

Business Advice **Fact Sheet**

Essential Information for Business Success

Labelling Fish and Shellfish

These guidance notes provide information on the requirements of the Fish Labelling Regulations 2010. The general requirements of the Food Labelling Regulations 1996 also apply – please see our separate guidance, “General Food Labelling”.

The Fish Labelling Regulations apply to:-

- Live, fresh, chilled and frozen fish.
- Fish fillets and other fish meat, including minced fish.
- Dried, salted, brined or smoked fish.
- Crustaceans, except where both cooked and peeled.
- Molluscs, except when cooked.

It does not apply to fish products (such as pastes, pies, breaded) or fish to which a sauce has been applied. These products will be regulated by the Food Labelling Regulations only. The regulations do not apply to: -

- Fish and shell fish which is ready to eat and sold by catering establishments e.g. restaurants, canteens, and take aways.
- Small quantities of fish sold direct from the fisherman/producer to the final consumer. Small quantities is defined as 20 Euros (currently around £15 to £18).

Labelling Requirements

The following information must be provided:

- **Fish Description**

Many species of fish and shellfish must be described in a particular way. For example, fish of species “Pleuronectes platessa” must be described as “plaice”. Species of “Littorina” must be described as “winkles”. The full list of fish and shellfish names that are prescribed in this way is extensive, and so not reproduced here. If you would like further information please contact us.

- **Treatment**

If fish has been treated in any way then this treatment should be given in the fish description, for example “smoked mackerel”, “salted cod”, “dried herring”, “prawns (previously frozen)”. Any words or phrases used to describe fish should be accurate, for example a “fillet” is understood to mean the fish is taken off the main bones, and a “steak” suggests a natural cut of fish rather than a minced/processed product.

- **Production Method**

Expressed as “caught”, “caught in fresh water”, “farmed” for fish, “cultivated” for shellfish. You do not need to specify “caught” for fish caught at sea if it is obvious from the fish description or catch area.

- **Catch Area**

For products caught at sea the following catch areas must be specified as appropriate. North-West Atlantic, North-East Atlantic, Baltic Sea, Central-Western Atlantic, Central-Eastern Atlantic, South-West Atlantic, South-East Atlantic, Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea, Indian Ocean, Pacific Ocean or Antarctic.

For products caught in fresh water, a reference to the country of origin is required. For farmed/cultivated products, a reference to the country in which the product underwent its final development is required. You may include a more precise catch area or country of origin if you wish.

Mixed Batches

Where more than one species make up a product e.g. a seafood mix, the information for each species must be on the label. Where there is one species but from different production methods the label must state each production method.

Where there is one species but different catch areas, the area that is most representative of the batch must be stated or you may refer to each catch area.

How should the information be given?

The information must be easy to understand, clearly legible and easily visible to a purchaser.

When sold pre-packed – this will mean on the packaging of the fish/shellfish

When sold loose e.g. fishmonger, fish counters – this will be on a ticket/label next to the product or in-store notice, wall chart/poster.

When being sold non retail e.g. producer, processor, wholesaler – the information must be on the packaging or on commercial documents which accompany the products.

For more information or advice concerning labelling fish and shellfish please telephone

Norfolk Trading Standards on **0344 800 8020**

Alternatively you may email us at **trading.standards@norfolk.gov.uk**

Did you know that we have a wide range of information and advice for businesses on our website? Log onto **www.norfolk.gov.uk/tradingstandards**



If you need this advice sheet in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact the Customer Service Centre on 0344 800 8020 and we will do our best to help.