

Voluntary labelling and claims



Voluntary labelling



What is the difference between a nutrition and a health claim on food labelling?

What types of information can be added to food labelling to promote the product?



Is organic food healthier for you?

Voluntary labelling



Certain pieces of information are often included on food labels but are not required by law. These are added by the manufacturer or retailer voluntarily. Examples of additional information that may be included in a label are:

General	Nutrition	Marketing	Production
Vegetarian or vegan labelling	Nutrition information*	Marketing terms, for example fresh, pure, natural	Production methods, such as organic
Country of origin (where not required)	Nutrition signposting, for example colour codes or reference intake	Pictures and graphics	Method of slaughter, for example Halal and scejchita slaughter
Serving suggestions			

*Nutrition information is mandatory when a food makes a nutrition claim (for example, low fat) or a health claim (for example, fibre helps maintain a healthy digestion). From 13 December 2016 nutrition labelling will become mandatory whether or not a claim is made on the majority of foods.

Nutrition and health claims



- > A nutrition claim is any claim that states, suggests or implies that the food has a particular beneficial nutritional property, for example, low fat.
- > A health claim is any claim that states, suggests or implies that a relationship exists between a food category, a food or one of its constituents and health, for example, calcium is needed for normal growth and development of bone in children. This claim can only be used for food which is a source of calcium.

Nutrition claim



Health claims



Nutrition claims



A nutrition claim suggests or implies that the food has a particular beneficial nutritional property.

Low fat



A claim that states or suggests a food is low in fat.

With no added sugars



A claim that states or suggests sugars have not been added to a food.

Low sodium/salt



A claim that states or suggests a food is low in sodium or salt.

Introduction to nutrient quantities on food labels



1. Most pre-packed foods will have to provide nutrition information by 2016.
 - Nutrition information provides the amount of certain nutrients per 100g.
2. Separately there is a voluntary scheme in which levels of four nutrients have been classed as low, medium and high based on the amount of the nutrient per 100g (see table).
 - This helps the consumer to judge the levels of fat, sugar and salt from the nutrition label.
 - This information is also used for Front of Pack nutrition labelling.

Criteria for 100g of food

Text	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
Colour code	Green	Amber	Red
Fat	$\leq 3.0\text{g}/100\text{g}$	$>3.0\text{g}$ to $\leq 20\text{g}/100\text{g}$	$>20\text{g}/100\text{g}$
Saturates	$\leq 1.5\text{g}/100\text{g}$	$>1.5\text{g}$ to $\leq 5.0\text{g}/100\text{g}$	$>5.0\text{g}/100\text{g}$
(Total) Sugars	$\leq 5.0\text{g}/100\text{g}$	$>5.0\text{g}$ and $\leq 15\text{g}/100\text{g}$	$>15\text{g}/100\text{g}$
Salt	$\leq 0.3\text{g}/100\text{g}$	$>0.3\text{g}$ to $\leq 1.5\text{g}/100\text{g}$	$>1.5\text{g}/100\text{g}$

Marketing terms



Certain terms are used by manufacturers, producers and retailers to market their products, but it is important that these terms do not mislead consumers. These are known as marketing terms.

Examples of marketing terms

- > **Fresh** – Can be helpful to identify produce that is sold within a short time of production or harvesting
- > **Pure** – Mostly for foods containing single ingredients to which nothing has been added
- > **Natural** – Only contains natural ingredients with no other added ingredients



Special dietary advice – vegetarians and vegans



- If a food is labelled vegetarian, it means that the food doesn't contain any meat, fish, or poultry etc. or additives from animal sources such as gelatine.
- Products carrying the Vegetarian Society Approved logo must meet certain requirements laid down by the Vegetarian Society.
- If a food is labelled vegan, it means that the food does not contain any animal products, including those from living animals – such as milk.

Vegetarian logos



Vegan logo



Organic food



Organic food plays a role in providing choice for consumers.

- There are many different reasons why consumers choose to buy organic food. These can include health reasons, concern for the environment and animal welfare.
- Eating organic food is one way to reduce consumption of pesticide residues and additives.
- Organic food can often be more expensive and less readily available.
- There is no conclusive evidence that organic food is nutritionally superior.
- Products carrying organic logos must meet certain criteria.

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Making healthy food choices



Why do food producers add extra information to food labelling?

Does the information food producers voluntarily add to food labelling affect your food choices?