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## Canada

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### Canadian Labelling Requirements for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

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Fresh Fruit

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FAIRS Subject Report

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**Report Highlights:**

The Canadian Government maintains separate labeling requirements for fresh fruits and vegetable products. This report includes a summary of those requirements as well as links to Government of Canada websites with more detailed information.

## **Background on Labeling in Canada**

Food labeling in Canada is generally governed by the [Food and Drugs Act](#) (FDA) and the [Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act](#) (CPLA) and their respective regulations, the [Food and Drug Regulations](#) and the [Consumer Packaging and Labelling Regulations](#) (CPLR).

The FDA and the CPLA require that most prepackaged products sold in Canada carry a label. As this report focuses on fresh fruits and vegetables, it uses the [Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Regulations](#) (FFVR) definition for prepackaged products - “produce that is packaged in a container in such a manner that it is ordinarily sold to or used or purchased by a consumer without being re-packaged.” The Canadian Food Inspection Agency’s (CFIA) Food Labelling for Industry Tool outlines [exemptions](#) from having a label for fresh fruits and vegetables in the following cases:

- “Fresh fruits or fresh vegetables packaged in a wrapper or confining band of less than ½ inch in width;
  - Fresh fruits or vegetables that are packaged in a clear, colourless transparent wrapper (e.g. shrink wrap) on individual units of fresh produce when absolutely no printed, written or graphic information appears on the wrapper, other than a price sticker, bar codes, number codes, environmental statements and product treatment symbols qualify for this exemption. Examples of these products typically found in such wrappers include an English cucumber, a head of lettuce, a bunch of grapes, etc. Examples of fresh fruits or vegetables that are packaged in a confining band of less than ½ inch (13 mm) in width are fresh broccoli, asparagus or rhubarb, held together by twist ties, elastics or rubber bands [B.01.003(1)(a)(ii), FDR; 4(4), CPLR].

**Note:** the *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Regulations* (CPLR) also exempt the following foods from bearing a label:

- a. Raspberries or strawberries packaged in the field in containers with a capacity of 1.14 litres or less [4(5), CPLR];
- b. Soft drink containers that are i) re-used by a dealer as soft drink containers, ii) permanently labelled with any information required to be shown by the FDA, and iii) manufactured prior to March 1, 1975 [4(2), CPLR].

The foods listed in (a) and (b) however; do not have an exemption from labeling requirements under the FDR.”

The Labelling Requirements page outlines some more detailed exemptions to labeling rules [here](#). The FFVR has additional examples [here](#).

## **Labeling Requirements for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables in Canada**

This report discusses Canada's Labelling Requirements for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables which do require a label. An overview of these guidelines can be found here:

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/labelling/food-labelling-for-industry/fresh-fruits-and-vegetables/eng/1393800946775/1393801047506>.

Below are excerpts of the regulations, with links to the relevant sections.

### **Durable Life Date - Fresh Fruits and Vegetables**

#### **Required**

"Fresh fruit and vegetables are exempt from displaying a durable life date ("best-before" date)."  
Please note that per section [B.01.007](#) of the Food and Drug Regulations, the requirement for a durable life date does not apply to "prepackaged products consisting of fresh fruits or fresh vegetables" regardless of packaging.

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"If the durable life date is voluntarily applied to a prepackaged container the information must be declared in the proper format [B.01.007(6) FDR]. If the durable life date is voluntarily applied to a master or shipping container, that will not be sold at retail, the information is not required to be declared in the format as mentioned above.

Refer to [Date Markings](#) for more information."

### **Identity and Principal Place of Business - Fresh Fruits and Vegetables**

#### **Required**

"The identity and principal place of business of the person (individual, corporation, business, head office, distributor, importer, etc. ) by or for whom the product was manufactured or produced for resale must be shown on the label [B.01.007(1.1)(a), FDR; 10(b)(i), CPLA; 10(2)(d), 23(c), FFVR].  
On master containers, where the name and address is easily and clearly discernible in or on the inner container without opening the outer container, the name and address need not be shown on the outer container [23, FFVR].

