this statement may either accompany or be displayed with the food, or be provided to the purchaser on request.

An advisory statement to the effect that ‘excessive consumption of the food may have a laxative effect’, is required for foods containing any substances at the levels stated in **table 2** below.

**Table 2** Substances requiring advisory statements [Standard 1.2.3–2]

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
A substance listed below, either singularly or in a combination with any of the following, at a level at or in excess of <b>10g/100g</b> .	A substance listed below, either singularly or in a combination with any of the following, at a level at or in excess of <b>25g/100g</b> .	One or more substance listed in column 1 in combination with one or more of the substances listed in column 2, at a level at or in excess of <b>10g/100g</b> .
Lactitol	Erythritol	
Maltitol	Isomalt	
Maltitol syrup	Polydextrose	
Mannitol	Sorbitol	
Xylitol		

**Table 3** over details the advisory statements required for certain foods.

**Table 3 Advisory statements for certain foods [Schedule 9 of the Code]**

Food product	Advisory Statement required
Bee pollen or a food containing bee pollen as an ingredient.	Statement to the effect that ‘the product contains bee pollen which can cause severe allergic reactions’.
Cereal-based beverages that contain less than 3% m/m protein.	
Evaporated or dried products made from cereals that, when reconstituted as a beverage according to directions for direct consumptions, contain less than 3% m/m protein.	Statement to the effect that ‘the product is not suitable as a complete milk replacement for children under the age of 5 years’.
Cereal-based beverages that contain no less than 3% m/m protein and no more than 2.5% m/m fat.	
Evaporated or dried products made from cereals that, when reconstituted as a beverage according to directions for direct consumption, contains no less than 3% m/m protein and no more than 2.5% m/m fat.	Statement to the effect that ‘the product is not suitable as a complete milk replacement for children under the age of 2 years’.
Milk, or an analogue beverage made from soy, that contains no more than 2.5% m/m fat.	
Evaporated milks, dried milks or equivalent products made from soy, that when reconstituted as a beverage according to directions for direct consumption, contain no more than 2.5% m/m fat.	
Food containing aspartame or aspartame-acesulphame salt.	Statement to the effect that ‘the food contains phenylalanine’.
Food containing quinine.	Statement to the effect that ‘the food contains quinine’.
Food containing guarana or extracts of guarana.	Statement to the effect that ‘the food contains caffeine’.
Foods containing added phytosterols, phytostanols or their esters.	Statements to the effect that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ when consuming the product, it should be consumed as part of a healthy diet; and</li> <li>■ the product may not be suitable for children under the age of 5 years and pregnant or lactating women; and</li> <li>■ plant sterols do not provide additional benefits when consumed in excess of 3 grams per day.</li> </ul>
Cola beverages that contain added caffeine, or a food containing a cola beverage that also contains added caffeine as an ingredient.	Statement to the effect that ‘the product contains caffeine’.
Propolis or food containing propolis as an ingredient.	Statement to the effect that ‘the product contains propolis which can cause severe allergic reactions’.
Unpasteurised egg products.	Statement to the effect that ‘the product is unpasteurised’.
Unpasteurised milk and unpasteurised liquid milk products.	Statement to the effect that ‘the product has not been pasteurised’.

## Mandatory declarations [1.2.3–4]

Mandatory declarations of the presence of the following substances in food must be declared on a label.

- added sulphites in concentrations of 10mg/kg or more
- cereals containing gluten and their products, namely, wheat, rye, barley, oats and spelt and their hybridised strains other than:
  - ▶ where these substances are present in beer and spirits; or
  - ▶ glucose syrups that are made from wheat starch and that:
    - have been subject to a refining process that has removed gluten protein content to the lowest level that is reasonably achievable; and
    - have a gluten protein content that does not exceed 20mg/kg
  - ▶ alcohol distilled from wheat
- crustacea and their products
- egg and egg products
- fish and fish products, except for isinglass derived from swim bladders and used as a clarifying agent in beer or wine
- milk and milk products, other than alcohol distilled from whey
- peanuts
- soybeans other than:
  - ▶ soybean oil that has been degummed, neutralised, bleached and deodorised; or
  - ▶ soybean derivatives that are a tocopherol or a phytosterol
- sesame seeds
- tree nuts and their products (does not include coconut)
- lupin.

