



Beef Labelling Guide

for individuals/organisations in
Northern Ireland selling beef

BL3 (revised November 2016)



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**



Beef Labelling Guide

for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

Contents

Advice contact point	3
SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION	4
1. What is the beef labelling system?	4
2. What are the beef labelling rules?	4
3. Do the beef labelling rules apply to you/your business?	4
4. What type of beef must comply with the labelling rules?	4
5. What is labelling?	5
6. How should pre-packaged beef be labelled?	5
7. How should non pre-packaged beef be labelled?	5
8. What is a traceability system?	5
9. What happens if I do not follow these rules?	6
SECTION B: COMPULSORY LABELLING	7
10. What compulsory information must be shown on your labelling?	7
11. What compulsory information must be shown on your labelling for minced beef?	11
12. What compulsory information must be shown on your labelling for trimmings?	12
13. What compulsory information must be shown on pre-packaged cut meat?	13
14. What compulsory information must be shown on non pre-packaged cut meat?	14
15. How should you label beef imported from a non-EU country?	15
16. How do the rules apply to beef approved under the Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) and Product of Designated Origin (PDO) systems?	16
17. What are the criteria for PGIs and PDOs?	16
SECTION C: VOLUNTARY AND ADDITIONAL LABELLING	17
18. What are the rules relating to voluntary information on labels?	17



Beef Labelling Guide

for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

19.	Additional Labelling	17
20.	Contacts for voluntary/additional labelling	18
	APPENDIX 1 Examples of labels containing compulsory information.	19
	APPENDIX 2 Examples of display for compulsory labelling for non-pre-packaged beef	21
	APPENDIX 3 Blank Labels	22
	APPENDIX 4 Customer information	23
	APPENDIX 5 Legislation	24
	APPENDIX 6 Definitions	25

BEEF LABELLING GUIDE (BL3)

This booklet supersedes the *Beef Labelling Guide Booklet BL2 (November 2008)* and provides guidance on the compulsory beef and veal labelling system.

FOR ADVICE

Businesses in Northern Ireland should contact the Agri-food Inspection Branch (AfIB) of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for Northern Ireland (DAERA):

Telephone: 028 9052 5001

E-mail: AfIB.Admin@daera-ni.gov.uk

Address: Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Agri-Food Inspection Branch
Room 1018
Dundonald House
Upper Newtownards Road
Belfast
BT4 3SB

This Guide is available on the DAERA website:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/beef-labelling-guidance>



Beef Labelling Guide

for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. What is the beef labelling system?

1.1 The beef labelling system is European Union (EU) wide. It provides consumers with clear, reliable information about the origin of beef and veal on sale. A customer information note describing the system is provided in Appendix 4. Retailers may wish to copy this to hand out to their customers. Display of this information is not compulsory. The legislation governing the system is listed in Appendix 5. Definitions of terms used in the legislation are listed in Appendix 6.

2. What are the beef labelling rules?

2.1 The beef labelling rules apply to all fresh or frozen beef and veal (including mince and trimmings) offered for sale in the EU. Additional labelling requirements apply to meat and offal from animals aged less than 12 months. This is a compulsory system and requires you to label your beef with prescribed information (see Section B for full details of what labelling information you need to display).

3. Do the beef labelling rules apply to you/your business?

3.1 Yes, if you are selling fresh or frozen beef or veal, or offal from animals aged less than 12 months, anywhere in the supply chain. For example; slaughterhouses, cutting plants, cold stores, re-packaging centres, butchers' shops, mobile shops, market stalls, supermarkets, or farm shops. Suppliers to hotels, restaurants and other catering facilities are also included.

3.2 No, if you are selling cooked beef. For example: hotels, restaurants, fast food outlets, cafes or canteens. Consumers of beef from catering establishments may expect that information equivalent to that provided on labels on fresh/frozen beef should be available to them on request.

4. What type of beef must comply with the labelling rules?

4.1 Fresh and frozen beef and veal e.g. whole carcasses, quarters, sirloin or rump steak. This includes mince and uncooked beef burger patty with no added ingredients (e.g. soya protein, cereal binder). Offal from animals aged less than 12 months is also included. Uncooked beef that has been seasoned, either in depth or over the whole surface of the product and is either visible to the naked eye or clearly distinguishable by taste is not included. Beef and offal in processed products, such as, processed beef burgers, pies, sausages, ready meals or tinned beef are not covered by the beef labelling system. Such products do not need to be labelled with the compulsory terms. Fresh or frozen beef and veal means all products falling within Customs Nomenclature (CN) codes 0201, 0202, 0206 10 95 and 0206 29 91. If in doubt please contact DAERA, AfIB, (see page 3).



