

BHUTAN MANDATORY STANDARD FOR LABELLING OF PREPACKAGED FOOD

1. PREAMBLE

This standard is issued pursuant to the Food Rules and Regulations of Bhutan 2017. This standard is based on the Codex General Standard for Labelling of Prepackaged foods (CODEX STAN 1—1985 and its amendments).

2. SCOPE

This standard applies to all prepackaged foods intended for sale directly to consumers or to catering establishments.

3. DEFINITIONS

Claim means any statement or representation that suggests or implies that a food has particular qualities relating to its origin, nutritional properties, nature, processing, composition or any other quality.

Consumer refers to any person or groups of persons purchasing foods for direct consumption.

Container means any packaging of food for delivery as a single item whether by completely or partially enclosing the food and including wrappers. A container may contain several units or types of packages when such is offered to the consumer.

Definitions relevant to **date marking** of prepackaged food

Date of manufacture refers to the date when the product or item has been produced and ready for distribution.

Date of packaging means the date on which the food is packaged in the container in which it will be presented for sale to the consumer.

Date of minimum durability (best before)/**Sell by date** means the date which signifies the end of the period under any stated storage conditions during which the product will remain fully marketable and will retain any specific qualities for which specific or tacit claims have been made.

Use by date (recommended last consumption date or expiration date) means the date which signifies the end of the period under any stated storage conditions after which the product probably will not have the quality attributes normally expected by the consumers. After this date the food should not be regarded as marketable.

Food means any article or substance intended for human consumption, whether processed, semi processed or raw, including water and beverages which may contain any flavouring matter or condiments, except for pharmaceutical drugs, tobacco and cosmetics.

Food additive means any substance not normally consumed as a food by itself and not normally used as a typical ingredient of the food, whether or not it has nutritive value, the intentional addition of which to food for a technological purpose in the manufacture, processing, preparation, treatment, packing, packaging, transport or holding of such food results in it or its byproducts becoming a component of or otherwise affecting the characteristics of such foods. The term does not include 'contaminants or substances added to food for maintaining or improving nutritional qualities.

Ingredient means any substance, including a food additive used in the manufacture or preparation of a food and present in the final product although possibly in a modified form.

Label means any tag, brand, mark or pictorial or other descriptive matter, written printed or marked or attached to a container of food.

Labelling includes any written printed or graphic matter that is present on the label, accompanies the food, or is displayed near the food, including that for the purpose of promoting its sale or disposal.

Lot means a definitive quantity of a commodity produced essentially under the same conditions.

Prepackaged means packaged or made up in advance in a container, ready for offer to the consumer or for catering purposes.

Processing aid means any substance or material, not including apparatus or utensil and not consumed as a food ingredient by itself, intentionally used in the processing of raw materials, foods or its ingredients, to fulfill a certain technological purpose during treatment or processing and which may result in the non-intentional but unavoidable presence of residues or derivatives in the final product.

4. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Prepackaged food shall not be described or presented on any label or in any labeling in a manner that is false, misleading or deceptive or is likely to create an erroneous impression regarding its character in any respect.

5. MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Name of the food

The name shall indicate the true nature of the food and normally be specific and not generic;

1. Names used shall be in conformity with Codex or as prescribed in national legislation.
2. In the absence of any such name a common or usual name existing by common usage.
3. A brand or trade mark name may be used provided it is accompanied by existing common names as provided in Codex or under national legislation.

5.2 Language of presentation and supplementary labelling

1. The name of the food and other information presented on the label shall be in either in English or Dzongkha.
2. Where a product is labelled in a language other than that prescribed in this standard, it shall be the responsibility of the importer/distributor of the product to ensure that all labeling information is presented on the label in either in English or Dzongkha.

5.3 Ingredient declaration

1. Except for single ingredient foods, a list of ingredients shall be declared on the label.

5.4 Added water

1. Added water shall be declared in the list of ingredients except when the water forms part of an ingredient such as brine, syrup or broth used in a compound food.

5.5 Declaration of food and food ingredients produced through modern biotechnology

1. The presence of any food or food ingredient obtained through modern biotechnology shall always be as per the Food Rules and Regulation 2007.

5.6 Name and address

1. The name and address of the manufacturer, packer, distributor, importer, exporter or vendor of the food shall be declared.

5.7 Country of origin

1. The country of origin of the food shall be declared.

5.8 Lot identification

1. Each container shall be embossed or otherwise permanently marked in code or such other notation to clearly identify the producing factory and the lot.

5.9 Date marking

1. All prepackaged foods presented for sale shall carry the following:

Date of minimum durability (best before). This shall consist of:

- the day and the month for products with a minimum durability/use by date of not more than three months;

- the month and the year for products with a minimum durability/use by date of more than three months

6. EXEMPTIONS FROM DATE MARKING

Fresh fruits and vegetables shall be exempt from date marking requirements.

7. INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

Instructions for use including reconstitution, where applicable, shall be included on the label, as necessary, to ensure correct utilization of food.

8. IRRADIATED FOOD

The label of a food which has been treated with ionizing radiation shall carry a written statement indicating that treatment in close proximity to the name of the food. The use of the international food irradiation symbol is optional but when it is used it shall be placed in close proximity to the name of the food.

9. EXEMPTIONS FROM MANDATORY LABELING REQUIREMENTS

Small units (where the surface area is less than 10cm²) may be exempt from requirements relating to ingredient declaration and nutritional information that may be prescribed under this standard.