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TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

OVERVIEW OF FOOD LABELING

UNDER EU LAW

(LEAFLET)

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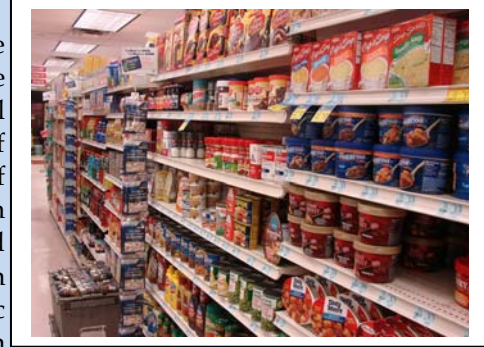
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AN OVERVIEW OF FOOD LABELING UNDER THE EU LAW

INTRODUCTION

EU requirements on general labeling for all foodstuffs are set out in Directive 2000/13/EC. This Directive sets the compulsory information that has to be included on all labels, such as the name of the product, the list of ingredients, the use-by date and any special conditions of use. In addition to the general legislation, there are certain labeling rules for certain food groups (e.g. meat), and specific measures including labeling provisions for certain foods and substances (e.g. beef, fish, chocolate, dietetic foods, food supplements, fortified foods etc). Nutrition labeling on foods is regulated by Directive 90/496/EEC.



KEY REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with Articles 4 to 17 (Directive 2000/13/EC) and subject to the exceptions contained therein, indication of the following particulars alone shall be compulsory on the labeling of foodstuffs:

- (1) the name under which the product is sold;
- (2) the list of ingredients;
- (3) the quantity of certain ingredients or categories of ingredients as provided for in Article 7;
- (4) in the case of prepackaged foodstuffs, the net quantity;
- (5) the date of minimum durability or, in the case of foodstuffs which, from the microbiological point of view, are highly perishable, the 'use by' date;
- (6) any special storage conditions or conditions of use; the name or business name and address of the manufacturer or packager, or of a seller established within the Community.
- (8) particulars of the place of origin or provenance where failure to give such particulars might mislead the consumer to a material degree as to the true origin or provenance of the foodstuff;
- (9) instructions for use when it would be impossible to make appropriate use of the foodstuff in the absence of such instructions;

The labeling and methods used must not be such as could mislead the purchaser, particularly:

- (i) as to the characteristics of the foodstuff and, in particular, as to its nature, identity, properties, composition, quantity, durability, origin or provenance, method of manufacture or production;
- (ii) by attributing to the foodstuff effects or properties which it does not possess;
- (iii) by suggesting that the foodstuff possesses special characteristics when in fact all similar foodstuffs possess such characteristics

Front-of-pack nutrition labeling

Front-of-pack nutrition information would become mandatory for nearly all pre-packaged processed foods. There would be on the front of the packaging the energy, fat, saturated fat, carbohydrates with specific reference to sugars and salt content of the product, expressed in terms of per 100ml/100g or per portion. In addition, the amount of these elements in relation to the reference intakes will have to be indicated. Operators can choose to include additional nutrition information on the front of pack, on condition that it does not detrimentally affect the visibility and legibility of the mandatory information. As before and, in line with the Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation (see IP/05/668), nutrition information also has to be provided to support any nutrition or health claim made in relation to a product. Also, in line with the Regulation, on the addition of vitamins and minerals and certain other substances to foods, nutrition information has to be provided if vitamins and minerals have been voluntarily added to the food.

Legibility

In order to avoid the common problem of essential information being too small or hidden for the consumer to easily read on food labels, the Regulation states that mandatory information must be printed in a minimum size (3mm), with a significant contrast between the writing and the background. Voluntary information (e.g. slogans or claims) must not be presented in a way that adversely affects the presentation of mandatory information.

Allergen labeling

Currently, the presence of allergens must be clearly indicated on all pre-packed food sold in the EU. There is an EU list of identified allergens which must be labeled, including peanuts, milk, fish and mustard.

Origin labeling

The Regulation proposes to keep country of origin or place of provenance labeling on food voluntary, unless its absence could mislead consumers. However, certain criteria are laid down for producers who do wish to put the country of origin or place of provenance on the label of their products. In line with international standards (WTO and Codex), the country of origin should be determined in accordance with the Community Custom Code. The country of origin or place of provenance of the main ingredients must also be listed if those ingredients originate from a different place than the finished product. For example, butter churned in Belgium from Danish milk could be labeled as "produced in Belgium from Danish milk".

FOODS/DRINKS EXEMPT FROM THE MANDATORY NUTRITION LABELING REQUIREMENTS

These are unprocessed foods which are not nutritionally significant in the diet overall. They include:

- Unprocessed food comprised of a single ingredient (e.g. fresh steak, apples)
- Water
- Smoked or matured food comprised of a single ingredient or category of food
- Teas and coffees
- Herbs, spices, salt and vinegars
- Flavourings, food colours and other food improvement agents or processing aids
- Food sold in packaging with a surface area less than 25cm² is also exempt from the nutrition labeling requirements, as is inner packaging that is not designed for sale without the outer packaging.

REFERENCE INTAKE TO BE INDICATED AS PART OF THE NUTRITION INFORMATION

Reference intake is a guidance daily intake for certain nutrients, which under current voluntary nutrition labeling schemes are often referred to as "Recommended Daily Amounts". It is already required under EU legislation for vitamins and minerals when listed, and many food manufacturers already include the reference amount for other nutrients on their labeling. Comparing the nutrient content of a foodstuff to a reference intake enables the consumer to better understand the relevance of the information provided on the label for their overall diet. Annex XI of the Regulation lists the reference intakes for the main nutrients. There is also provision for the reference intake to be reviewed at any stage if it is considered necessary.

Source: EUROPA > European Commission > DG Health and Consumers > Overview > Food and Feed Safety (http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/labellingnutrition/foodlabelling/index_en.htm)

FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT:

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Labeling Requirements

1 Quantity

2 Name of the Product

3 List of Intredients

4 Date of Expiry

5 Manufacturer Details

6 Nutrition and health claims

Net weight: **500g e**

BEST BEFORE
June, 2010

xyz cakes

INGREDIENTS
Flour, 20% wheat, whole wheat, wheat flour, sugar, gluten flour, milk powder, salt, low-fat wheat germ, aroma of malt barley, vitamins (C, B1, B6, B2, B1, folic acid B12), iron

Allergy Information
Composed of milk, wheat and barley.

xyz product info
Tel 0988 13433
address: LK3000 Dubai
UAE

Sugar Free

500g

Barcode

