



FOOD STANDARDS

Australia New Zealand

Te Mana Kounga Kai – Ahitereiria me Aotearoa





Country of Origin Labelling

Overview of Proposal

August 2005





Timeline

- Discussion paper released 12 August 2005
- Consultation to continue
- Submissions close 5 September 2005
- Final assessment report late September 2005
- Ministers to consider late October 2005

Proposal strengthens country of origin requirements

- “On request” option for unpackaged foods is dropped
- Country to be specified
- Print size and legibility requirements specified for unpackaged foods
- Strengthened provisions for specified unpackaged foods
- Declarations must be clear and unambiguous
- Consistency with trade practices law

‘On request’ option for unpackaged foods is dropped

- Earlier ‘on request’ option dropped
- Feedback from consumers, producers, retailers and industry indicated this option would be unworkable
- Will require information to be on a label on the food or on a sign associated with the display of the unpackaged food



Country to be specified

- Unpackaged fish, fruit, vegetables and nuts will be required to specify the country of origin including locally produced product
- Previously, only imported produce had to be identified and the use of the word “imported” was sufficient
- Provides clearer distinction between local and imported product

Print size and legibility requirements for unpackaged foods

- Signs associated with the display of unpackaged produce will require 9mm print
- Labels on produce and signs will have to be clear, legible, distinct from background
- Reinforce application of the legibility standard in the Food Standards Code to unpackaged foods

Country of origin labelling

Current



Country of origin labelling

Proposed





Strengthening provisions for specified unpackaged foods

- Further-processed forms of unpackaged fish, fruit, vegetables and nuts will be required to specify the country of origin - e.g. dehydrated apples, sun-dried tomatoes, dried fish
- Previously, only packaged or imported fresh, whole produce had to carry country of origin information

Country of origin labelling

Current



Country of origin labelling

Proposed



Declarations must be clear and unambiguous on packaged foods

- All packaged foods must carry country of origin information
- The name and address of manufacturer will not be considered sufficient
- The use of a logo or outline of the country will not be sufficient; the country name will be required
- Now there must be a declaration - eg. “Product of Australia”; “Made in Canada”



Declarations must be clear and unambiguous on packaged foods

- The country of origin information must be prominent and clear so as not to mislead
- Example: 100% Australian-owned should not have greater prominence than the declaration of origin

Country of origin labelling

Current



Country of origin labelling

Proposed



Consistency with trade practices legislation

- Country of origin declarations must be consistent with trade practices legislation - packaged and unpackaged foods
- There are established rules for the use of wording such as
 - “Product of Australia”
 - “Made in Australia”
 - “Made in Australia from local and imported ingredients”



Balancing consumer information and costs

- Proposed standard will enable consumers to clearly identify Australian products
- We have not included labelling of ingredients
 - Loss of flexibility
 - Costs to industry; and
 - Likely flow on costs to consumers

Implementation

- Overall package of measures will include – the standard, user guides and an awareness program
- Manufacturers, producers and retailers can adopt new labelling as soon as standard is gazetted.
- Full implementation required following gazettal:
 - 6 months for unpackaged foods
 - 2 years for packaged foods to allow change over of labelling stock