

BEEF LABELLING SCHEME GUIDELINES

ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EC REGULATION 1760/2000

General

- The beef labelling system is a European Community (EC) wide system which is intended to provide buyers with clear, reliable information about beef (including veal) on sale. A key requirement of the system is that it should enable beef on sale to be traced back to where it originated. All beef offered for sale in the EC **must** be labelled with certain compulsory information and is mandatory.

GUIDANCE APPLICABLE TO ALL BEEF

(please see below new rules on the marketing of bovine animals aged 12 months or less)

Compulsory Labelling

- Reference number or code
- **'Born in'** (name of Member State or non-EC country in which the animal or group of animals were born)
- **'Raised in'/'Reared in'** (name of Member State or non-EC country in which the animal or group of animals were raised) i.e. If cattle are born, raised and slaughtered in the same country the indication **'Origin'** plus the country can be used instead of **'born in'** and **'raised in'/'reared in'**
- **'Slaughtered in'** (name of Member State or non-EC country)
- Licence number of slaughterhouse
- **'Cutting in'/'Cut in'** (name of Member State or non-EC country)
- Licence number(s) of cutting plant(s)

Origin - Any imported cattle slaughtered in the UK can not be labelled as Origin. For example, beef imported from Southern Ireland should be labelled accordingly;

- Born in IE
- Reared in IE/UK
- Slaughtered in UK (plus plant number) and,
- Operators should ensure that the carcasses of these cattle are not boned and batched with UK origin beef.

Mince - The following compulsory information must be shown on your labelling for minced beef:

- A reference number or code
- **'Slaughtered in'** (name of Member State or non-EC country of slaughter) i.e. the batch must be slaughtered in one country only
- **'Minced in'** (name of Member State or non-EC country of mincing) i.e. mince may only be derived from animals slaughtered in one country only
- If different from country of mincing, the country where animals or group of animals have lived from birth to slaughter, **'Origin'**: [name of member state and/or non-EC country], or **'Origin: Non-EC'** if the country is outside the EC.

NEW LABELLING RULES ON THE MARKETING OF MEAT OF BOVINE ANIMALS AGED 12 MONTHS OR LESS

On slaughter, all bovine animals aged 12 months or less must be placed into one of the following 2 categories:

- **Category V**: bovine animals aged 8 months or less or
- **Category Z**: bovine animals aged more than 8 months but not more than 12 months

The meat of bovine animals aged 12 months or less can only be marketed in the Member States under the compulsory sales description(s) as listed in the EU legislation. For meat marketed in the UK the following sales descriptions apply:

- meat from animals slaughtered aged 8 months or less must be described as **'veal'**.
- meat from animals slaughtered aged more than 8 months but not more than 12 months must be described as **'beef'**.

At each stage of production and marketing, the meat must be labelled with the age of the animals on slaughter using the wording:

- **'age on slaughter: up to 8 months'** in the case of animals aged 8 months or less, or
- **'age on slaughter: from 8-12 months'** in the case of animals aged more than 8 months but not more than 12 months.

However, operators may at each stage of production and marketing, except on release to the final consumer, replace the wording above with category letter (V or Z). Please note: mixing of meat from V or Z carcasses and bovines over 12 months is not permitted.

APPROVED (VOLUNTARY) LABELLING INFORMATION

If you intend to give your customers any other written labelling information about the **origin** (other than the Member State or non-EC country), **production methods** or **characteristics** of beef which are not compulsory this can be made on a voluntary basis if approved under the Beef Labelling Scheme which operates alongside the compulsory rules.

Labelling requiring approval

- Region or Locality where the animal was born and reared; (e.g. West Country & 'Cumbrian')
- Breed or Cross Breed names (e.g. 'Aberdeen Angus sired' & 'Aberdeen Angus cross')
- Age or Gender of animal
- Method of Production (e.g. Farm Assured, Grass-fed)
- Method of Slaughter (i.e. Halal)
- Method of Length of Maturation (e.g. '21 days matured')

Contacts - If you wish to make a voluntary claim and your business is located in England and you require an application form please contact:

Beef Labelling Section, Meat Technical Schemes, Rural Payments Agency, Eden Bridge House,
Lowther Street, Carlisle, CA3 8DX.

Alternatively, you can call (01228) 640469 or e-mail: MTS.carlisle@rpa.gsi.gov.uk