



THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY
USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT
POLICY

Voluntary Public

Date: 3/31/2014

GAIN Report Number: CA14037

Canada

Post: Ottawa

Canada Unveils Labeling Assistance for Exporters

Report Categories:

Agriculture in the News

Approved By:

Jeff Zimmerman

Prepared By:

Sonya Jenkins

Report Highlights:

On Monday March 24th 2014, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) held a “soft launch” of its new online labelling tool. An official launch is expected in June of this year after sufficient feedback has been received. It has been designed to consolidate the information formerly found in the Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising and the CFIA’s Decisions page.

Canada Unveils Labeling Assistance for Exporters

On Monday March 24th 2014, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) held a “soft launch” of its new online labelling tool. An official launch is expected in June of this year after sufficient feedback has been received. It has been designed to consolidate the information formerly found in the Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising and the CFIA’s Decisions page. The tool can be found on the CFIA’s [Food Labelling for Industry](#) page. This page also contains other information of importance to U.S. firms including assistance determining which [food products require a label](#) as well as [general principles for labelling and advertising](#).

For quick reference while developing labels, U.S. companies should refer to the [Labelling Requirements Checklist](#).

Labelling requirements in Canada differ from those in the United States and non-compliance may result in fines, product being refused entry into Canada or product being removed from store shelves. The most significant difference between Canadian and American labels is the mandatory use of bilingual French and English labels in Canada. Other important variations include which allergens must be listed on a label and the format of the Nutrition Facts Table.

All retail prepackaged food products are subject to the packaging and labeling requirements set by the CFIA. The basic requirements for agricultural exports to Canada are:

- Common name of product
- Net quantities expressed in metric units
- Name and address of Manufacturer /Canadian Dealer, noted "imported for/importé pour"
- List of ingredients, (including food allergens)
- Nutrition Facts Table in accordance with the Canadian format
- Durable life date (if shelf life 90 days or less)
- As of August 2013, mandatory declaration of food allergens on pre-packaged foods
- Labels in English and French
- Follow minimum type size specifications
- Conformity to standardized package sizes stipulated in the regulations
- Country of origin labeling on shipping container

Products for commercial, industrial or institutional use as food service products are exempt from the bilingual labelling and nutrition labelling requirements. However, a number of processors provide this information voluntarily.

Additionally, although the Universal Product Code (UPC) or bar code is not required or administered by government, virtually all retailers in Canada require products to be labelled with a UPC.

FAS Canada publishes an annual [Exporter Guide](#) which provides an overview of the exporting requirements to Canada, including labelling. In the 2013 edition, the labelling information can be found starting on page 24.