

Weight

Every product should include the net weight of the contents.

Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)

All food items containing GMOs should have the following notice 'This product contains GMOs'.

Nutrition and Health Claims

Pre-packed food items having a nutritional or health claim e.g. low fat, rich in fibre, should include a nutrition information label expressed per 100g or ml.

Typical Nutritional Information per 100g of product:	
Energy (kCal/kJ)	729/3000
Protein (g)	0.8
Carbohydrates (g)	3.5
Fat (g)	79.1

There are some exemptions on the details which are needed on the label, such as salt. This does not need to have a list of ingredients unless nothing else is added to it and neither the best before date since this is a preservative. On the other hand, there are products which need specific information e.g. eggs require having the Class which indicates the quality of the egg.

Further information on the best choices of food products ideal for your health can be obtained by reading the booklet 'Read Food Labels for Healthier Choices'. This can be obtained from the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate.

For further queries or if you wish to lodge a related complaint, you may contact the Health Inspectorate Services within the Directorate for Environmental Health from Monday to Friday from 8 in the morning till 3 in the afternoon on telephone number 21337333 or by e-mail on mhi@gov.mt or you may go personally to the Health Inspectorate Services at 37/39, Rue d'Argens, Msida.

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YOUR HEALTH
We care

FSC
 FOOD SAFETY COMMISSION

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Ministry for Health, the Elderly and Community Care

Labelling of Food Products



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Introduction

The fundamental rule of food labelling is that consumers have a right to the proper and correct information. Labelling of pre-packed food provides the necessary information on the properties of the food. Labelling is governed by National and European food laws and regulations.

Information must be clear and accurate

Food labelling must not mislead the consumer. The labelling must not attribute to any foodstuff the property of preventing or curing a human disease or refer to such properties. Food labels must not mislead the customer on the country of origin of the product.

Language

With the exception of infant formulae, the information on food items has to be in Maltese, English or Italian. In the case of infant formulae having just the Italian language is not acceptable.

Product name

The name of the product gives the exact description about the nature of the product. The company name is not obligatory.



List of ingredients

This list must be thorough and listed in descending order according to their weight. The list has to be preceded by the word 'Ingredients'. Only additives that are allowed to be used with food can be used.

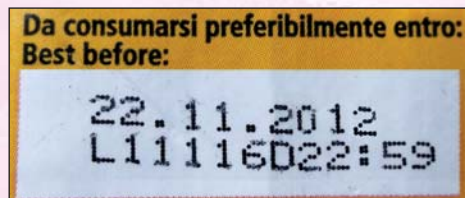
There are also food additives that can only be used with certain types of food as well. Additives must not exceed the limits as stipulated in the law.

When a particular ingredient is named in the product title or else noted by pictorial means it should be highlighted either in the list of ingredients or in the name of the product; e.g. a pre-packed food item having a product name such as 'chicken and mushroom pie' on the label must declare the percentage of chicken and mushroom in the ingredients' list or in the name of the product.

Ingredients: Water, sugar, acidity regulator: E330, colouring: E124, E122, E102, strawberry flavour, preservative: E211 E102, E122 may have adverse effect on activity and attention in children

Durability date

'Use By Date' is used on products that are highly perishable and have a short shelf-life such as raw and cooked meats, milk and yoghurt. 'Expiry Date' on a product has the same meaning as 'Use By Date'. 'Best Before' or 'Best Before End' date is used for products with a long shelf-life and means the date until the product can reasonably be expected to retain its optimum condition. These dates should appear in the European mode i.e. day-month-year in case of Best Before or month-year or year only in case of Best Before End.



Lot number

The identification of the lot or batch number is to be preceded with the letter L.

Alcohol content

Products that contain more than 1.2% alcohol must show the alcohol content.

Name and address of the manufacturer

The name and address of the manufacturer or packer must be shown on the product label. As for established European sellers their products can show their own details rather than those of the manufacturer or packer.

Allergens

Ingredients that may cause intolerances or allergies such as cereals containing gluten, mustard, sesame seeds, sulphur dioxide, peanuts, tree nuts, molluscs, lupin beans, eggs, fish, crustaceans, soybeans, milk and celery must be indicated on the label with a clear reference.

Allergy advice

May contain traces of nuts

Storage conditions

The label should indicate any special storage conditions to enable the consumer to maintain the quality of the product such as 'refrigerate after opening' or 'store in a cool dry place'.

storage...

Store at -18°C or below.
Do not re-freeze once defrosted.

Instructions for use

If necessary the label must contain instructions on how to use the product to enable the consumer to make appropriate use of the food such as cooking or preparation instructions.