For food not required to bear a label, the declaration may either accompany or be displayed with the food, or provided to the purchaser on request.

## Statement of ingredients [1.2.4]

Generally, a food label must include a statement of ingredients (ingredient includes additives). However, certain foods and ingredients are exempt from this requirement. Standard 1.2.4 details these exemptions.

### Common, descriptive or generic food names

The statement of ingredients must identify each ingredient, using either the common name, a name that describes the true nature of the ingredient or a generic name specified in the Code. The following generic names of foods can be used without any specific conditions; cheese, cocoa butter, crystallised fruit, fruit, gum bases, herbs, meat, milk protein, poultry meat, spices and vegetables.

#### Example:

The term 'fruit' can be used in place of bananas or oranges.

In the case of offal; brain, heart, kidney, liver, tongue or tripe must be identified as offal or by the specific name of the type of offal. Any other type of offal must be identified by the specific name of the type of offal.

However, the following generic names may only be used under specific conditions, as detailed in **table 4**.

**Table 4 Generic food names [Schedule 10 of the Code]**

Generic name	Condition for use
Cereals	If the cereal is wheat, rye, barley, oats or spelt, or a hybridised strain of one of those cereals, the specific name of the cereal must be declared.
Fats or oils	(a) The statement of ingredients must declare: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) whether the source is animal or vegetable; and</li> <li>(ii) if the source of oil is peanut or sesame—the specific source name; and</li> <li>(iii) if the source of oil is soybeans and the oil has not been degummed, neutralised, bleached and deodorised—the specific source name; and</li> <li>(iv) if the food is a dairy product, including ice cream—the specific source of animal fats or oils</li> </ul> (b) This generic name must not be used for diacylglycerol oil.
Fish	If crustacea, the specific name of the crustacea must be declared.
Milk solids	May be used to describe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) milk powder, skim milk powder or dried milk products; or</li> <li>(b) any 2 or more of the following ingredients:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) whey</li> <li>(ii) whey powder</li> <li>(iii) whey proteins</li> <li>(iv) lactose</li> <li>(v) caseinates</li> <li>(vi) milk proteins</li> <li>(vii) milk fat.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Nuts	The specific name of the nut must be declared.
Starch	(a) If the source of the starch is wheat, rye, barley, oats or spelt, or hybridised strains of those cereals—the specific name of the cereal must be declared. (b) The name 'starch' may be used for any unmodified starch or any starch which has been modified by either physical means or enzymes.
Sugar	(a) The name 'sugar' may be used to describe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) white sugar; or</li> <li>(ii) white refined sugar; or</li> <li>(iii) caster sugar or castor sugar; or</li> <li>(iv) loaf sugar or cube sugar; or</li> <li>(v) icing sugar; or</li> <li>(vi) coffee sugar; or</li> <li>(vii) coffee crystals; or</li> <li>(viii) raw sugar.</li> </ul> (b) The name 'sugars' must not be used in a statement of ingredients.

The ingredient name may also need further description to ensure that the consumer is not misled about the nature of an ingredient, for example, cheese powder or dried vegetables.

## Order of ingredients

All ingredients must be listed in descending order of ingoing weight. This means that the ingredient present in the greatest amount is listed first and so on. For food that is intended to be reconstituted, the ingredients may be listed in descending order of their weight in the reconstituted food. In this instance, it must be made clear on the label.

For water and other evaporative ingredients, the ingoing weight must be calculated in a certain way. This is detailed in standard 1.2.4–5 of the Code.

## Compound ingredients

A compound ingredient is an ingredient that contains two or more ingredients. If a food contains compound ingredients which contributes 5% or more to the final food, then all the foods and additives in that compound ingredient must be declared, in brackets, in the statement of ingredients. If the compound ingredient contributes less than 5% to the final food, then only additives performing a technological function or substances listed in **Mandatory declarations**, must be declared.