Beef Labelling Guide

for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

5. What is labelling?

5.1 Labelling covers written information given to customers at the point of sale. This includes information given on packaging material and on labels near the product. It also includes information given at the point of sale in advertisements, posters, announcements and leaflets associated with the product. Information given by word of mouth is not covered, although it is an offence under other legislation to mislead the consumer.

6. How should pre-packaged beef be labelled?

6.1 Pre-packaged beef must be labelled on its packaging. If packages are grouped together and sold in a carton, the required information may be shown on the carton and omitted from the individual packages within it. If however, the packages are sold without the outer covering, each must be labelled with the required information before sale. (See Section B 13 for detailed requirements).

7. How should non pre-packaged beef be labelled?

7.1 For non pre-packaged beef sold to the end customer, information must be on the meat or displayed in the shop, e.g. on a ticket in close proximity to the meat or on a sign on the wall visible to your customers (examples are provided at Appendix 2). The display must ensure that the beef is distinguishable within the shop so that the customer can see which information applies to which meat. The reference code(s) or number(s) on display must ensure that the beef can be traced back to its source through your traceability system. (See Section B 14 for detailed requirements)

8. What is a traceability system?

8.1 This is a manual or computer system kept by your business which will link the animals or beef you buy, to the reference number or code of the meat which you sell. All operators in the supply chain must have a traceability system so that beef on sale to the consumer can be traced back to the animal or group of animals from which it was derived and to prove that the labelling information given to customers throughout the supply chain is correct.

8.2 The exact type of information recorded in your traceability system depends on the nature of your operation. It should record the arrival and departure of each animal carcass, part carcass, primal or other cut of beef to ensure that there is a balance between arrivals and departures. The date of birth of each animal must be recorded at the slaughterhouse. Depending on your type of operation, you will need to record some or all of the following:

- intake date (of animal, carcass or cut);
- date of birth
- the supplier;
- delivery note details;
- kill date;



Beef Labelling Guide

for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

- weight;
- UK ear tag/cattle passport number or reference code;
- product (cut);
- tray number or colour;
- the date placed on the counter;

and link these to:

- the reference number or code;
- the compulsory labelling relating to the slaughterhouse and cutting plants;
- the compulsory labelling relating to animals aged less than 12 months.

9. What happens if I do not follow these rules?

9.1 Checks to ensure compliance with the rules are carried out by DAERA authorised officers in slaughterhouses and most cutting plants and by Environmental Health Officers at other premises. You must give these officers access to your premises and to your records.

9.2 You must not supply inaccurate or misleading information. Unless you have reason to doubt its accuracy, you can assume that the beef labelling information given to you when you buy beef from your suppliers is accurate. If any labelling information is omitted on beef from your suppliers it is **your responsibility** to ensure that you get confirmation of the correct information and keep a record of this.

9.3 If you fail to follow the rules, you will be required to remove your beef from sale until it is re-labelled in accordance with the rules. If it cannot be adequately re-labelled, because insufficient information is available to trace it, you may be required to send it directly for processing into products. You could also be required to take further steps in order to correct your breach of the rules. Serious breaches of the rules could constitute a criminal offence which, on conviction, will lead to a fine.



Beef Labelling

Guide for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

SECTION B: COMPULSORY LABELLING

This Section explains the compulsory information you must show on your labelling for fresh and frozen beef and veal.

10. What compulsory information must be shown on your labelling?

10.1 The following indications must be shown on your labels. For more detail see paragraphs 10.3 to 10.11.

- (1) **Reference number or Batch code;**
- (2) The name of the **Member State or non-EU country** in which the animal or group of animals was/were **born**;
- (3) The name of the **Member State or non-EU country** in which the animal or group of animals was/were **reared**;
- (4) The name of the **Member State or non-EU country** in which the animal or group of animals was/were **slaughtered** and the **approval number** of the slaughterhouse;
- (5) The name of the **Member State or non-EU country** in which the meat from the animal or group of animals was **cut** and the **approval number** of the cutting plant(s).

10.2 In addition, the following indications must be shown on labels on meat from animals aged less than 12 months. See paragraphs 10.10 and 10.11.

- (6) The **age of the animal at slaughter**.
- (7) The **sales description** for each age category.

10.3 **Indication (1)** is a **traceability reference number** or batch code which ensures the link between the beef and the animal or group of animals from which it was derived.

For a slaughterhouse –

- The reference number or batch code may be the identification number or any other number or code relating to the individual animal, or group of animals, from which the meat was derived.
- If the reference number is a batch number, a batch may comprise, at most, one day's production in the slaughterhouse.



Beef Labelling Guide

for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

For a cutting plant -

- The reference number or batch code may be the individual identification number or any other number or code relating to the animal, or group of animals, from which the cut meat is derived.
- If the reference number is a batch number, a batch may comprise, at most, one day's production in the cutting plant.
- A batch formed in a cutting plant may only be formed from beef which has been born in the same country, raised in the same country or countries, slaughtered in the same country and at the same slaughterhouse, and, if relevant, cut previously in the same cutting plant.
- If you are cutting beef from a number of different slaughterhouses, beef from each slaughterhouse must be assigned a different reference number.
- In a single batch, you may include beef slaughtered in the same slaughterhouse but on different days.
- Batches undergoing further cutting (e.g. primals into retail cuts) must not involve more than one day's production and must be formed from beef which has been cut previously in the same cutting plant or plants.
- During the production of cut meat (see definition at appendix 6) operators may make up a batch from meat originating from animals slaughtered at a maximum of three different slaughterhouses and from carcasses cut up at a maximum of three different cutting plants.
- During the production of trimmings and mince, operators are only required to follow the rule relating to a single country of slaughter when making up batches.

For a retail outlet -

- Any reference number or code enabling traceability within your shop can be used provided there is a link through your register and documentation to your supplier's reference number or code. This could be a batch number.

10.4 Indication (2) must show the Member State or non-EU country in which the animal or group of animals was/were born.

- This information must be shown as; Born in: [name of Member State or non-EU Country] and must be a single Member State or a single non-EU country.
- A regional name such as "Northern Ireland" is not sufficient.



Beef Labelling

Guide for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

10.5 **Indication (3)** must show the names of all the **Member States or non-EU countries** where the animal or group of animals **lived between birth and slaughter**.

- This information must be shown as; **Reared in: [name of Member State(s) or non-EU country]**
- Each animal in the group of animals must have been reared in all the countries listed. If the animal or animals spent less than 30 days immediately after birth in the country of birth, you do not have to list that country on the label as a country of rearing.
- If the animal spent less than 30 days immediately before slaughter in the country of slaughter, then you do not have to list that country on the label as a country of rearing.

10.6 Where your beef is derived from animals which were **born, reared and slaughtered** in the **same Member State or same non-EU country**, instead of separate indications (2), (3) and the first part of (4) (i.e. name of the Member State or non-EU Country), your labelling can be shown as “**Origin: [name of Member State or non-EU country]**”, along with indications (1), the second part of (4) (i.e. the approval number of the slaughterhouse) and (5). Indications (6) and (7) will also be required for meat from animals aged less than 12 months.

10.7 **Indication (4)** must show the **Member State or non-EU country** in which the **slaughterhouse is located** and the **slaughterhouse approval number**.

- Your labelling must include the words: “**Slaughtered in: [name of Member State or non-EU country]**”. This must be a single Member State or a single non-EU country e.g. “Slaughtered in United Kingdom”. For beef from animals slaughtered in Northern Ireland, “Slaughtered in United Kingdom” should be the indication. A regional name such as “Northern Ireland” is not sufficient.
- Your label must show the **slaughterhouse approval number**. This is the veterinary approval number which has been allocated to the establishment or premises, and which appears on the health mark stamp.
- There must be only one slaughterhouse number on the beef label and therefore all beef sold together in a pack or batch must be from only one slaughterhouse. Beef from two or more slaughterhouses must not be combined to form a pack or batch, except in relation to the production of cut meat where a batch may consist of meat originating from animals slaughtered at a maximum of three different slaughterhouses and from carcasses cut up at a maximum of three different cutting plants.

10.8 **Indication (5)** must show the **Member State or non-EU country** in which the cutting plant is located and the **cutting plant approval number**.



Beef Labelling Guide

for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

- Your labelling must be shown as: “**Cutting/cut in: [name of Member State or non-EU country]**”. This must be a single Member State or a single non-EU country. A regional name such as “Northern Ireland” is not sufficient.
- Your label must show the **cutting plant approval number**. This is the veterinary approval number which has been allocated to the establishment or premises, and which appears on the health mark stamp.
- Where a batch of beef is processed through more than one cutting plant, your labelling must show the approval numbers of all the cutting plants at which the beef was processed.
- Beef which has not been cut in the same cutting plant, or series of cutting plants, must not be mixed to form a pack or batch, except in relation to the production of cut meat where a batch may consist of meat originating from animals slaughtered at a maximum of three different slaughterhouses and from carcasses cut up at a maximum of three different cutting plants.
- Where beef is cut in unlicensed premises (e.g. butchers, farm shops or other shops), the address of the premises must be shown in place of an approval number. Where beef is cut and sold on the same unlicensed premises, the indication may state “on these premises”. If a slaughterhouse also does the cutting then the slaughterhouse approval number should be used if no cutting plant number is allocated.

10.9 When labelling beef with the name of the Member State or non-EU country, the **full name of the Member State(s) or non-EU country(ies)** must be shown on the label. Abbreviations are not acceptable. Beef exported to other Member States, including the Republic of Ireland, must carry the full name of the country. Currently the only exception to this rule relates to beef which originates from within the UK or the Republic of Ireland, which may be labelled “UK” or “IRL” respectively. Furthermore, this exception only applies to beef presented for sale within the UK, and is subject to ongoing review and may be withdrawn.

10.10 **Indication (6)** is required when labelling meat from animals aged less than 12 months and must show the **age of the animal at slaughter**, shown as; “**Age on slaughter: less than 8 months**” in the case of animals aged less than 8 months, or “**age on slaughter: from 8 months to less than 12 months**” in the case of animals aged from 8 months to less than 12 months. However, operators may, at each stage of production and marketing, **except when on sale to the final consumer**, replace the age on slaughter information with the category identification letters; “**V**” for animals aged less than 8 months, or “**Z**” for animals aged from 8 months to less than 12 months.

- At slaughter, all bovine animals aged less than 12 months must be classified by the operator as either; aged less than 8 months i.e. from the day of birth until the day before they reach 8 months (category identification letter V); or, aged 8 months to less than 12 months i.e. from the day they reach 8 months until the day before they reach



Beef Labelling

Guide for individuals/organisations in Northern Ireland selling beef

12 months (category identification letter Z). The category identification letter must be placed on the outside surface of the carcass by using labels or a carcass stamp.

10.11 **Indication (7)** is required when labelling meat from animals aged less than 12 months and must show the sales description for each age category as; “**veal**” for meat from animals aged less than 8 months, and “**beef**” for meat from animals aged from 8 months to less than 12 months.

Examples of labels containing information you must display are shown in Appendix 1 of this guide.

11. What compulsory information must be shown on your labelling for minced beef?

11.1 You must label with the following indications. However, if you wish, you may label with all the indications at 10 above. You may also include the date of mincing. For more detail see paragraphs 11.2 to 11.6 below.

(1) **Reference number or batch code;**

(2) Name of the **Member State or non-EU country of slaughter;**

(3) Name of the **Member State or non-EU country of mincing;**

(4) Name of the **Member State(s) or non-EU country(ies)** where the animal or group of animals lived from birth to slaughter.

11.2 **Indication (1)** is a **traceability reference number** or batch code which links the mince back to the source animal, group of animals or batches of beef.

11.3 **Indication (2)** must show the name of the **Member State or non-EU country** in which the animals were **slaughtered**. Mince in the same batch must be made from beef **derived from animals slaughtered in the same country**. Your labelling must include the words “**Slaughtered in: [name of Member State or non-EU country]**”.

11.4 **Indication (3)** must show the name of the **Member State or non-EU country** in which the beef was minced; the batch must be minced in only one country. Machines must be cleaned between consignments of beef where the animals have been slaughtered in a different country from the previous batch. Your labelling must include the words “**Mincing in: [name of Member State or non-EU country]**”.

11.5 **Indication (4)** must show the name(s) of the **Member States(s) or non-EU country(ies)** where the animal or group of animals **lived from birth to slaughter**. Your label must include the words “**Origin: [name(s) of Member State(s) and/or non-EU country(ies)]**”, or “**Origin:**



Beef Labelling

Guide for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

Non-EU” if all those countries are outside the EU. Indication (4) does not need to be shown if the country of origin of the animals is the same as the country of mincing.

Where minced beef is mixed with minced meat from other species, you must provide the compulsory information relating to the minced beef on the label. You will also need to obtain advice from your local authority Environmental Health Department on the labelling requirements relating to the minced meat from other species.

Examples of labels containing information you must display are shown in Appendix 1 of this guide.

12. What compulsory information must be shown on your labelling for trimmings?

12.1 You must label with the following indications:

(1) **Reference number or batch code.**

(2) Name of the **country of slaughter.**

(3) Name of the **country of production** of the trimmings and the **approval number of the plant** at which they were produced.

(4) Names of the **countries of birth and rearing** of the animals in the group.

12.2 **Indication (1)** is a **traceability reference number** or batch code which links back to the source animal, group of animals or batches of beef.

12.3 **Indication (2)** must show the **name of the country of slaughter** of the animals from which the trimmings originate. The information must be shown as: **“Slaughtered in: [name of Member State or non-EU country of slaughter]”**. Trimmings in the same batch must be **produced from beef derived from animals slaughtered in the same country.**

12.4 **Indication (3)** must show the name of the **country of production of the trimmings and the approval number of the plant** at which they were produced. The information must be shown as: **“Produced in: [name of Member State or non-EU country of production]”** and the **plant approval number.**

12.5 **Indication (4)** must show the names of the **countries of birth and rearing** of the animals in the group. This information must be shown as: **“Born and reared in: [names of the Member States or non-EU countries in which the animals were born and reared]”**. When the country of birth, the country of rearing and the country of slaughter is the **same** for all animals in the group, operators may use the indication **“Country of origin: [name of Member State or non-EU country in which birth, rearing and slaughter took place]”**.



Beef Labelling Guide

for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

13 What **compulsory information must be shown on pre-packaged cut meat?**

13.1 You must label with the following indications:

(1) **Reference number or batch code.**

(2) Name of the **country of slaughter and slaughterhouse approval number.**

(3) Name of the **country in which carcasses were cut and cutting plant approval number(s).**

(4) Names of the **countries of birth and rearing** of the animals in the group.

13.2 In addition, the following indications must be shown on labels on meat from animals aged 12 months or less.

(5) The **age of the animal at slaughter.**

(6) The **sales description** for each age category.

13.3 **Indication (1)** is a **traceability reference number** or batch code which links back to the source animal, group of animals or batches of beef.

13.4 **Indication (2)** must show the **country of slaughter and slaughterhouse approval number**, or where required, the two or three slaughterhouse approval number(s) at which the animals in the group were slaughtered. (A batch may be made up from meat derived from animals slaughtered at a maximum of three different slaughterhouses.) The information must be shown as: **“Animals in the group slaughtered in [name of Member State or non-EU country of slaughter]”** and the **approval number(s)** of the slaughterhouse or the two or three slaughterhouses concerned.

13.5 **Indication (3)** must show the **country in which the carcasses were cut** and the **cutting plant approval number**, or where required, the two or three cutting plant numbers at which the carcasses were cut. (A batch may be made up from meat derived from carcasses cut up at a maximum of three different cutting plants.) The information must be shown as: **“Cutting of meat in batch in: [name of Member State or non-EU country of cutting]”** and the **approval number(s)** of the cutting plant or the two or three cutting plants concerned.

13.6 **Indication (4)** must show the names of the **countries of birth and rearing** of the animals in the group. This information must be shown as: **“Born and reared in: [names of the countries in which the animals were born and raised]”**. When the country of birth, the country of rearing and the country of slaughter is the same for all animals in the group, operators may use the indication **“Country of origin: [name of Member State or non-EU country in which birth, rearing and slaughter took place]”**.



Beef Labelling Guide

for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

13.7 **Indication (5)** is required when labelling meat from animals aged less than 12 months and must show the age of the animal at slaughter, shown as; **“Age on slaughter: less than 8 months”** in the case of animals aged less than 8 months, or **“age on slaughter: from 8 months to less than 12 months”** in the case of animals aged from 8 months to less than 12 months.

13.8 **Indication (6)** is required when labelling meat from animals aged less than 12 months and must show the sales description for each age category as; **“veal”** for meat from animals aged less than 8 months, and **“beef”** for meat from animals aged from 8 months to less than 12 months.

13.9 The compulsory indicators at 13.1, and 13.2 if appropriate, must be included on labels where unprocessed beef is presented in BBQ packs along with other meats. Labelling of other meats is covered by different legislation.

14 What compulsory information must be shown on non pre-packaged cut meat?

14.1 You must label with the following indications:

(1) **Reference number or batch code.**

(2) Name of the **country of birth, rearing, slaughter and cutting.**

14.2 In addition, the following indications must be shown on labels on meat from animals aged less than 12 months.

(3) The **age of the animal at slaughter.**

(4) The **sales description** for each age category.

14.3 **Indication (1)** is a **traceability reference number or** batch code which links back to the source animal, group of animals or batches of beef.

14.4 **Indication (2)** must show the name of the **country of birth, rearing and slaughter** of the animals from which the meat originates, followed by the name of the **country of carcass cutting.**

14.5 **Indication (3)** is required when labelling meat from animals aged less than 12 months and must show the **age of the animal at slaughter**, shown as; **“Age on slaughter: less than 8 months”** in the case of animals aged less than 8 months, or **“age on slaughter: from 8 months to less than 12 months”** in the case of animals aged from 8 months to less than 12 months.



Beef Labelling

Guide for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

14.6 Indication (4) is required when labelling meat from animals aged less than 12 months and must show the sales description for each age category as; “veal” for meat from animals aged less than 8 months, and “beef” for meat from animals aged from 8 months to less than 12 months.

14.6 When displaying non-pre-packaged cut beef at retail level to the final consumer, operators must ensure that the rule on batch composition on further cutting using a maximum of three slaughterhouses and three cutting plants is followed for all cut meat.

14.7 Meat from animals born and/or raised and/or slaughtered in different countries must be clearly separated from each other, including when displayed for sale. The information displayed in the retail outlet must be placed near these meats to enable the final consumer to distinguish easily between meat of different origins.

14.7 Operators who sell non-pre-packaged cut beef displayed together for sale, must record each day, with the date, the approval numbers of the slaughterhouses where the animals were slaughtered and those of the cutting plants where the carcasses were cut. Operators must provide this information to any consumer who requests it.

14.8 During further cutting or mincing, the composition of a batch may be composed of meat derived from a group of animals which exceeds one day’s production for non-pre-packaged cut beef displayed for sale to the final consumer, provided the requirements detailed at 14.1 and 14.2 are followed.

15. How should you label beef imported from a non-EU country?

15.1 Beef imported from a non-EU country must be labelled in accordance with the EU rules. Where all the compulsory information is not available on non-EU country imports you must label with the wording “*Origin: Non-EU*” and “*Slaughtered in [name of non-EU country]*”. You should also supply a reference number or code when the beef is cut or repackaged after import along with the cutting plant approval number.

15.2 Meat or offal from animals aged less than 12 months imported from a non-EU country must be labelled with the age at slaughter and the appropriate sales description of the Member State in which it is marketed (as detailed at 10.10 and 10.11). Operators in non-EU countries wishing to place meat from animals aged less than 12 months on the Community market must subject their activities to checks by a competent authority or independent third-party body (EN45011 accredited), who will ensure that the requirements of the regulations are met.



Beef Labelling

Guide for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

16. How do the rules apply to beef approved under the Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) and Product of Designated Origin (PDO) systems?

16.1 Products approved under the PGI/PDO systems (e.g. “Scotch Beef”, “Welsh Beef” and “Orkney Beef”) must be labelled with the compulsory indications listed at 10.

17 What are the criteria for PGIs and PDOs?

17.1 PGI products are produced, processed or prepared within a geographical area, as defined under Council Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92 (as amended) on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs. The product must have a specific quality, reputation or other characteristic related to the area. For example, ‘Scotch Beef’ is a PGI and must come from quality assured cattle born, bred, slaughtered and dressed within Scotland. PDO products are produced, processed and prepared in a geographical area, and the features and characteristics of the product must be due to the geographical area and methods of production unique to the area. ‘Orkney Beef’ is a PDO and is produced, slaughtered and dressed exclusively on Orkney.



Beef Labelling Guide

for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

SECTION C: VOLUNTARY AND ADDITIONAL LABELLING

18. What are the rules relating to voluntary information on labels?

18.1 You can give your customers non-compulsory labelling information on a voluntary basis if you wish. Prior approval is not required. However, you must ensure that it is comprehensible to consumers, can be verified by the appropriate competent authority if required and meets the requirements of food labelling law.

