



## **Labeling Requirements :**

### **A. General Requirements**

Labeling requirements for prepackaged and canned foods are outlined in the Iraqi Food Standards IQS/230/1989. These labeling requirements were drafted in 1973 and were updated in 1978 by the **COSQC (The Central Organization of Standardization and Quality Control)** and discussed by the Technical Commission for the Standardization of Dairy Products and Canned Foods. The labeling requirements for locally produced and imported food products are as follows:

- The name of the food .
- List of ingredients .
- Net contents and drained weight (metric system) .
- Name and address of the manufacturer/packer/distributor/importer/exporter/vendor .
- Country of origin .
- Lot identification .
- Date of production and storage instruction .
- Instruction for use .
- Quantitative ingredients declaration .

## **B. Shelf life**

The first Iraqi regulation on foodstuff shelf life was written in 1986 as the Guidelines for Shelf life of Foodstuffs but later was approved by a special commission set up for this purpose, and known as Iraq General Standardization number 1847/1994. It was updated in 1999 and published in the National Gazette issue number 3868 on March 5, 2001.

A further amendment to Iraq General Standardization number 1847/1999 Foodstuff Shelf Life was published in the official Iraq Gazette issue number 3878 in May 2001. Standard Specification number IQS/1847/1999 identified the shelf life requirements for the majority of foodstuffs. As for selected perishable foods (vegetables and fruits), white sugar liquid and dried, table salt, pulses (unprocessed and unpackaged), dried vegetables, medicinal plants and liquor, the only shelf life requirement is the date of expiration or date of manufacture. Products such as green coffee (unpackaged), black tea (unpackaged) herbs and spices would meet the general labeling requirements of the date of harvest:

**- For products having three months shelf life or less** - Dates shall be engraved or in relief, printed with permanent ink directly on all packages or their original label by producer only. Using stickers and expiration dates is not permissible. For these products, date of production and validity should be stated in as day, month and year.

**-For products with more than three months shelf life** - Product packaging should state date of production and expiration in the order, month / year, and that considering first day of the month, as date for

production and likewise the end of the month is considered as the expiry date.

**- For packaging containing multiple pieces,** shelf life information should be printed on the outer packaging of each individual item.

**- For individual food products having a shelf life of more than one year,** no approval will be granted for importation for which less than of half of the product's shelf-life remains. For products having a shelf life of one year or less, no more than one-third of the shelf life may have expired.

Shelf life can only be shown by clear and unambiguous production and expiration dates. The use of any of the following statements for expressing expiration date is permissible.

Expiration Date

Use by (date)

Fit for (from the day of production)

Use Before

Sell by date (for food products having an expiration period exceeding 3 months).

The production and expiration dates should be declared on the label of the package in a clear manner as follows:

DD-MM-YY: for food stuffs with expiration period less than three months.

MM-YY: for foodstuffs with expiration exceeding three months.

## **Minimum Requirements for Packaged-food Labeling**

The Massachusetts Food Protection Program has prepared this guide to help you develop a food label that complies with Massachusetts and federal labeling requirements. For additional information, please refer to the resources listed on the back panel.

### **Foods that Require Labeling**

All packaged foods must be labeled in accordance with Massachusetts and federal labeling regulations, including all foods intended for retail sale that are manufactured in licensed residential kitchens.

**For interpretations and assistance with labeling regulations, please contact:**

### **Minimum Information Required on a Food Label**

The Massachusetts and federal labeling regulations require the following information on every food label:

- 1- Common or usual name of the product.
- 2- **All** ingredients listed in descending order of predominance by weight, and a complete listing of sub-ingredients.

*Example of a sub-ingredient:* Flour (bleached wheat flour, malt barley, flour, niacin, iron, potassium thiamine, thiamine mononitrate, riboflavin).

- 3- Net weight of product.

Dual declaration of net weight, if product weighs one pound or more.

*Example:* 1 pound [16 oz.]

- 4- “Keep refrigerated” or “Keep frozen” (if product is perishable).

