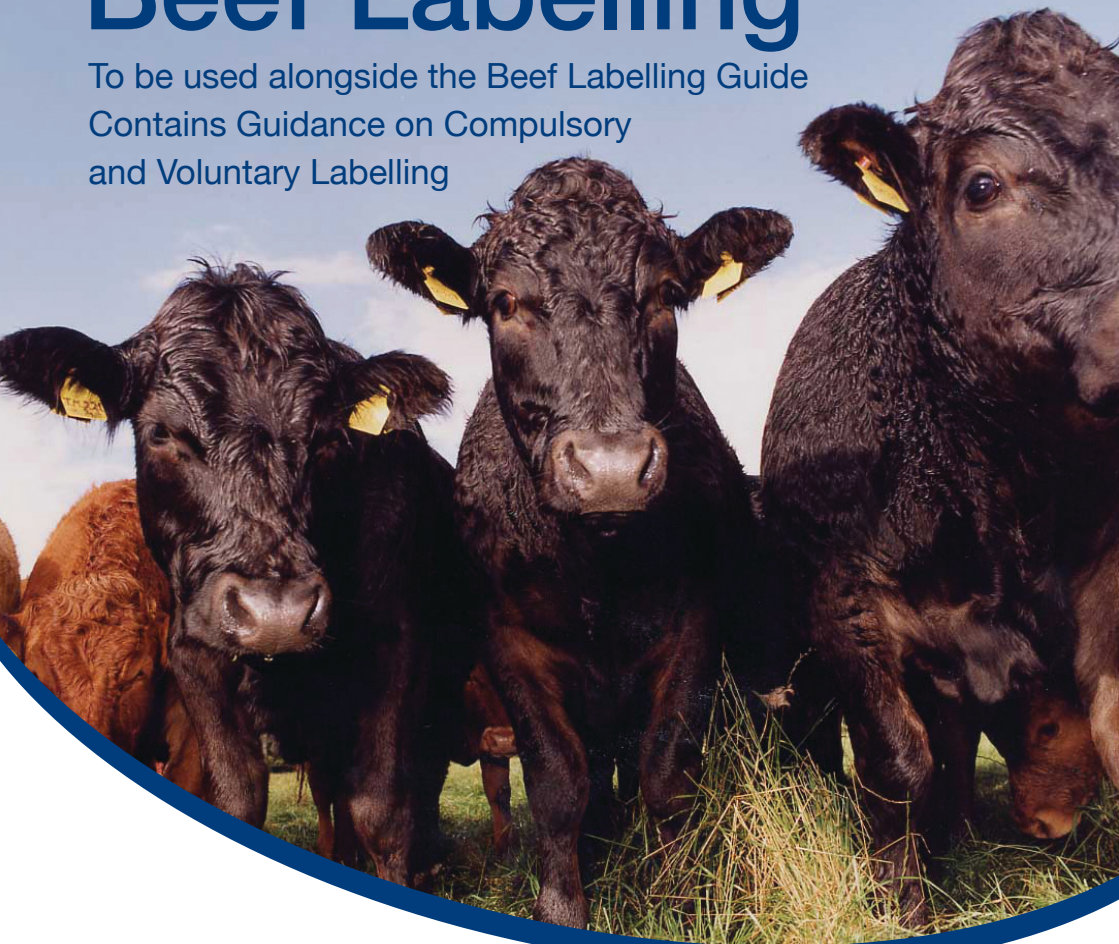


# Quick Guide to Beef Labelling

To be used alongside the Beef Labelling Guide  
Contains Guidance on Compulsory  
and Voluntary Labelling



Department of  
**Agriculture and  
Rural Development**

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## Compulsory Labelling Information

All beef\* offered for sale in the EC **must** be labelled with:

- **Reference Number** or Batch Code;
- **Born In** (member state or non-EC country of birth);
- **Reared In** (member state or non-EC country of rearing);
- **Slaughtered In** (member state or non-EC country of slaughter);
- **Licence Number** of slaughterhouse (e.g. UK9000);
- **Cut In** (member state or non-EC country of cutting);
- **Licence Number(s)** of cutting plant(s).

**Note: Origin** - If cattle are born, reared and slaughtered in the same country, the indication '**origin**' plus the country and the slaughterhouse EC number can be used instead of '**born in**', '**reared in**' and '**slaughtered in**'. Any imported cattle slaughtered in the UK cannot be labelled as Origin UK.

Butchers and retailers should be aware that they **must** clearly display the following at the point of sale:

- **Country of Birth**
- **Country of Rearing**
- **Country of Slaughter**
- **Country of Cutting**

It should also be noted that beef from **different countries** must be kept separate in a display area.