18.2 Voluntary labelling could include:

- region or locality where the animal was born and reared;
- breed or cross breed;
- age or gender of animal;
- method of production (e.g. grass-fed);
- assurance scheme (e.g. Farm Quality Assured);
- method of slaughter (e.g. halal, kosher);
- method or length of maturation.

19. Additional Labelling

19.1 Additional information, which does not come under the compulsory beef labelling rules, can be added to labels as required and may include:

- the name of the product or cut (e.g. brisket, sirloin);
- the weight of the product;
- the 'best before' or 'use by' date;
- storage conditions or conditions of use (e.g. 'keep refrigerated');
- instructions for use (e.g. cooking instructions);
- the name and address of the manufacturer, packer or seller;
- statements that the product has been packaged in a protective atmosphere;



Beef Labelling

Guide for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

- statements in accordance with the carcass classification grid;
- the health mark required under EU Regulations and other similar veterinary indications;
- labelling as “organic” (approval is required from an Organic Certification body e.g. Soil Association);
- Protected Designations of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) products.

20. Contacts for voluntary/additional labelling

Your local authority Environmental Health Department

The Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland
10 A-C Clarendon Road
Belfast BT1 3BG

Tel. 028 9041 7700

Email: infofsani@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk



Beef Labelling Guide

for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

APPENDIX 1

EXAMPLES OF LABELS CONTAINING COMPULSORY INFORMATION

In these examples, information which is compulsory is shown in **bold** type.

Label for retail:

05/02/17/324694/1 - ref. no. / code
 Sirloin Steak
 Weight: 600 grams
 Price: £12.00
 Unit Price: £20.00/Kilo
Slaughtered in: United Kingdom (9000)
Cut in: United Kingdom (9000)
Origin: United Kingdom

Label for mince:

minced beef*
08/07/17/346248/2 - ref. no. / code
 Weight: 1 kg
 Price: £5.75
Minced in: United Kingdom
Slaughtered in: United Kingdom

*Where all animals from which the minced beef is derived were born, raised and slaughtered in the UK.

Label for carcasses:

Kill Date
03/04/17/42864/1 - ref. no. / code
 Classification: C R+3=
 Weight: 152 kg
Slaughtered in: United Kingdom (9000)
Origin: United Kingdom

Label for mince:

Minced beef
 06/08/18/958425/2 - ref. no. / code
 Weight: 2 kg
 Price: £9.00
 Minced in: United Kingdom
 Slaughtered in: United Kingdom
 Origin : Ireland*

* Where the animals of origin were born and raised in Ireland.

Label for animals born and reared in Ireland and slaughtered in NI

05/02/17/324953/9 - ref. no. / code
 Lean steak pieces
 Weight: 500 grams
 Price: £4.90
 Price per Kg: £10.80
Born in: Ireland
Reared in: Ireland
Slaughtered in: United Kingdom (9000)
Cut in : United Kingdom (9000)

Label for animals born and reared in Ireland and finished in NI

05/02/17/324694/3 - ref. no. / code
 Lean steak pieces
 Weight: 500 grams
 Price: £4.90
 Price per Kg: £10.80
Born in: Ireland
Reared in: Ireland / United Kingdom
Slaughtered in: United Kingdom (9000)
Cut in: United Kingdom (9000)



Beef Labelling Guide

for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

Examples of labels for the meat of bovine animals aged less than 12 months

Carcase label

Category V - appropriate age classification
03/04/0842864/1 - reference number/code
Weight: xxx kilos
Origin: United Kingdom
Slaughtered in: United Kingdom (9000)

Display label

Tray: Green trays	Reference number/code: MB 535 WB 14/06.17 (example only)
Origin: United Kingdom* - British	Slaughtered in: United Kingdom Slaughterhouse license No. 9000
Cut in: United Kingdom Cutting plant license No. 9000	Veal. 'age on slaughter: less than 8 months'

(*where born, raised and slaughtered in the UK)



Beef Labelling Guide

for individuals/organisations in Northern Ireland selling beef

APPENDIX 2

EXAMPLE OF DISPLAYS FOR COMPULSORY LABELLING FOR NON-PREPACKED BEEF

Rump Steak:

Tray: A	Ref. No. / Code AB 1234 00105
Origin: United Kingdom*	Cut in: United Kingdom

* Where born, reared, slaughtered in the UK.