### Example:

The statement of ingredients for canned spaghetti might read 'spaghetti (flour, egg, water), sugar, water'.

## Alternative ingredients

Where from time to time, a food ingredient or additive is replaced with another food or additive that serves the same function, both can be listed, provided it is clear that a substitute or alternative ingredient is being declared.

### Example:

The statement of ingredients may read 'safflower or sunflower oil' as alternative ingredients depending on availability.

## Food additives [1.2.4–7, schedule 7 and 8]

In the case of food additives, generally the additive name must be declared in the ingredient list, in the following format:

- the class name followed by the food additive number e.g. colour (102); or
- the class name followed by the full name of the additive e.g. colour (Tartrazine).

However, there are exceptions to this format for certain substances which are explained within standard 1.2.4.

## Date marking [1.2.5]

Generally, all packaged food with a shelf life of 2 years or less must show a date mark, except for individual portions of ice cream or ice confection. Products with a shelf life of 2 years or more are not required under the Code, to show a date mark.

## Form of date mark

Foods with a shelf life of 3 months or less must display a date mark that shows at least the day and month.

**Example:** 3 12 or 3 Dec or 3 12 18 or 3 Dec 17 or Dec 3 2018

Foods with a shelf life longer than 3 months must show at least the month and year.

**Example:** 12 18 or Dec 18 or 3 12 18 or 3 Dec 18

Date marks must be expressed in numerical form, except the month, which may be expressed in letters. It must be clear which number is the day, month and year. The label on a package of food must not include any other date marking system.

### ‘Use By’ dates

If a manufacturer or packer believes that for health and safety reasons a food should not be consumed after a certain date, the 'Use By' form of date mark must be used and in this format. Foods labelled 'Use By' cannot be sold after that date has expired.

### ‘Best Before’ dates

A best before date must be marked with the words 'Best Before'. It refers to the last date when a food can be expected to retain its original quality (e.g. colour, taste, texture, flavour). A food marked with a 'Best Before' date may still be perfectly safe to eat past this date, but its quality may have diminished. Foods may be sold past their 'Best Before' date provided the food is not spoiled and complies with any other applicable legislation.

### ‘Baked On’ and ‘Baked For’ dates

For bread with a shelf life of less than 7 days, the 'Best Before' date mark may be replaced by a date mark in the form of one of the following:

- ‘Baked For’ or ‘Bkd For’ date, which means:
  - a) if the time when the bread was baked is before midday—the baked-on date; or
  - b) if the time when the bread was baked is after midday—the day after the baked-on date.
- ‘Baked On’ or ‘Bkd On’ date, which means the date when the bread was baked.

For more information about the labelling of bread, see the Queensland Health publication *Bread and Bakery Products*.

## Directions for use and storage [1.2.6]

For food required to bear a label, information relating to any use or storage conditions required to ensure that food will keep until the ‘Use By date’ or ‘Best Before date’, is required on the label.

All food (whether required to bear a label or not) must include directions for the use or storage of the food, if those directions are required for health or safety reasons.

### Examples:

- Milk—‘Store below 4°C’.
- Frozen lasagne—‘Cook thoroughly before eating’.



Specific statements are required as follows, if the food is or contains:

- raw bamboo shoots—a statement indicating that bamboo shoots should be fully cooked before being consumed
- raw sweet cassava—a statement indicating that sweet cassava should be peeled and fully cooked before being consumed.

## Nutrition, health and related claims [1.2.7]

Nutrition, health and related claims are voluntary statements made by food businesses on labels and in advertising about the content of certain nutrients or substances in a food, or the relationship between food and health.

This allows food businesses to make a range of general level and high level health claims and nutrition content claims provided certain requirements are met.

However, health claims and nutrition content claims must not be made about:

- kava
- an infant formula product
- any food that contains more than 1.15% alcohol by volume, other than a nutrition content claim about energy, carbohydrate or gluten content; or salt or sodium content about a food that is not a beverage.