5- All perishable or semi-perishable foods require open-dating and recommended storage conditions printed, stamped, or embossed on the retail package.

6- Once an open-date has been placed on a product, the date may not be altered.

7- Name and address of the manufacturer, packer, or distributor. If the company is not listed in the current edition of the local telephone book under the name printed on the label, the street address must also be included on the label.

8- Nutrition labeling.

9- If a food product has a standard of identity, the food must meet the standard in order to be offered for sale under that product name.

10- All FDA certified colors.

*Example: FD&C Yellow #5, FD&C Red #3*

### **Massachusetts Open-dating Regulation**

To comply with the Massachusetts open-dating labeling regulation, a “sell-by” or “best-if-used-by” date is required if the product has a recommended shelf life of fewer than 90 days.

Foods exempt from this requirement include: fresh meat, poultry, fish, fruits, and vegetables offered for sale unpackaged or in containers permitting sensory examination, and food products pre-packaged for retail sale with a net weight of less than 1½ ounces.

Foods may be sold after the open-date if the following conditions are met:

- It is wholesome and good quality.
- The product is segregated from food products that are not “past date,” and the product is clearly marked as being “past date.”

## **Health Claims**

Health claims allowed by the **FDA(Food and Drug Administration)** on a label are limited to the following relationships between diet and disease:

1. Calcium and reduced risk of osteoporosis.
2. Sodium and increased risk of hypertension.
3. Dietary saturated fat and cholesterol and increased risk of heart disease.
4. Dietary fat and increased risk of cancer.
5. Fiber-containing grain products, fruits, and vegetables and reduced risk of cancer.
6. Fruits/vegetables and reduced risk of cancer.
7. Fruits, vegetables, and grain products that contain fiber, particularly soluble fiber and reduced risk of heart disease.
8. Soluble fiber from certain foods and reduced risk of heart disease.
9. Folic acid and reduced risk of neural tube defects.
10. Soy protein & reduced risk of heart disease.
11. Stanols/sterols and reduced risk of heart disease.
12. Dietary non-cariogenic carbohydrate sweeteners and reduced risk of tooth decay.

## **Food Allergen Labeling**

The Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act of 2004 (**FALCPA**) addresses the labeling of foods that contain any of the eight major food allergens.

**FALCPA** defines "major food allergens" as (**Milk ,Fish, Egg, Crustacean, Shellfish, Peanuts, Tree Nuts, Soybeans, Wheat**)

All ingredients that contain a major food allergen must be labeled, even if they are exempted from labeling by being a spice, flavoring, coloring or incidental additive.

FALCPA requires the labeling of food allergens in one of two ways.

1. In the ingredient statement, include the common or usual name of the food source, followed by the name of the allergen in parentheses. For example: Ingredients: Flour (**wheat**), whey (**milk**)
2. After the ingredient statement, place the word, "Contains:" followed by the name of the food allergen. For example: *Contains: Wheat, Milk*

FALCPA requires that:

- For Tree Nuts, the specific type of nut must be declared.

Example: almonds, pecans, walnuts

- For Fish and Crustacean Shellfish, the species must be declared:.

Example: cod, salmon, lobster, shrimp

FALCPA's requirements apply to all packaged foods sold in the United States, including both domestically manufactured and imported foods.

## **Massachusetts Minimum Requirements for Packaged-Food Labeling**

### **WHEAT BREAD**

Ingredients: Flour (bleached wheat flour, malt barley, flour, niacin, iron, potassium thiamine, thiamine mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid), Sugar, Eggs, Water, Milk, Margarine (liquid soybean oil, partially hydrogenated soybean oil, water, salt, whey, soybean lecithin, vegetable mono & diglycerides, sodium benzoate as a preservative, potassium caseinate [a milk protein], artificially colored, FD&C Red #3, artificially flavored, vitamin A, dalmite added), Yeast, Salt  
Contains: Wheat, Eggs, Milk, Soy