

**MEAT PRODUCTS COMPOSITIONAL
STANDARDS**
The Meat Products Regulations (NI) 2003

WHAT DOES THE FACT SHEET COVER?

The law requires some types of meat products to contain a minimum amount of meat and named meat.

THIS LEAFLET DOES NOT COVER:

The labelling of meat products

MEAT PRODUCT:

“Meat Product” means any food, which consists of meat, or which contains meat, mechanically recovered meat or, from an animal or bird, heart, tongue, head muscles (other than cheeks), carpus, tarsus (feet) or tail. The following are *not* meat products: raw meat with no added ingredients (except proteolysis enzymes); uncooked poultry with no added ingredients except additives, water, self-basting preparations or seasonings; products containing fat but no other meat.

MEAT:

“Meat” means skeletal muscle with naturally included or attached fat and connective tissue. Note that this means mechanically recovered meat, heart, tongue, etc are *not* meat for the purposes of calculating meat contents. There are also limits set for the amount of fat and connective tissue that can be included with the muscle as “meat”, and these are as follows:

Type of Meat:	Pork	Birds and Rabbits	Beef, Lamb and other species
Fat:	30%	15%	25%
Connective Tissue:	25%	10%	25%

MEAT CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

The minimum meat content requirements and requirements as to the type of meat used in certain products are summarised in the table below.

SALES TO CATERERS

These must comply with the same minimum standards as retail.

PROBLEMS

If you make your own products, ensure that you know, and stick to, the exact recipe and make due allowance for variations in mixing and /or manufacture.

COMPOSITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN MEAT PRODUCTS

Notes: X is used to refer to a type of meat, eg. beef burger, pork pie, etc. Meat content for numbers 7-13 should be calculated by reference to the weight of uncooked ingredients.

Meat includes cured meat.

Name of Product	Pork only	Birds and Rabbits	Beef, Lamb and other species, or other mixtures of meat	Type of meat used
1. Burger	67%	55%	62%	If described as an X burger, the amount of X must be at least equal to the minimum required meat content
2. Economy Burger	50%	41%	47%	If described as an X economy burger, the amount of X must be at least equal to the minimum required meat content
3. Hamburger	67%	-	62%	All pork, all beef or a mixture of pork and beef
4. Chopped X	75%	62%	70%	-
5. Corned meat, Corned X	120%	120%	120%	All the meat must be X; total fat content must not exceed 15%
6. Luncheon meat, Luncheon X	67%	55%	62%	-
7. Meat Pie, Meat Pudding, X Pie, X Pudding, Melton Mowbray Pie	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%	-
8. Meat Pie, Meat Pudding, X Pie, X Pudding, Melton Mowbray Pie, weighing not more than 200g and not less than 100g	11%	11%	11%	-
9. Meat Pie, Meat Pudding, Melton Mowbray pie, weighing less than 100g	10%	10%	10%	-
10. Scottish Pie, Scotch pie	10%	10%	10%	-

Name of Product	Pork only	Birds and Rabbits	Beef, Lamb and other species, or other mixtures of meat	Type of meat used
11. Meat and something else pie, meat and something else pudding	7%	7%	7%	-
12. Something else and meat pie, something else and meat pudding	6%	6%	6%	-
13. Pasty, pastie, bridie, sausage roll	6%	6%	6%	-
14. Pork sausage (but not pork liver sausage or pork tongue sausage), pork link, pork chipolata, pork sausage meat	42%	-	-	-
15. Sausage (but not liver sausage or tongue sausage), link, chipolata, sausage meat	32%	26%	30%	-

Uncooked meat products

Certain parts of the carcass of mammalian species may not be used in uncooked meat products, i.e. brains, feet, small and large intestine, lungs, oesophagus, rectum, spinal cord, spleen, stomach, testicles, udder, however, uncooked intestines may be used as casings, e.g. for sausages.

Minced Meat

There is no standard prescribed by law, but it is generally accepted that it should not contain more than 25% fat. If qualified by words such as "lean" or "extra lean", the following levels have been published by the Association of Public Analysts :-

DESCRIPTION OF MINCED BEEF	RECOMMENDED % FAT LEVEL
Lean Minced Beef	<10%
Extra Lean Minced Beef	<5%
Low Fat	<3%

Where a particular meat is named, e.g. "mince beef", there should be no other meats present. The use of additives in minced meat is prohibited.

Additives

The type and amounts of additives, such as colours and preservatives that can be used in meat products are strictly controlled. Some are banned, whereas for others only permitted additives may be used. Please contact the number on the front of this fact sheet if you require any further information.

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.

PLEASE NOTE, THIS LEAFLET HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR THE GUIDANCE OF TRADERS BY BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL. IT IS NOT AN AUTHORITATIVE DOCUMENT ON THE LAW AND IS ONLY INTENDED FOR GUIDANCE. IT IS NOT NECESSARILY COMPREHENSIVE AND IS SUBJECT TO REVISION IN THE LIGHT OF FURTHER INFORMATION. FOR FURTHER GUIDANCE PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT.