



# Act on Food Safety

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## Food Labelling – Country of Origin

Country of origin provides consumers with information on where their food is grown, produced, manufactured or packaged.

Businesses are required to comply with Food standard 1.2.11, which sets out the requirements for Country of Origin labelling for packaged foods and certain unpackaged foods such as fish, pork, fruit and vegetables. The standard also applies to food sold to catering establishments in catering packs. [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

Labels on both packaged and unpackaged food must be in English and be legible, distinct from the background and easy to read. They must be clear, unambiguous and not mislead consumers. Labels for unpackaged foods are subject to the same legibility requirements as packaged foods. The sign adjacent to unpackaged foods must be legible and be at least 9mm in size.

It is not sufficient to list the country in the manufacturer's address on the label.

A graphic or logo must contain a written declaration of the country of origin.

It is desirable to spell out the full country name rather than use an abbreviation.

A state or region, from which the product originates, may be included, in addition to the country of origin, for example Victorian oranges, Produce of Australia.

If some of the ingredients do not originate from the country where the food was packed for retail sale, a statement that the food is made from imported ingredients or a mixture

of local and imported ingredients must be included. The *Trade Practices Act 1974* prescribes that only certain wording of country of origin statement assures that a product can claim 'Made in' or 'Product of'.

### What are the country of origin labelling rules for packaged food?

Clearly identify where the food was made or produced or packaged for retail sale. The label should also state if the food is constituted from imported ingredients or from local and imported ingredients.

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## What are the country of origin labelling rules for unpackaged food?

Certain unpackaged foods must carry a declaration on a label or sign near the food that states the country of origin. For e.g. a sticker on an orange or a sign adjacent to the product.

Unpackaged foods requiring a label are:

- Whole or cut fruit and vegetables, fresh or preserved by any means including pickled, cooked, frozen and dehydrated; both fresh tomatoes and unpackaged sun-dried tomatoes; fresh apples and dried apples;
- Nuts, legumes, spices, herbs;
- Seafood such as fresh and smoked fish fillets, frozen crumbed fish fillets, and fresh and preserved fish; and fish that has undergone any processing and includes unprocessed fish mixed or coated with other food/s;
- Fresh pork or pork preserved by curing, drying etc; pork mixed with vegetables, fruit, fish and foods used in the preservation process; and pork products such as bacon and ham.

For unpackaged food the standard allows two options for declaring the country of origin. 1) a label on or in connection with the food stating either the country or countries of origin; 2) a statement indicating that the food is a mix of local and/or imported food, as the case may be.

### Where does Standard 1.2.11 not apply?

- To unpackaged cereals; meat other than pork, such as fresh lamb, beef, chicken; eggs; edible oils; dairy products; sugar and honey; vinegar and related products; and salt.
- To food sold for immediate consumption in restaurants, canteens,

cafes, takeaway shops, schools, caterers or self-catering institutions.

- It is not required when unpackaged fresh and processed fruit and vegetables, nuts, seafood, fresh pork and preserved pork products are mixed with other foods but it applies for food containing fish even when mixed with other food.

Country of origin labels must not mislead consumers. The information must be accurate. Suppliers should exercise caution to ensure accuracy of information.

As well as complying with food standards requirements and the *Food Act 2001*, a food business must also comply with Commonwealth legislation – *Trade Practices Act 1974* and the *Imported Food Control Act 1992*.

## Some examples of complying labels

### 1. 'Product of Australia' or 'Produce of Australia' or 'Produced in Australia'

To qualify for the 'product of' claim for a particular country all of the significant ingredients must come from that country and all of the production and manufacturing must be carried out in that country.

### 2. 'Made in Australia' or 'Australian Made' or 'Manufactured in Australia'

To qualify for a 'made in' claim for a particular country it must be substantially transformed in that country for which the claim is made, and more than 50% of the

cost of production or manufacture must be incurred in that country.

### 3. 'Made in Australia from local and imported ingredients' or 'Made in Australia from imported and local ingredients'

The order of local and imported in the label depends on whether the local or the imported ingredients are predominant in the product.

For more information on labelling please go to [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)



## Did you know?

The Australian Made, Australian Grown symbol is used on close to 10,000 products. Australian Grown means that each significant ingredient has been grown in Australia, and that all or virtually all of the processes involved in the production of the good have occurred in Australia. The Australian Grown brand is an easy way to identify produce that is Australian.



## ACT Health website

**Information on food safety is available on ACT Health website.**

Please visit [www.health.act.gov.au](http://www.health.act.gov.au) – then follow the quick link: public health and click on – health protection service – environmental health – food safety.

Food safety program templates for Manufactured Meat Producers, Oyster Processors and Vulnerable Populations (Hospitals); “Act on food safety” newsletters, food safety posters and information sheets are available on this website.

