

Food Labels and Regulations

Introduction:

Food labelling regulations in Canada, overseen by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), are designed to provide consumers with accurate information, promote food safety, and ensure fair trade practices. In this report, we will explore the intricate world of food labelling, covering various aspects, including nutrition labelling, bilingual requirements, allergen declarations, and labelling claims.

Nutrition labelling:

Nutrition labelling is a fundamental aspect of food packaging in Canada. CFIA mandates that businesses provide comprehensive nutrition information on packaged foods. Key components of nutrition labelling include:

- Calorie Content:

The number of calories per serving must be prominently displayed, allowing consumers to make informed dietary choices.

- Nutrient Breakdown:

Information on nutrients such as fats, carbohydrates, proteins, and specific vitamins and minerals must be included.

- Allergen Declarations:

Allergens present in the product, such as peanuts, tree nuts, wheat, soy, milk, and eggs, must be clearly identified. This is crucial for consumers with food allergies.

Bilingual Labelling:

Canada's official languages are English and French, and bilingual labelling is a legal requirement. All food labels must be presented in both languages to ensure accessibility and compliance with national language laws.

Country of Origin Labelling:

Certain commodities, such as meats, fish, and fruits, must display the country of origin on their labels. This information helps consumers make choices based on their preferences for domestic or imported products.

Allergen Labelling:

To protect consumers with allergies, businesses must provide clear and accurate allergen information on their labels. This includes identifying the presence of common allergens and cross-contamination risks.

Labelling Claims:

CFIA regulates labelling claims to prevent misleading information. Businesses must ensure that claims related to organic, gluten-free, natural, or other product attributes are truthful and substantiated. This ensures that consumers can trust the claims made on food packaging.