### Health claims

Health claims refer to a relationship between a food and health. Health claims are not permitted on foods that are high in saturated fat, sugar or salt.

There are two types of health claims:

- **General level health claims** refer to a nutrient or substance in a food and its effect on health.

**Example:** 'Calcium for bones and teeth'.

- **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.

**Example:** 'Diets high in calcium may reduce the risk of osteoporosis in people 65 years and over'.

For both general level and high level health claims, there are lists of pre-approved food-health relationships that businesses can base their claims on. These are listed in Schedule 4 of the Code.

### Nutrition content claims

Nutrition content claims indicate the presence or absence of certain nutrients or substances in the food, for example, 'low in fat' or 'good source of calcium'. These claims will need to meet certain criteria set out in the Standard. For example, food with a '*good source of calcium*' claim will need to contain not less than the amount of calcium specified in the Standard.

## Endorsements

An endorsement is a nutrition content claim or health claim that is made with the permission of an endorsing body.

## Nutrition information panel [1.2.8]

Generally, all packaged food labels must include a nutrition information panel (NIP). Except where a nutrition content claim is made, the following foods are exempt from requiring a NIP:

- a standardised alcoholic beverage
- a kit intended to be used to produce a standardised alcoholic beverage
- a beverage containing no less than 0.5% alcohol by volume that is not a standardised alcoholic beverage
- a herb, spice or herbal infusion
- vinegar or imitation vinegar
- iodised salt, reduced sodium salt mixture, salt or salt substitute
- tea, instant tea, coffee or instant coffee
- an approved food additive
- an approved processing aid or food sold to be used as a processing aid
- fruit, vegetables, meat, poultry and fish that comprise of a single ingredient or category of ingredients
- gelatine
- water, mineral water, spring water or ice
- prepared filled rolls, sandwiches, bagels and similar products
- jam setting compound
- kava
- food in a small package, other than food for infants.

For food that is not exempt or where a nutrition claim is made, the following example provides the standard format for a NIP. In the panel, the words 'serving size' may be replaced with the words 'slice', 'pack', or 'package' or other common units of measure including 'metric cup' or 'metric tablespoon', if appropriate.

Foods that need to be reconstituted or foods that must be drained before consumption must show the values for the reconstituted or drained food, for example, cordial or a tin of corn, respectively.

### Example:

Meat pies (4 pack)

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION		
Servings per pack: 4	Serving size: 175g (1 pie)	
	Quantity per serving	Quantity per 100g
Energy	1615kJ	923kJ
Protein	25.9g	14.8g
Fat - Total	20.7g	11.8g
- Saturated	10.1g	5.76g
Carbohydrate	23.6g	13.5g
- Sugars	1.2g	0.7g
Sodium	471mg	269mg

If the weight or volume of the food as packaged is variable (e.g. wedge of cheese), the number of servings of the food per kilogram or other unit is acceptable.

The percentage of daily intake may also be included in the NIP. These must be calculated using the associated reference values listed in Standard 1.2.8.

Food Standard Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) has a Nutrition Panel Calculator (NPC) to help food manufacturers calculate the average nutrient content of their food products and prepare a NIP. The NPC can be found at [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au).

## Characterising ingredients and components [1.2.10]

Generally, characterising ingredients and components must be declared in the ingredient list as a percentage of the food.

### Example:

Ingredient label from a meat pie

#### Ingredients:

Wheat flour, beef (minimum 25%), water, animal and vegetable fat, onion powder, hydrolysed vegetable protein, egg, thickener (410), sugar, mineral salt (450), salt, colour (150a), herbs, preservative (223).

Information about characterising ingredients and compounds is not required for the following:

- prepared filled rolls, sandwiches, bagels or similar products
- a food for sale that is sold at a fund-raising event
- a food for sale that is in a small package
- infant formula product
- cured and/or dried meat flesh in whole cuts or pieces
- a standardised alcoholic beverage
- a beverage containing no less than 0.5% alcohol by volume, other than a standardised alcoholic beverage.