Striploin:

Tray: B	Ref. No. / Code F18 – 07/05/17
Born in: Ireland	Reared in: Ireland and United Kingdom
Slaughtered in: United Kingdom	Cut in: United Kingdom

Striploin:

Tray: Green Trays	Ref. No. / Code MB 535 WB 14/9/16
Origin: United Kingdom*	Cut in: United Kingdom

* Where born, reared, slaughtered in the UK.

Minced Beef:

Tray: C	Ref. No. / Code HB 626 – DN 5
Slaughtered in: Ireland	Minced in: United Kingdom
Origin: Ireland	



Beef Labelling Guide

for individuals/organisations in Northern Ireland selling beef



APPENDIX 3

Blank Labels

Tray:	Reference number/code:
Origin:	
Slaughtered in:	Cut in:

Tray:	Reference number/code:
Born in:	Reared in:
Slaughtered in:	Cut in:

Minced Beef

Tray:	Reference number/code:
Slaughtered in:	Minced in:
Origin:	



Beef Labelling

Guide for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef



APPENDIX 4

BEEF LABELLING

CUSTOMER INFORMATION

By law, all beef and veal on sale must be clearly labelled with the EU country where the animal was born, reared and slaughtered. If the beef is imported from outside the EU, the name of the country of origin must be on the label.

The labels must have a code or reference number which allows the meat to be traced back to the animal, or batch of animals, that it came from.

There may be other terms on the label, such as the breed of the animal, the region or locality it came from, or the method of production. These terms are not compulsory but they must comply with food labelling law.

In addition, meat from animals less than 8 months old must be labelled as veal and show the age at slaughter. Meat from animals from 8 months to less than 12 months old must be labelled as beef and show the age at slaughter.



Beef Labelling

Guide for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef



APPENDIX 5

LEGISLATION

The Beef and Veal Labelling Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010

Regulation (EC) No. 1760/2000 (as amended) of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a system for the identification and registration of bovine animals and regarding the labelling of beef and beef products and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No. 820/97.

Regulation (EU) No. 653/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No. 1760/2000 as regards electronic identification of bovine animals and labelling of beef.

Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1825/2000 (as amended) laying down detailed rules for the application of Regulation (EC) No. 1760/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the labelling of beef and beef products.

Commission Regulation (EC) No. 275/2007 amending Regulation (EC) 1825/2000 laying down detailed rules for the application of Regulation (EC) No. 1760/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the labelling of beef and beef products.

Regulation (EU) No. 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products and repealing Council Regulation, (EEC) No. 922/1972, (EEC) No. 234/1979, (EC) No. 1037/2001 and (EC) No. 1234/2007.



Beef Labelling

Guide for individuals/organisations
in Northern Ireland selling beef

APPENDIX 6

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of Regulation 1760/2000, the following definitions apply:

- (a) “minced meat”: any meat that has been minced into fragments or passed through a spiral-screw mincer, and that falls within one of the CN codes referred to in Article 12 of Regulation (EC) No. 1760/2000 and contains less than 1% salt;
- (b) “trimmings” : small pieces of meat recognised as fit for human consumption produced exclusively during trimming operations during the boning of carcasses and/or the cutting up of meat;
- (c) “cut meat”: meat which has been cut into small cubes, slices or other individual portions that do not require further cutting by an operator before being bought by the final consumer and can be directly used by that consumer. This definition does not cover minced meat and trimmings;
- (d) “pre-packaged cut meat”: the individual pack offered unaltered to the final consumer or to an establishment engaged solely in retail sales, made up of cut meat and the packaging in which it was packaged before being offered for sale, whether the packaging covers it fully or partially, but such that the content cannot be altered without opening or changing the packaging;
- (e) “non-pre-packaged cut meat”: cut meat displayed for sale non-pre-packaged in outlets for sale to the final consumer and all pieces of meat displayed for sale non-pre-packaged in outlets for sale to the final consumer, intended to be cut at the request of the final consumer;
- (f) “batch”: meat, on the bone or boned, for example, carcasses, quarters or boned pieces of meat, cut up, minced or packaged together under practically identical conditions;
- (g) “retail”: the handling and/or processing of meat and its storage at the point of sale or delivery to the final consumer, including caterers, company canteens, institutional catering, restaurants and other similar food service operations, shops, supermarket distribution centres and wholesale outlets;
- (h) “final consumer”: the ultimate consumer of cut meat who does not use it as part of a food business operation or activity.

ISBN: 978-1-84807-720-1



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**