

# COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELLING FACT SHEET

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## Introduction

Country of Origin Labelling (CoOL) provides consumers with information on the country or countries where their food is grown, manufactured or packaged.

Standard 1.2.11 – Country of Origin Labelling, comes into effect on June 8 2006. This standard applies to unpackaged fresh food, unpackaged processed food and fresh food in packages that do not obscure the nature or quality of the produce.

This standard does not apply to food sold to the public by restaurants, canteens, schools, caterers or self-catering institutions where the food sold is for immediate consumption.

## Labelling requirements for unpackaged foods

The following foods displayed for retail sale require a label on or in connection with the display of the food:

- ✓ Fresh fish, either singly or mixed with one or more other foods;
- ✓ Fish that has undergone any processing, including cooking, drying or coating with another food;
- ✓ Whole or cut fruit and vegetables, fresh or preserved, pickled, cooked, frozen or dehydrated. This does not include where the preserved fruit and vegetables have been mixed with foods other than those used in preserving the produce;
- ✓ Whole or cut fruit and vegetables displayed in a package that does not obscure their nature of quality.

For the purpose of the Food Standards Code, nuts, legumes, herbs, spices and mushrooms are classified as vegetables.

The label on these food products is required to either:

- 1 identify the country or countries of origin of the food (including Australia);  
or
- 2 indicate that the foods are a mix of local and/or imported foods, as the case may be.

## Country of Origin Labelling Statements

The provisions of the new standard follow the principles in the *Trade Practices Act 1974* in respect to prohibiting the use of false or misleading statements. The following specify the circumstances in which certain statements can be used:

- ✓ 'Product of', 'Produce of' and 'Produced in' are premium claims and the country claimed must be the origin of each significant ingredient and virtually all the process of manufacture of the food must have happened in that country.
- ✓ 'Made in', 'Manufactured in' and 'Australian made' can be used only if the food has been substantially transformed in the country claimed, and 50% or more of the cost of production must have been incurred in that country.
- ✓ 'Made in Australia from imported ingredients' or 'Packaged in Australia from local and imported ingredients' are qualified claims. These can be used where it is not possible for a 'Made in' claim to be made, either due to uncertainty around the question of substantial transformation and whether 50% or more of production costs is met, or to adjust to seasonal changes in availability of the produce.

Labels on both packaged and unpackaged food must be in English, legible to the average person and distinct from the background. They must be clear and unambiguous. The sign adjacent to unpackaged products must be legible and in a type size of at least 9mm.

### Where to from here?

On 8 December 2006, CoOL requirements will be required on all unpackaged fresh pork and pork products. More information will be provided before this date. On 8 December 2007, all packaged food will need to comply with CoOL requirements. Once this Standard comes into force for all packaged products, a 12 month grace period will be provided for compliance of old manufactured stock. Once again, more information will be provided before this date.

### Want to find more information?

For more information on the CoOL requirements, please visit the Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) website: [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au). On this website you will be able to download the full Food Standards Code, which includes Standard 1.2.11.

FSANZ have produced a user guide on the new CoOL requirements. This can be downloaded from the following website:

[www.foodstandards.gov.au/\\_srcfiles/CoOL\\_1st%20Edn-PRINT\\_with\\_cover.pdf](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/_srcfiles/CoOL_1st%20Edn-PRINT_with_cover.pdf)

More information can be obtained by contacting the FSANZ Advice Service on 1300 652 166 or [advice@foodstandards.gov.au](mailto:advice@foodstandards.gov.au).