Section 1.2.10 of the Code provides details on how characterising ingredients and components should be calculated and expressed.

## Country of origin requirements [1.2.11]

From 1 July 2018, the country of origin labelling requirements will be omitted from the Code. After this date, businesses must label their products according to the requirements of the *Country of Origin Food Labelling Information Standard 2016* authorised by Australian Consumer Law.

The country of origin labelling requirements for a food item will vary depending on whether the food:

- is a priority or non-priority food
- was grown, produced, made or packed in Australia or another country.

Country of origin artwork for food labels is available for download at [www.business.gov.au](http://www.business.gov.au)

## Foods requiring pre-market clearance

### Novel foods [1.5.1]

A 'novel food' is a food or component of a food that does not have a history of human consumption in Australia or New Zealand and requires an assessment of specified public health and safety considerations. Novel foods and novel food ingredients must not be sold unless specifically permitted in the Code and compliant with any specified conditions.

### Food produced using gene technology [1.5.2]

'Food produced using gene technology' means a food that has been derived or developed from an organism which has been genetically modified. 'Genetically modified' food means a 'food produced using gene technology' that contains novel DNA or novel protein or is listed in Schedule 26–3 of the Code.

The Code specifies certain restrictions and requirements for food produced using gene technology and genetically modified foods, detailed in Standard 1.5.2.

### Irradiation of food [1.5.3]

Irradiation of food is prohibited unless specifically permitted by the Code and must comply with specified conditions, using only a permitted source of radiation.

The Standard also specifies certain record-keeping and labelling requirements in relation to irradiated food.

## Presentation of food labels

### Legibility [1.2.1–24]

All required words, statements, expressions or designs provided on a food label must be in English, be legible, and be prominent so as to contrast distinctly with the background of the label. Information in other languages in addition to the English information is permitted provided it does not negate or contradict the English information.

### Print size [1.2.1–25]

No specific print type or size is defined for general labelling requirements, however:

- warning statements must be in a type size of at least 3mm (or 1.5mm on small packages)
- a print size is prescribed in the Code for some foods where a required statement must be shown (e.g. infant formula).

## False/misleading claims

A label must not include words, statements, claims, pictures or graphics that represent a food or its characteristics in a way that is false, misleading or deceptive.

## Altering a label [1.2.1–22]

A person who sells or deals with packaged food, must not deface (includes alter, remove, erase, obliterate and obscure) the label on the package unless the relevant authority has given its permission. In Queensland, the relevant authority is Queensland Health.

However, a person who sells packaged food may relabel a food if the label contains incorrect information. The new label must be attached securely and completely cover the incorrect information.

## Further information

Please note this document is a brief guide to help you understand the requirements of the Code. You will find more detailed information in the Code. There are also user guides and fact sheets that are available from the FSANZ website at [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au). Queensland Health also has a variety of fact sheets with detailed information on food safety. These can be accessed at [www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/industry-environment/food-safety](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/industry-environment/food-safety).

Public Health Units are responsible for responding to enquiries and complaints regarding labelling and compositional standards of the Code. However, assessment of labels against the requirements of the Code should be referred to an independent legal adviser.

If you have any further questions relating to the labelling requirements, contact the Queensland Health Public Health Unit for the area where you are located. Contact details for Public Health Units can be found at [www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/contact-us/contact-public-health-units](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/contact-us/contact-public-health-units).

There are a number of other government and non-government organisations that administer different aspects of labelling outside the requirements of the Code.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is responsible for ensuring that individuals and businesses comply with Australian competition, fair trading and consumer protection laws. Matters regarding country of origin, halal and kosher foods also fall under ACCC responsibility. More information about the roles and responsibilities of the ACCC can be found on their website at [www.accc.gov.au](http://www.accc.gov.au).

The Health Star Rating System is a front-of-pack labelling system that rates the nutritional profile of packaged food. The system was developed by the Australian, State and Territory governments in collaboration with industry, public health and consumer groups. More information about the system and how stars are calculated can be found on the website [www.healthstarrating.gov.au](http://www.healthstarrating.gov.au).

The National Measurement Institute (NMI) is a division within the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science and is responsible for developing and maintaining Australia's primary measurement standards. Information about the NMI's services is available on their website [www.measurement.gov.au](http://www.measurement.gov.au).

# Appendices

## Appendix 1—Example label

### 1 Nutrition information panel

This panel shows the average amount of energy, protein, fat, saturated fat, carbohydrate, sugars and sodium in a serve and in 100 g (or 100 ml) of the food. The amount of any other nutrient or substance about which a nutrition content or health claim is made must also be shown (e.g. the amount of calcium must be shown if a claim about calcium is made).

### 2 Percentage labelling

Food labels must show the percentage of the key or characterising ingredients or components in the food. This allows similar foods to be compared. The characterising ingredient for this strawberry yoghurt is strawberry and the ingredient list states that it contains 7% strawberries.

### 3 Food identification

To help identify a food, food labels must show:

- the name of the food
- the name and business address in Australia or New Zealand of the supplier of the food
- the lot identification of the food.

The name or description of the food must reflect its true nature (e.g. strawberry yoghurt must contain strawberries). If the yoghurt contained strawberry flavouring rather than real fruit, then the name would need to indicate that it is strawberry-flavoured yoghurt.

### 4 Information for people with food allergies or intolerances

Some food ingredients and substances can cause severe allergic reactions and must be declared when present in a food. These ingredients are peanuts, tree nuts (e.g. cashews, almonds, and walnuts), crustacea, fish, milk, eggs, sesame, soybeans, and wheat.

Sulphites (if added at 10 mg or more per kg of food) and cereals containing gluten (e.g. wheat, oats, barley, rye and spelt) also need to be declared.

### 5 Date marking

Foods that should be eaten before a certain date for health or safety reasons must be labelled with a use-by date.

Otherwise a best-before date is required if the food has a shelf life of less than two years. Although it may be safe to eat a food after its best-before date, it may have lost quality and some nutritional value.

### 12 Nutrition and health claims

Nutrition content claims are claims about the content of certain nutrients or substances in a food, (e.g. 'contains calcium'). Health claims refer to a relationship between a food and health. There are rules for when nutrition content or health claims are made on food labels.

### 11 Country of origin

Australia and New Zealand have different country of origin labelling requirements.

In Australia, the country of origin of packaged and some unpackaged foods must be stated on the label. Read more about country of origin labelling on the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission website at [www.accc.gov.au](http://www.accc.gov.au)

In New Zealand, country of origin labelling is required on wine only. Further information is available on the Ministry for Primary Industries website at [www.foodsafety.govt.nz/industry/sectors/wine/labelling-composition](http://www.foodsafety.govt.nz/industry/sectors/wine/labelling-composition)

### 6 Ingredient list

Ingredients must be listed in descending order (by ingoing weight). So if an ingredient is listed near the start of the list, then the food contains more of this ingredient than others lower down the list.

### 7 Labels must tell the truth

Under Australian and New Zealand consumer laws, labels must not be false, misleading or deceptive. Suppliers must also label foods with accurate weights and measure information. The National Measurement Institute in Australia ([www.nmi.gov.au](http://www.nmi.gov.au)) and the Ministry of Consumer Affairs in New Zealand ([www.consumerprotection.govt.nz](http://www.consumerprotection.govt.nz)) ensure that correct weight and measurement information is used on food labels.

### 10 Legibility requirements

Any labelling requirements must be in English, be legible and prominent so as to contrast distinctly with the background on the label.

### 8 Food additives

Food additives must be identified in the ingredient list, usually by their class name (e.g. 'thickener' or 'colour') followed by the food additive name or number. A thickener has been used in this yoghurt and is labelled as 'thickener (1442)'. A full list of food additive names and numbers is available from [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)



### 9 Directions for use and storage

Where specific storage conditions are required for a food to keep until its best-before or use-by date, those conditions must be included on the label. If the food must be used in accordance with certain directions for health or safety reasons, those directions must be included on the label.