Names of EC or Non-EC countries must not be abbreviated; with the exception of **UK** and **IRL** for local sale e.g. Argentina to ARG is not acceptable.

A **batch** of beef (with a unique reference/batch number) must only contain beef cut up under practically identical conditions and must not exceed one day's production.

\* Beef-All beef and beef products that fall within CN codes 0201, 0202, 0206 10 95 & 0206 29 91

### Meat from animals aged less than 12 months

When labelling meat from animals aged less than 12 months at slaughter, additional indications must be made:

- **Age on slaughter: less than 8 months (or V) and Veal; or**
- **Age on slaughter: from 8 to less than 12 months (or Z) and Beef.**

### Derogations on Compulsory Labelling

There are a number of derogations to the above which apply to:

- **Mince:**

Any beef that has been minced into fragments or passed through a spiral screw mincer and contains less than 1% salt.

The label must show:

- **Reference Number** or Batch Code;
  - **Slaughtered in** (member State or non-EC country of slaughter that is, the batch must be slaughtered in one country;
  - **Minced/Prepared in** (member State or non-EC country of mincing/preparation); and
  - **Origin** - Only required if the meat is from animals born, reared and slaughtered in a member State or non-EC country that is different from the country of mincing/preparation.
- **Trimming:**

Small pieces of beef recognised as fit for human consumption produced exclusively during trimming operations during the boning of carcasses and/or the cutting up of beef (not 'lean trim').

The label must show:

- **Reference Number** or Batch Code;
- **Born and Reared in** (member State or non-EC country of birth and rearing);
- **Slaughtered in** (member State or non-EC country of slaughter); and
- **Cut in** (member State or non-EC country of cutting) plus plant EC licence number.

Origin may be used as detailed on page 2 of this booklet (this applies also to cut beef below).

Note: Essentially trimmings do not have to name individual slaughterhouse licence numbers and so can be from several (providing they are within one EU member state).

- **Pre-Packaged Cut Beef:**

Individual pack offered unaltered to final consumer.

The label must show:

- **Reference Number** or Batch Code;
- **Born and Reared in** (member State or non-EC country of birth and rearing);
- **Slaughtered in** (member State or non-EC country of slaughter) Plus EC licence number of the slaughter plant(s) (Up to a maximum of three); and
- **Cut in** (member State or non-EC country of slaughter) Plus EC licence number of the cutting plant(s) (Up to a maximum of three).

- **Non Pre-Packaged Cut Beef:**

Cut beef displayed for sale to the final consumer that has not been packaged, for example, butcher's counter.



- Supplier;
- Delivery note;
- Kill date and kill number;
- Weight;
- UK ear tag/cattle passport number or reference code;
- Product (cut);
- Tray number or colour; and
- Date placed on the counter.

And connect these to:

- The reference number or code;
- The compulsory labelling about slaughterhouse and cutting plants;
- The compulsory labelling relating to animals aged less than 12 months; and
- Any voluntary labelling claims made against sales.

### Non-compliance

All non-compliances are dealt with on an individual basis and can result in verbal warning, formal written warning, enforcement notices or court action.

## Voluntary Labelling Information

If you intend to give your customers any other written labelling information which is not compulsory, you must make sure you meet the requirements of food labelling regulations.

### Voluntary Labelling includes:

- Region or Locality where the animal was born and reared (for example, Northern Ireland or locally produced);
- Breed or Cross Breed names (for example, Aberdeen Angus sired or Hereford cross);

- Age or gender of animal;
- Method of production (for example, Grassfed);
- Assurance scheme (for example, Farm Quality Assured)
- Method of slaughter (for example, Halal); or
- Method or length of Maturation (for example, 21 days matured).

### Additional Labelling

In addition to the compulsory and voluntary labelling requirements shown, please see below the additional labelling information that can be added if required. These terms do not come under the compulsory requirements of the Beef Labelling Scheme.

- Name of the Product or Cut (for example, sirloin);
- Weight of the product;
- The Best before or Use by date;
- Storage conditions or conditions of use (for example, 'keep refrigerated');
- Instructions for use (for example, cooking instructions);
- Name and address of the manufacturer, packer or seller;
- Statements that the product has been packaged in a protective atmosphere;
- Statements in accordance with the carcass classification grid;
- Health mark required by the Fresh Meat Directive and other similar veterinary indications;
- Labelling as Organic (approval is required from Organic Certification Body eg Soil Association, OF&G); or
- Protected Designations of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) products.

If you have any queries in relation to labelling which is not compulsory, please contact your local Environmental Health Officer or the Food Standards Agency.

### **Contacts**

For enquires please contact:

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