



Packaging and labelling

K

Know

What do you need to know?

- Unsafe and/or unsuitable packaging can make your food and drink unsafe. You need to know that the packaging you use is suitable for use with food and drink so it keeps your product safe.
- Not all food or drinks have to be labelled, but for those that are, the labels must meet the rules in the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code).
- Some food or drink can become unsafe over time, even though it still might look, smell and taste OK. It's important to let your customer know when to eat your food by, by calculating the shelf-life and providing a Best Before, Use By or Baked On/Baked For date. You need to make sure you calculate this date correctly.
- The Baked On/Bkd On or Baked For/Bkd For date can only be used on bread with a shelf-life of less than 7 days.
- MPI has developed guides to help you create your food and/or drink label:
 - Follow **'A guide to food labelling'** www.mpi.govt.nz/document-vault/2965 to write your label.
 - Follow **'A guide to alcoholic drinks'** <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/31404-a-guide-to-alcoholic-drinks-whats-in-them-and-how-to-label> to write your label.





- Follow **'A guide to New Zealand honey labelling'** <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/26491-a-guide-to-new-zealand-honey-labelling> to write your label.



- Raw milk cheeses are unsafe for vulnerable people (i.e. young children, older people, pregnant women and people with compromised immune systems). You should let these people know raw milk cheese is unsafe for them.

Package

- Only use packaging that doesn't cause, or contribute to, food or drink becoming unsafe or unsuitable.
- Check that packaging is intended for your type of foods or drink or use.
- Handle and store packaging with the same care as a food or drink, ingredient or input.

Why is packaging important?

- Packaging protects your food or drink from becoming unsafe or unsuitable.
- Anything that touches your packaging (i.e. bugs, chemicals or foreign matter) can make your food or drink unsafe or unsuitable.

Labelling

- For all food and drink you label you must meet either the rules in the Code or if exporting, the rules set by the destination market, if they are different.

Producing, processing and handling food

- If you are supplying bulk food or drink, these will generally need to be accompanied with a packing or specification sheet. You must supply the same information that would go on the food label.
- If your food or drink doesn't have to be labelled, you must still be able to tell your customers:
 - what's in the food or drink,
 - any warning statements,
 - if the food or drink is made from or contains genetically modified ingredients or irradiated foods,
 - information about the variety, vintage, country, or area of origin for grape wine,
 - ingredients list (including a statement if the milk is raw or thermised).



Why is labelling important?

- Labels allow your customers to make good and safe choices.
- Some of your customers may have medical conditions (e.g. allergies) which require them to include or avoid certain foods in their diet.
- Consistency in the layout of label (e.g. having a nutrition information panel and using minimum font sizes) can help your customers make good choices.
- Some countries have different requirements for percentage and labelling statements. NZ Winegrowers provides an international wine labelling guide which is available in the member only section of their website (www.nzwine.com).



Why calculate the shelf-life of a food?

- You might need to work out the shelf-life of a food so that you can apply a date mark.
- There is a guide to help you work out shelf-life. Follow **'How to determine the shelf-life of food'** <http://mpi.govt.nz/document-vault/12540>.
- Food that has a shelf-life of more than 2 years, or is an individual portion of ice cream or ice confection (e.g. a popsicle) does not need to be date marked.

D

Do

What do you need to do?

Package

- If you are packaging food or drink you must:
 - implement procedures for ensuring packaging will not cause, or contribute to, food or drink becoming unsafe or unsuitable,
 - only use packaging that is suitable for use with food and drink. Either:
 - purchase packaging labelled as being suitable for food or drink, or
 - get an assurance from your supplier that it is food grade.
 - calculate the food's shelf-life (if applicable), and apply the appropriate date marking, identify whether you need to either:
 - label your food or drink, and/or
 - provide a packing or specification sheet with bulk food or drink (e.g. catering packs).

D

Do

Label

- You must meet the rules about labelling in the Code for any food or drink you label.
- Labels or specification sheets must include:
 - name of the food or drink,
 - lot/batch identification,
 - name and address of your New Zealand or Australian business,
 - any applicable advisory statements, warning statements and declarations,
 - any conditions for storage and use,
 - ingredients list (not required for standardised alcoholic drinks),
 - date marking (e.g. Use By, Best Before etc.) (not required for food or drink with a shelf-life of more than 2 years),
 - net contents,
 - number of standard drinks,
 - alcohol content (by volume),
 - nutrition information panel (not required for alcoholic drinks - unless a nutrition content claim is made),
 - you can't make health claims about alcoholic drinks, but you can make nutrition content claims about carbohydrate, energy and gluten,
 - information about nutrition, health and related claims (only if you've made a claim),



D

Do

- information about characterising ingredients and components (not required for standardised alcoholic drinks),
 - if the product is or has been made with genetically modified foods or irradiated foods.
- If exporting grape wine, you must meet the Code, or follow any labelling rules that are specified by the export market if they are different.
 - If your grape wine label includes a statement about a single grape variety, vintage or area of origin, at least 85% of the wine must contain that grape variety, be made in that vintage or come from that area.*
 - If your grape wine label includes a statement about a blend or combination of grape varieties, vintages or areas of origin, at least 85% of the blend must contain those grape varieties, be made from those vintages or come from those areas. Your wine label must list these in descending order from greatest to least amount in your blend.*
 - *Brandy or other spirits to fortify grape wine, and yeasts (less than 50ml/L) can be excluded from these calculations.
 - You must not include a claim about grape variety, vintage area of origin if the wine has a higher percentage of wine or from another grape variety, vintage, country or area of origin.
 - If any grapes, juice or wine from another country is added to your wine you must include this on your label.

S

Show



What do you need to show?

- Show your verifier:
 - your packaging and how you know it is safe and suitable for the foods you are packaging,
 - your food and drink labels and how you know what to put on them,
 - how you know your grape wine label statements about grape variety, vintage or area of origin are correct and true,
 - how you know your label complies with the requirements of any applicable overseas market.
- Your verifier might ask you how you calculated the shelf-life of your food.