## Appendix 2—Labelling checklist

### 1. General information

Does the label require any of the following general information?	Examples	Yes	No
Name or description of food. The prescribed name, or otherwise a name or description of the food that indicates the true nature of the food.	Frozen yoghurt Smoked salmon Roast chicken roll		
Lot identification. The food batch number or date marking. This is necessary in the event of a food recall.	Use By 3 Dec 18		
Name and business address, in Australia or New Zealand, of the supplier. A business address means the premises where the business is being operated. A post office box is not sufficient.	Finefoods Co 20 Main Street Brisbane QLD Australia		
For vending machines, the name and business address of the supplier of the vending machine must be displayed clearly on or in the vending machine.	Quick snacks 100 Smith St Brisbane QLD Australia		
Date marking Use By date (when food must not be consumed after a certain date for health and safety reasons) or Best Before date (when food may be consumed after the date specified, although the quality may have diminished).	Use By 3 Dec 18 Best Before Dec 18		
Directions for use or storage. Information relating to any use or storage conditions required to ensure the food will keep until the Use By or Best Before date.	Store below 5°C		

### 2. Mandatory warning and advisory statements and declarations

Does the label require mandatory warning and advisory statements and declarations?	Example	Yes	No
Warning statements	Royal jelly		
Advisory statements	Unpasteurised egg products		
Declarations	Peanuts		

### 3. Ingredients List

Does the label fulfil ingredient listing requirements?	Example	Yes	No
Ingredients identified by common name, name that clearly describes the food or a generic name.	Milk solids (generic name)		
Ingredients listed in descending order of ingoing weight. For water and other evaporative ingredients, the ingoing weight must be calculated in a certain way.	Wheat flour, water, yeast, salt, preservative (282).		



Compound ingredients broken into individual ingredients if required.	On canned spaghetti: 'spaghetti (flour, egg, water), meat, sugar, water'		
Alternative ingredients.	'safflower or sunflower oil'		
Additives listed by class name followed by additive number or full name of additive.	Colour (102)		

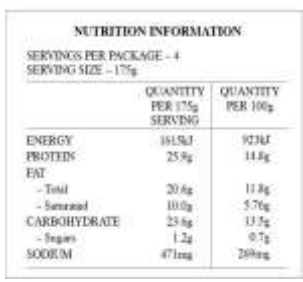
#### 4. Characterising ingredients and components

Does the label meet the requirements for foods with characterising ingredients or components	Example	Yes	No
Characterising ingredients or components declared in the ingredients list as a percentage of the food.	Strawberry yoghurt. Contains 9% strawberries.		

#### 5. Nutrition, health and related claims

Are there nutrition, health and related claims?	Examples	Yes	No
Health claims refer to a relationship between food and health and are not permitted on foods high in saturated fat, sugar or salt.	'Calcium for bones and teeth'		
Nutrition content claims indicate the presence or absence of nutrients or substances in food.	'low in fat'		
Endorsements are nutrition content claims or health claims made with the permission of an endorsing body.	Such as from industry associations		

