

FOOD LABELS - What do they mean?

Food labels are a useful source of information. In December 2000, Australia and New Zealand Health Ministers decided that labels on most packaged food would be improved.

1. Nutrition labeling

All manufactured foods have a nutrition information panel so you can make a comparison between them. There are a few exceptions such as very small packages and foods like herbs and spices, tea and coffee and foods sold unpackaged (if a claim is not made) or foods made and packaged at the point of sale.

NUTRITION INFORMATION			
Servings Per Pack	50 10g	Average Quantity per Serving	Average Quantity per 100g
ENERGY	(kJ)	280	2800
PROTEIN	(g)	Less than 1.0	Less than 1.0
FAT - Total	(g)	7.5	75
- Saturated	(g)	1.92	19.2
- Trans	(g)	0.05	0.5
- Polyunsaturated	(g)	1.8	18
- Omega 3	(mg)	525	5250
(alpha-linolenic acid)			
- Monounsaturated	(g)	3.7	37.3
CHOLESTEROL	(g)	0.0	0.0
CARBOHYDRATE	(g)	Less than 1 g	Less than 1 g
- Sugars	(g)	Less than 1 g	Less than 1 g
SODIUM	(mg)	38	380
POTASSIUM	(mg)	Less than 5 mg	28
VITAMIN A	(µg)	110 (15% RDI)*	1100
VITAMIN D	(µg)	1.0 (10% RDI)*	10

*Values based on Adult Recommended Dietary Intake

Nutrition information panels provide information on the levels of energy (kilojoules), protein, total fat, saturated fat, carbohydrate, sugars and sodium, as well as any other nutrient about which a claim is made on the label. Nutritional information can help you make informed food choices which can lead to better nutrition for you and your family.

Note: All quantities listed in the Nutritional Information Panel are average quantities.

2. Percentage labelling

Packaged foods carry labels which show the percentage of the key or characterising ingredients or components in the food products. The characterising ingredient for this canola spread is canola and as you can see from the ingredient list that it has 53% canola in it.

3. Name or description of the food

Foods must be labelled with an accurate name or description. Labels or descriptions must not mislead consumers therefore this canola spread must contain canola in it.

4. Food recall information

Labels must have the name and business address in Australia or New Zealand of the manufacturer or supplier, as well as the lot and batch number (or date coding). This makes the food recalls more efficient and effective.

5. Information for allergy sufferers

Common allergens must be declared in the ingredient list or in the mandatory advisory statement. These allergens include: milk, egg, cereals containing gluten, peanuts, soybeans, tree nuts, sesame seeds, fish, crustaceans, sulphites (greater than 10mg/kg). All food which contains or may contain traces of these allergens will have it on the label.

6. Date marking

'Use-by' date means the food must be eaten or thrown away by this date. It is unsafe to eat the food after this date. 'Best-before' date means food may still be safe to eat after this date so long as the product has not deteriorated or been damaged, however the quality and nutritional value may be reduced.

7. Ingredients list

Ingredients must be listed from greatest to smallest by ingoing weight including added water. Where there are very small amounts of multi-component ingredients, (under 5%) it is permitted to list the composite ingredients only. This does not apply to any additive or allergen which must be listed however small the amount.

NUTRITION INFORMATION	
Vegetable Oils (Canola 53%)	Water, Salt, Non Fat Milk Solids, Emulsifiers (Soy 322, 471), Preservative (202), Food Acid (330), Vitamins A & D, Natural Colour (Carotene), Flavour (Nature Identical).
CHARACTERISING INGREDIENT (%)	
N/A	

8. Quantity

Suppliers must label food products with accurate minimum weights and measures information. Weights and measures declarations are regulated by Australian State and Territory and New Zealand Government fair trading agencies. Fair trading laws in the States and Territories and New Zealand require that labels do not mislead.

9. Food additives

Food additives must be included in the ingredients list. Food additives are listed with their function in food followed by a name or number. Additives are added to food to do many things including preserving, emulsifying, colouring, raising and thickening. Soy lecithin (322) has been added to this canola spread as an emulsifier.

10. Legibility requirements

Labels must be legible, with prominent type which is distinct from the background, and in English.

11. Directions for use and storage

Where specific storage conditions are required in order for a product to remain safe until its 'use-by' or 'best before date', manufacturers must include this information on the label, for example this canola spread should be kept refrigerated between 0 to 4 degrees C. Other foods which require preparation to ensure they are safe will need to provide directions.

12. Country of Origin

'Made in' - the goods must have been substantially transformed in the country claimed to be the origin and 50% of production must have been carried out in that country. 'Product of' the country of origin claimed must be the country of origin of each significant ingredient of the food and all or virtually all the processes of production or manufacture of the goods have happened in that country.



Need more information?

About the food standards code and labelling requirements
Contact FSANZ www.foodstandards.gov.au
About Select products
Contact Woolworths www.woolworths.com.au
1 Woolworths Way, Bella Vista NSW 2153 Australia