The name and address should be complete in order to allow communication in writing with the responsible party."

#### **Voluntary**

"Additional descriptive wording, such as "Packed for", "Packed by" is optional.

Providing additional information such as telephone number, e-mail address, website, etc., is at the discretion of the responsible party.

More than one name and address may be displayed on the label, as long as at least one complete mailing address is provided.

The identity and principal place of business may be shown anywhere on the label, except that part which is applied to the bottom of the container [B.01.005, B.01.007 (1.1)(a), FDR; 13, CPLR; 10(7), FFVR]. The letters must be at least 1.6 mm in height based on the lower-case letter "o" [12(3), FFVR; 15, CPLR].

The name and the address may be shown in either French or English [B.01.012 (9); 6(2), CPLR].

If wording such as "Packed by", "Packed for", etc., is displayed with the name and address on the label of a prepackaged container it should appear in both French and English; if this wording appears on master or shipping containers it may appear in French and/or English. For more information, refer to [Identity and Principal Place of Business](#)."

### **Country of Origin - Fresh Fruits and Vegetables**

#### **Fresh fruit and vegetables grown in a country other than Canada**

##### **Required**

"The country of origin declaration is mandatory on all containers of imported fresh produce, regardless of whether they are packaged whole produce, or packaged fresh-cut (minimally processed) produce. This requirement also applies to imported produce packaged and labelled or re-packaged and labelled in Canada.

Every container of imported produce shall be labelled to show the words "Product of", "Produce of", "Grown in" or "Country of Origin", followed by the name of the country of origin of the produce, or other words which clearly indicate the country in which the produce was grown [10(11), FFVR].

On master containers, where the country of origin is easily and clearly discernible in or on the inner container without opening the outer container, the country of origin need not be shown on the outer container [23, FFVR]."

#### **Determining country of origin labelling requirements**

##### **Required**

"Examples of produce for which country of origin labelling is mandatory:

Whole or fresh-cut produce imported from single or multiple origins, for example:

- A bag of apples is imported from the USA - "Product of USA";
- A prepackaged mix of sweet peppers, 1 orange and 1 yellow from Mexico and 1 green from the USA - "Product of Mexico and USA";
- Squash is grown, chopped and packaged in the USA - "Product of USA".

Whole or fresh-cut produce imported from a single origin and repacked in Canada, for example:

- Onions imported from Mexico in 50 kg bags, then repacked into 10 kg bags in Canada - "Product of Mexico".

Domestic whole produce is packaged with imported whole produce from one or more origins, for example:

- A salad blended from whole baby lettuce leaves imported from the USA and spinach leaves grown in Canada - "Product of USA and Canada";
- Domestic apples are packaged with apples imported from the USA - "Product of Canada and USA".

Single ingredient fresh-cut produce prepared in Canada from imported whole produce, for example:

- Carrots imported from the USA then shredded and packaged in Canada - "Product of USA"."

There is also a [summary of labelling requirements for prepackaged containers](#) which may be of use, it should be noted that they are different than those for [shipping containers](#) or [master containers](#).

### **Changes to Nutritional Labeling in Canada**

The Government of Canada is currently examining ways to revise the nutrition labeling requirements in the FDR to give consumers better information about their food choices. Currently, Canada has a limited list of health claims which can be made on food and beverage products. The only change under this new proposal would be to allow the claim “A healthy diet rich in a variety of vegetables and fruit may help reduce the risk of heart disease” on fruits and vegetables. Other initiatives include standardizing serving sizes, clarifying daily values, making the list of ingredients easier to read, providing more information on the sugar in products, allergen labeling and making it easier to update scientific information. The full proposal can be found at: <http://gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p1/2015/2015-06-13/html/reg1-eng.php>.