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Australia

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

Australia to Adopt Country of Origin Labeling Changes

2005

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Report Highlights:

The Australia New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council met in late October and agreed that the Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) proposed draft standard for Country of Origin labeling should be accepted in Australia. It is expected that the new standard will be gazetted (made law) by early 2006. Once adopted, the standard will include a transitional period. Changes include the addition of Country of Origin Labeling requirements for pork and food sold for catering purposes in-line with the current requirements for packaged and unpackaged fish, fruit and vegetables.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Canberra [AS1]
[AS]

REF: AS5032

The Australia New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council met in late October and agreed that the Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) proposed draft standard for Country of Origin labeling (see ref report) should be accepted in Australia. Details of the key FSANZ recommendations are contained in ref report which can be downloaded from the [FAS Attache Reports](#) website. In summary, there have been no changes to the proposed requirements for packaged food or unpackaged fish, fruit & vegetables. Unpackaged fresh pork and preserved pork will have to be labeled in the same way as unpackaged fish, fruit & vegetables. Food sold for catering purposes will have to be labeled with country of origin information. Food sold direct to the public by restaurants, caterers, etc. will not have to be labeled with country of origin information.

Arrangements for adopting the standard in Australia require final work to be completed and it is expected that the new standard will be gazetted (made law) in early 2006. Once adopted, the standard will include a transitional period so that manufacturers can transit from the current system to the new in a measured way. Implementation details will be made available on the [FSANZ website](#). The application of the standard to New Zealand is yet to be determined.

The issue of country of origin labeling of packed fruit and vegetables, and the Trade Practices Act application of the terms 'Made in...' and 'Product of...' to food were considered. The Ministerial Council supported the Australian Government proposal to direct Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) to undertake further work to assess the feasibility and cost/benefits of extending country of origin labeling to packaged food that contains two or less fruits and/or vegetables.

Examples of such food are:

- Some foods that contains two or less fruits and/or vegetables;
- Whole, shelled, peeled, chopped or diced fruits and/or vegetables, with or without any incidental ingredients (incidental ingredients include preserving agents, ingredients used in small quantities for flavoring, salt, sugar, colorings and thickeners.);
- Preserved, dehydrated or frozen fruits or vegetables;
- Packaged fresh fruits and vegetables;
- Some fruit juices and soy milks (requested by Ministers);
- Where the fruit and/or vegetable is mixed with added water;
- Nuts, seeds, herbs and spices (part of the definition of fruit and vegetable) unless they are used as an incidental ingredient in which case they would not require labeling.

Foods that are not included in the scope of the survey are:

- Most foods (including juices) that contains more than two fruit and/or vegetables;
- Deconstructed fruits and or vegetables (e.g. pureed, ground or minced fruits or vegetables or vegetable oils) other than juice and soy milk;
- Foods that contain other major ingredients (e.g. fruits and/or vegetables mixed with meat, dairy foods, fish, cereals, eggs);
- Non-alcoholic beverages (other than juice);
- Alcoholic beverages.

On November 14, 2005, FSANZ released a [feasibility study](#) on this matter and has asked for written submissions from stakeholders to be received by 6.00 pm (Canberra time) on December 5, 2005.

The Australian Government has also written to its Treasurer and Minister for Industry, Tourism and Resources, requesting their consideration on how to address the issues relating

to the Trade Practices Act including those arising from the 'Made in' and 'Product of' claims, with a view to greater clarity about the place of origin of food, rather than the place it is packaged.

Detailed guidance on all of Australia's food regulations and standards is contained in our Food & Agricultural Import Regulations & Standards report (AS5020).

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Report Number	Title of Report	Date
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AS5031	Exporter Guide	10/05/2005
AS5032	Country of Origin Labeling Requirements Likely to Change	10/06/2005
AS5024	Agricultural Biotechnology Report	07/05/2005
AS5020	Food & Agriculture Import Regulations & Standards	06/16/2005
AS4038	Functional Food Sector Product Brief	01/05/2005
AS4035	Organic Food Market Brief	10/28/2004

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