

Quick guide to product labelling at approved farmers' markets

The label communicates product information to the customer. It serves three primary functions:

- Provides basic product information
- Provides health, safety and nutrition information
- Acts as a vehicle for food marketing, promotion and advertising

Regulatory requirements

A label is required for all prepackaged food except for the following:

- Fresh fruits and vegetables packaged in a wrapper or with a confining band of less than 12.7 mm (1/2 inch) in width
- One bite confections, such as candy, which are sold individually

Foods packaged at the time of sale do not need to have a label, i.e., foods packaged at the market by the vendor.

Foods sold at farmers' markets in Alberta are subject to both federal and provincial labelling requirements.

Basic labelling requirements - Federal

Common name

Standardized name set out in the Food and Drug Regulations or any other federal regulation. If the name is not prescribed the name by which the food is commonly known.

Net quantity

The quantity must be declared in metric units.

Dealer identity and principal place of business

The principal place of business is the main location where company-related enterprise occurs. The address should be complete enough for postal delivery.

Durable life date

If the product has a shelf life of 90 days or less the durable life date must be on the product. Storage instructions are also required if storage differs from normal room temperature.

List of ingredients

List ingredients in descending order of proportion by weight (as determined before they are combined to make the food).

Allergen labelling

Clearly identify food allergens, gluten sources and sulphites. Identify in list of ingredients or immediately at end of the list in the "contains" statement.

Nutrition facts panel

Many products sold at farmers' markets are exempt from needing a nutrition facts panel IF the product is sold direct to consumer by the individual who made it. The exemption is also lost if the product contains certain ingredients.

Bilingual labelling

Products are exempt from bilingual labelling if they are being made and sold within the municipality in which produced or in the municipalities immediately adjacent to the one where it was produced.

CFIA Industry Labelling Tool

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/labelling/food-labelling-for-industry/eng/1383607266489/1383607344939>

Basic labelling requirements - Provincial

Effective June 1, 2020, Alberta's Food Regulation was revised to include labelling requirements for farmers' market vendors who are selling home-prepared foods at Alberta approved farmers' markets.

These requirements are in addition to the federal requirements noted above and apply to ALL home-prepared foods or foods prepared in kitchens that are not subject to inspection and do not have an Alberta Health Services food permit.

- Name of the food
- Date the food was made or prepared

- A statement similar to “prepared in a home kitchen that is not subject to inspection”
- A statement similar to “not for resale”
- Vendor’s name, business name, email and/or phone number

To speak with a public health inspector about your food product, call 1-833-476-4743.