

LABELLING OF MEAT PRODUCTS

The Meat Products Regulations (NI) 2003 The Food Labelling Regulations (NI) 1996 (as amended)

WHAT DOES THIS FACT SHEET COVER?

The labelling of meat products including cured and uncured meat.

However, it does not apply to the following:-

- Raw meat to which no ingredient other than proteolytic enzymes has been added.
- Uncooked chickens, turkeys etc. with or without added water, self basting preparations, additives.
- Products that contain the fat, but no other meat, of any bird or animal.

Certain types of meat products such as burgers, sausages and meat pies must satisfy the compositional standards laid down in the regulations. Fact sheet entitled "Meat Products Compositional Standards" which gives comprehensive details of the minimum compositional requirements.

1) LABELLING OF NON-PREPACKED PRODUCTS AND PRODUCTS PRE-PACKED FOR DIRECT SALE

In relation to meat products, the following definitions apply :-

"non pre-packed" means not put in any packaging and ready for sale to the ultimate consumer or to a catering establishment.

"pre-packed for direct sale" means pre-packed for a retailer for sale by him on the premises where the food is packed or from a vehicle or stall used by him.

Under these situations the following details should be labelled:-

a) The name of the food – including the relevant indication regarding added ingredients as detailed in **a)** below

b) QUID declaration – as explained in **b)** below

c) Indication of additives – the following categories of additives must be labelled:-

- Antioxidants
- Artificial sweeteners
- Colours
- Flavour enhancers
- Flavourings
- Preservatives

For this purpose it is sufficient to state the category of additive without specifying its full name or E number.

If you do not manufacture meat products yourself, this information will be obtainable from your supplier.

2) LABELLING OF PREPACKED PRODUCTS

The following details must appear on the label:-

a) the true name of the meat product

This must either be:-

- A name required by law- see Fact Sheet Meat Products Compositional Standards
- If there is no name required by law, then a customary name may be used, i.e. one which is customary in the area where the meat is sold e.g. Cornish pasty.
- If neither of the names under i) nor ii) are used, then a description sufficiently precise to inform the purchaser of the true nature of the food and which distinguishes it from similar products with which it could be confused.

The true name may not be a brand name, a trade mark or a made up name.

Any meat product which has the appearance of a cut, joint, slice, portion, or carcase of meat or cured meat (whether cooked or uncooked) must also include an indication of the following **in the name of the food**:-

- any added ingredient of animal origin, unless the meat product contains meat of the species from which that added ingredient is derived.
- any added ingredient **other than** the following ingredients:-
 - additives
 - curing salt
 - ingredients used solely as a garnish or decorative coating
 - any ingredient (not being an additive) that is added only in order to impart odour or taste or both
 - salt, herb or spice used as seasoning
 - starch that is added only for a technological purpose
 - sugar that is added only in order to impart a sweet taste
 - added water in quantities of 5% or less in cooked cured meat
 - added water in quantities of 10% or less in uncooked cured meat

b) "QUID" declaration

This is a declaration that shows the percentage of an ingredient or category of ingredients in a product. A QUID declaration must be present to indicate the percentage of meat in the meat products you sell, for example the amount of pork in a pork sausage or the percentage of meat in a meat pie.

There are two methods for calculating a QUID declaration: -

The Mixing Bowl Method:

The weight of the ingredient is divided by the total weight of all the ingredients, minus the weight of water or other volatile ingredients lost during manufacture, e.g. the fish content of a fish finger:

<u>Ingredient</u>	<u>Weight</u>
Fish	70g
Batter	20g
Crumb	20g
Total before frying	110g
frying oil taken up	7g
Total mixing bowl	117g
water lost from batter during frying	-5g
Total of ingredients	112g

Formula $70/112 \times 100 = 62.5\%$

Method For Foods Which Lose Moisture Following Heat Or Other Treatment

Where a product loses moisture as a result of production e.g. the cooking of a meat patty, the final cooked product will weigh less than the sum of the uncooked ingredients. The QUID declaration must therefore be made on the basis of the amount of the ingredient at the mixing bowl stage as a percentage of the weight of the final product:-

<u>Ingredients</u>	<u>Weight</u>
Flour	100g
Butter	35g
Eggs	10g
Total mixing bowl	195g
Total after baking	169g

Formula $50/169 \times 100 = 29.6\%$

The following products are not required to bear QUID declaration when sold non-prepacked or prepacked for direct sale:-

- sandwiches, filled rolls and similar products
- pizzas and similar topped products
- food for which the name is "broth", "gravy" or "soup", whether or not qualified by other words
- food consisting of an assemblage of two or more ingredients, which has not been subjected to any processing or treatment once it has been assembled, and which is sold to the ultimate consumer as an individual portion intended to be consumed without further processing or treatment.

The following details must also appear on the label of pre-packed meat products. For a more detailed explanation of any of the following see Fact Sheet "Labelling and Marking Pre-Packed Food".

c) List of Ingredients in descending order by weight

d) Indication of minimum durability (IMD)

e) Special storage conditions associated with IMD. e.g. keep refrigerated 1 - 5°C

f) Name and address of the manufacturer, packer or seller

g) Place of origin

h) Instructions for use

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE FOOD I SELL FAILS TO COMPLY WITH THE ABOVE LEGISLATION, WILL I BE COMMITTING AN OFFENCE?

Yes. Failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £5000 for each offence and/or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months.

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SUMMARY OF COMPOSITIONAL STANDARDS

X is used to refer to either meat or type of meat e.g. meat pie or pork pie etc.

Name	Compositional Standards		
	Pork	Birds & Rabbits	Beef, Lamb & other species
Burger	67%	55%	62%
Economy Burger	50%	41%	47%
Hamburger	67%	-	62%
Pork sausage	42%	-	-
Sausage	32%	26%	30%
X pie	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%
X pie (between 200g & 100g)	11%	11%	11%
X pie (less than 100g)	10%	10%	10%
X & something else pie	7%	7%	7%
Something else & X pie	6%	6%	6%
Pasty, sausage roll	6%	6%	6%

The above is a summary only, for a complete list containing all compositional standards see Fact Sheet entitled "Meat Products Compositional Standards"