



Consultancy Support Service

REGULATORY UPDATE

In an effort to promote clearer allergen labelling on food products, Food Standards Australia New Zealand undertook a qualitative survey over 2015/16 to determine whether the current regulations have given rise to allergen labelling terminology that could be confusing for some consumers. The findings from this survey were published in September 2016 and include 4 key problem areas with the terminology currently used for allergen declarations.

1. Lack of standardisation and use of the “contains” summary statements – the “contains” summary statements are a voluntary statement listing the allergens present in the food and generally added below the ingredients list. Confusion arises due to non-standardisation of this statement (as it is not compulsory, is not always used and, when it is, the allergen listed does not always have the same description as the allergen highlighted in the ingredients list).
2. Terms such as ‘cereals containing gluten’ and ‘tree nuts’ lack the information that people with allergens require – for example, wheat or almond allergy sufferers.
3. Use of ‘gluten’ as a catch all for cereals containing gluten, without specific reference to the cereal that is present – e.g. wheat
4. Use of ‘fish’ in the “contains” statement, when referring to molluscs or Crustacea in the ingredients list – confusion has arisen due to the current definition in the code of ‘fish’.

FSANZ is considering how best to act on the findings of the survey, which will undoubtedly see a revision to the Food Standards Code.

Also in September:

- > Amendment No. 165 to the Food Standards Code included approval for Monsanto’s Herbicide Tolerant Corn Line MON87419
- > The Country of Origin Labelling Regulations were removed from the Food Standards Code and are now enforced by the ACCC as a new Information Standard in the Australian Consumer Law – more details on the changes here: <http://bit.ly/2dWxVIC>

- > Notification of an application to use Oryzin (Protease) as a Processing Aid – the enzyme is extracted from *Aspergillus melleus* and used in baking, flavouring production and dairy, meat, egg, fish, protein and yeast processing
- > Notification of an application to use Beta-galactosidase from *Bacillus licheniformis* as a processing aid during the production of lactose free milk and dairy products

GLOBAL STANDARD ON FOOD WASTE LAUNCHED

Food wastage has long been the subject of debate at the public and industry levels. The figures attributed to wastage of food (whether through manufacturing, agriculture or in the home) have often been eye wateringly huge. For example, the UN estimates that around 940 billion \$USD worth of food is lost or water annually worldwide.

In Australia, it is estimated that households waste over \$1000 each on food a year and this accounts for almost 50% of the waste in our bins.

Measuring and comparing wastage globally has been difficult without a global standard outlining how to quantify and report the wastage and loss.

The Food Loss and Waste Accounting and Reporting Standard (or FLW Standard) is a global standard that provides requirements and guidance for quantifying and reporting on the weight of food and/or associated inedible parts removed from the food supply chain—commonly referred to as “food loss and waste” (FLW).

Using the standard enables countries, cities, companies, and other entities to develop inventories of how much FLW is generated and where it goes. These inventories can underpin, inform, and focus strategies for minimizing FLW.

For food companies, this can provide a valuable cost saving tool to help reduce the impact of waste on the business.

The full standard can be accessed here:

<http://flwprotocol.org/>

For more information and support on reducing your own food loss and wastage, including developing and implementing a waste/loss reduction plan, contact nick.cork@alsglobal.com



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LABELLING COMPLIANCE – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Ensuring you have a compliant food product label is about more than just listing the ingredients and completing the Nutrition Information Panel.

Increasingly, the regulatory spotlight is falling on manufacturers that fail to comply with the requirements laid out in the Food Standards Code (FSC) and enforced by the states and territories.

Chapter 1 of the FSC outlines the general labelling and information requirements that are relevant for all foods, as well as more specific requirements which apply in different circumstances.

There are 12 general requirements outlined in Standard 1.2.1, Section 8; Information required on food that is required to bear a label.

General requirement:

- Name of the food (Standard 1.2.2–2);
- Lot identification (Standard 1.2.2–3);
- Name and address of the supplier (Standard 1.2.2–4);
- Advisory statements, warning statements and declarations (Standards 1.2.3–2, 1.2.3–3 and 1.2.3–4);
- A statement of ingredients (Standard 1.2.4–2);
- Date marking information (Standard 1.2.5–3);
- Storage conditions and directions for use (Standard 1.2.6–2);
- Information relating to nutrition, health and related claims (Standard 1.2.7–26(4));
- Nutrition information (Standard 1.2.8);
- Information about characterising ingredients and characterising components (Standard 1.2.10–3);
- Information relating to foods produced using gene technology (Standard 1.5.2–4);
- Information relating to irradiated food (Standard 1.5.3–9)

In addition to the requirements laid out in the FSC, the new Country of Origin Labelling (CoOL) requirements were introduced on the 1st July 2016 under the Australian Consumer Law (and enforced nationally by the ACCC).

The CoOL requirements will become mandatory on the 1st July 2018, with businesses able to voluntarily adopt the measures before then or stick to the current requirements in the FSC.

The new labelling includes a graphical representation of the quantities of the product that are grown/produced or packed in Australia compared to percentages of imported

ingredients.

The graphic contains a kangaroo and a bar chart, if the ingredients or major processing came from Australia and will look something like this:

For products substantially coming from outside Australia, the kangaroo logo cannot be used, with only the bar chart being available if the packing was performed in Australia.

The categories in full are:

- Grown in Australia – food where 100% of the ingredients are Australian grown
- Product of Australia – for food where 100% of the



ingredients are Australian and all major processing has been undertaken in Australia

- Made in Australia – for food products where major processing has been undertaken in Australia (over and above and slicing, canning, reconstitution or repacking activities)
 - Packed in Australia – can only feature a bar chart which shows the percentage of Australian ingredients
 - Product of... - all imported foods produced, made, grown or packed outside Australia are shown with their country of origin on the label
- a), b) and c) above are all able to use the kangaroo logo in addition to the bar chart
 d) can only use the bar chart logo
 e) cannot use either the kangaroo or the bar chart