## Commonly occurring food safety issues that Public Health Officers encounter during inspections of food premises

1. Build-up of food scraps and oil under/ on stove tops, deep fryers and other kitchen equipment.
2. Incorrect refrigeration temperature — the temperature should be at or below 5°C.
3. Cleanliness of equipment not being maintained e.g. fixed bench can-openers/ meat slicers.
4. Cleanliness of premises not being maintained e.g. removal of mould and dirt from fans and ceiling in cool rooms.
5. Cleanliness of fittings not being maintained e.g. exhaust hood and filters to be cleaned regularly so as to ensure no build up of oil.
6. Inappropriate storage of ‘raw over cooked’ food in refrigerators.
7. Food should be properly stored in food grade containers with sealable lids and not left in open bags.
8. Inadequate hand-washing facilities: provision of soap and handtowels required. Hand-wash facility should not be used for storage purposes.
9. Inappropriate cleaning and sanitising of food contact surfaces, eating and drinking utensils.
10. Inappropriate food storage conditions e.g. cardboard or newspaper used on cool room shelving. This prevents proper airflow and cooling of food in cool room.

The above are just some of the issues Public Health Officers find during inspections of food premises. Please pay attention to the above food safety issues and other requirements of the Food Standards Code to ensure you are compliant.

## Mandatory food safety programs for vulnerable population

Food businesses that process food for service to vulnerable persons are required to have food safety programs in place by **5 October 2008**. This includes contracted food businesses that supply food served to vulnerable persons.

Detailed information on mandatory food safety programs was provided in the Autumn 2007, Winter 2007 and Winter 2008 issues of 'Act on food safety'.

A food safety program requires businesses to identify potential food safety hazards, implement and document measures that will control those hazards, and keep written records to demonstrate compliance with the food safety program.

This requirement is determined by Standard 3.3.1 – *Food Safety Programs for Food Service to Vulnerable Persons* – of the Food Standards Code. A copy of Standard 3.3.1 is available at

[http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/\\_srcfiles/Standard\\_3\\_3\\_1\\_FSPs\\_%20Vulnerable\\_pops\\_v95.pdf](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/_srcfiles/Standard_3_3_1_FSPs_%20Vulnerable_pops_v95.pdf)

## Two new food safety posters

Posters have been delivered to those food businesses that have contacted the Health Protection Service (HPS) to obtain copies of the three food safety posters mentioned in our winter 2008 issue. The posters are A4 size, laminated and available free of cost. Public Health Officers have also been distributing the posters. Two new food safety posters — on cleaning and sanitising eating and drinking utensils and safe food handling have been developed. Ask your Public Health Officers for copies of the posters or contact the HPS on 6205 1700 or [hps@act.gov.au](mailto:hps@act.gov.au)



NOTE Information in this newsletter is intended as a summary only and cannot cover all situations. Food businesses are required to comply with all the provisions of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code and *Food Act 2001*, not just the contents of this newsletter. Please contact the Health Protection Service on 6205 1700 for more information on any of the articles in this newsletter or questions regarding food safety. We welcome and look forward to your feedback.

ENGLISH	If you need interpreting help, telephone:
ARABIC	: إذا احتجت لمساعدة في الترجمة الشفوية ، إتصل برقم الهاتف :
CHINESE	如果你需要传译员的帮助，请打电话：
CROATIAN	Ako trebate pomoć tumača telefonirajte:
GREEK	Αν χρειάζεστε διερμηνέα τηλεφωνήστε στο
ITALIAN	Se avete bisogno di un interprete, telefonate al numero:
PERSIAN	: اگر به ترجمه شفاهی احتیاج دارید به این شماره تلفن کنید:
PORTUGUESE	Se você precisar da ajuda de um intérprete, telefone:
SERBIAN	Ако вам је потребна помоћ преводноца телефонирајте:
SPANISH	Si necesita la asistencia de un intérprete, llame al:
TURKISH	Tercümana ihtiyacınız varsa lütfen telefon ediniz:
VIETNAMESE	Nếu bạn cần một người thông-ngôn hãy gọi điện-thoại:

**TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETER SERVICE 131 450**  
 Canberra and District - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week  
**HEALTH CARE INTERPRETERS 6205 3333**

## Contact details

**Health Protection Service,  
 ACT Health**

**Phone (02) 6205 1700**

**Fax (02) 6205 1705**

**Email [hps@act.gov.au](mailto:hps@act.gov.au)**

**Web [www.health.act.gov.au](http://www.health.act.gov.au)**

**Address**

**Howard Florey Centenary House,  
 25 Mulley Street, Holder 2611**

**Postal**

**Locked Bag 5,  
 Weston Creek ACT 2611**

