



Country of Origin Food Labelling Update – minor amendment to the Information Standard

The Country of Origin Food Labelling Information Standard 2016 (the Standard) commenced on 1 July 2016. The Standard gives effect to a decision made by Australian governments on 31 March 2016 through the Legislative and Governance Forum on Consumer Affairs (the Forum) on reforms to country of origin labelling. Subsequently, on 28 November 2016, an [amendment](#) to the Standard was made to sections 22 and 23 (dealing with imported food packaged in Australia), and section 26 (dealing with imported foods with Australian content) to better reflect the decision made by the Forum, and to correct typographical errors. Detailed information regarding the changes can be found in the [Explanatory Statement](#) to the amendment.

Changes to labelling requirements for some imported foods packed in Australia

The policy underpinning the reforms agreed by the Forum stipulates that, as a minimum, these foods need to say where they were made, with an option to add that they were packed in Australia, and include a bar chart and text showing the proportion of Australian ingredients. Section 22 previously required food that was made in a single overseas country with ingredients from one or more other countries, and subsequently packaged in Australia, to be labelled with a standard mark that included a statement that the food was packed in Australia and an indication of the proportion of Australian ingredients through text and a bar chart. It did not require the label to include the country in which the food was made. The amendment rectifies this oversight so that section 22 of the Standard better reflects the original policy intent.

Section 22 provides for the use of a standard mark on the labels of food packaged in Australia where some of the food in the package has not been grown, produced or made in Australia. The standard mark can state that the food is packed or packaged in Australia and include text and a bar chart indicating the proportion of Australian ingredients, but it cannot include the kangaroo logo because it contains food that was not grown, produced or made in Australia.

Package contains	Ingredients	Relevant provision
Food grown, produced or made entirely in a single overseas country	No Australian ingredients	Subsections 5 and 9
Food made in a single overseas country with Australian ingredients	All Australian ingredients	Subsection 2
	Some Australian ingredients	Subsections 3, 4 and 9
Food from two or more different countries that is combined for packing without substantial transformation	Some Australian ingredients	Subsections 6, 7 and 9
	No Australian ingredients	Subsections 8 and 9

The changes do not affect the labelling outcomes for any other foods. The 'Packed in Australia from at least x% Australian ingredients' would be retained for foods from multiple countries with some Australian content that are packed in Australia – for example, nuts from Australia and other countries that are mixed together and packed in Australia.

Section 23(1) of the Standard has also been amended to prevent food grown, produced or made in a single overseas country from using a label to indicate variance of ingredient origin over time. This is because section 23 provides for 'average' label alternatives to section 22 labels that require a statement that the food was packed in Australia and an indication of the minimum proportion of Australian ingredients through text and a bar chart. For food grown, produced, or made in a single overseas country and packed in Australia, section 22 requires, as a minimum, that the label include a statement about where it was grown, produced or made – a statement that the food was packed in Australia and an indication of the proportion of Australian ingredients through text and a bar chart are optional.

Minor change to voluntary labels for imported foods with Australian content

Section 26 of the Standard provides for optional labelling of imported foods (that is, food that is not grown, produced, made or packed in Australia) which contain Australian ingredients. Section 26(5) permits an addition to the text standard in a standard mark that identifies the country of origin of one or more specific ingredients of the food. This section has been amended to exclude this option for section 26(2) given that the explanatory statement in the standard mark already identifies that all of the ingredients are of Australian origin.

Will affected businesses have time to adjust to these changes?

As the Standard will not become mandatory until 1 July 2018 (following the two-year transition period), there should be sufficient time for businesses to ensure foods are labelled correctly in accordance with the amended Standard

The Government is determined to deliver better country of origin food labelling in as cost effective way as possible. While we don't want to unnecessarily increase regulatory or production costs for businesses, we do want to ensure that most consumers get the information they are seeking to make purchasing decisions in line with their personal preferences.

If you would like further information

If you would like to discuss this amendment further, please contact the Department directly through originlabelling@industry.gov.au. We also welcome you to register your interest and inform us of your particular business scenarios that would be affected by such an amendment.