#### 6. Nutrition information panels

Does the label contain the following information in the required format?	Example	Yes	No																											
Content of the nutrition information panel: The number of servings and average serving size Energy                                  kj (Cal) Protein    g Fat, total    g - saturated    g Carbohydrate    g - saturated    g Sodium    g	 <p style="text-align: center;">NUTRITION INFORMATION</p> <p>SERVINGS PER PACKAGE - 4 SERVING SIZE - 175g</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>QUANTITY PER 175g SERVING</th> <th>QUANTITY PER 100g</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>ENERGY</td> <td>1515kJ</td> <td>921kJ</td> </tr> <tr> <td>PROTEINS</td> <td>25.9g</td> <td>14.8g</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FAT</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Total</td> <td>20.6g</td> <td>11.8g</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Saturated</td> <td>10.0g</td> <td>5.70g</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CARBOHYDRATE</td> <td>23.6g</td> <td>13.3g</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Sugars</td> <td>1.2g</td> <td>0.7g</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SODIUM</td> <td>471mg</td> <td>268mg</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		QUANTITY PER 175g SERVING	QUANTITY PER 100g	ENERGY	1515kJ	921kJ	PROTEINS	25.9g	14.8g	FAT			- Total	20.6g	11.8g	- Saturated	10.0g	5.70g	CARBOHYDRATE	23.6g	13.3g	- Sugars	1.2g	0.7g	SODIUM	471mg	268mg		
	QUANTITY PER 175g SERVING	QUANTITY PER 100g																												
ENERGY	1515kJ	921kJ																												
PROTEINS	25.9g	14.8g																												
FAT																														
- Total	20.6g	11.8g																												
- Saturated	10.0g	5.70g																												
CARBOHYDRATE	23.6g	13.3g																												
- Sugars	1.2g	0.7g																												
SODIUM	471mg	268mg																												

#### 7. Legibility requirements

Does the label fulfil legibility requirements?	Example	Yes	No
Labels must be in English, be legible and be prominent so as to contrast distinctly with the background of the label.			
Type size for warning statements must at least 3mm (or 1.5mm on small packages). Type size for foods with required statements, is prescribed in the Code.	Each letter must be of the prescribed height when measured from base to top.		

## Definitions

**Assisted service display cabinet**—an enclosed or semi-enclosed display cabinet which requires a person to serve the food as requested by the purchaser e.g. deli cabinet.

**Caterer**—means a person, establishment or institution (for example, a catering establishment, a restaurant, a canteen, a school, or a hospital) which handles or offers food for immediate consumption.

**Characterising component**—a component of the food that:

- (a) is mentioned in the name of the food; or
- (b) is usually associated with the name of the food by a consumer; or
- (c) is emphasised on the label of the food in words, pictures or graphics.

**Characterising ingredient**—an ingredient or a category of ingredients of the food that:

- (a) is mentioned in the name of the food; or
- (b) is usually associated with the name of the food by a consumer; or
- (c) is emphasised on the label of the food in words, pictures or graphics.

Any of the following is not a characterising ingredient:

- (a) an ingredient or category of ingredients that is used in small amounts to flavour the food
- (b) an ingredient or category of ingredients that comprises the whole of the food
- (c) an ingredient or category of ingredients that is mentioned in the name of the food but which is not such as to govern the choice of the consumer, because the variation in the amount is not essential to characterise the food, or does not distinguish the food from similar foods.

**Claim**—an express or implied statement, representation, design or information in relation to a food or a property of food which is not mandatory in the Code.

**FSANZ**—Food Standards Australia New Zealand. FSANZ is a bi-national government agency which develops and food standards in the Code.

**Fund raising event**—an event that raises funds solely for a community or charitable cause and not for personal financial gain.

**Intra company transfer**—a transfer of food between elements of a single company, between subsidiaries of a parent company or between subsidiaries of a parent company and the parent company.

There are no labelling or information requirements under the Code specific to foods for intra company transfer.

**Lot**—an amount of a food that the manufacturer or producer identifies as having been prepared, or from which foods have been packaged or otherwise separated for sale, under essentially the same conditions, for example:

- (a) from a particular preparation or packing unit; and
- (b) during a particular time ordinarily not exceeding 24 hours.

**Lot identification**—for a food for sale, means a number or other information that identifies:

- (a) the premises where the food was prepared or packed; and
- (b) the lot of which the food is a part.

**Supplier**—in relation to food, includes the packer, manufacturer, vendor or importer of the food.

**Small package**—a package with a total surface area of less than 100cm<sup>2</sup>, e.g. 5cm x 2cm x 10cm.

**Standardised alcoholic beverage**—means beer, brandy, cider, fruit wine, fruit wine product, liqueur, mead, perry, spirit, vegetable wine, vegetable wine product, wine or wine product.

**Unpackaged food**—all food, other than food that is sealed in a package at a place other than the food business that sells it by retail in that package.

