Customers must be able to make informed choices about food. When a food employee wraps food for a customer’s request, the worker is available to answer the consumer’s questions and no package label is required. However, when food is packaged before customer request, a full label is required to provide information about ingredients, allergens, quantity, and who made the food.

Labeling Food Packaged at Retail

**Note**: This toolkit for food commonly packaged for self-service in retail establishments does not include all situations such as food donation or packaging using reduced oxygen packaging methods such as canning or vacuum sealing. Work with your [local health department](https://doh.wa.gov/community-and-environment/food/local-food-safety-contacts) for additional guidance: [www.doh.wa.gov/localhealthfoodcontacts](http://www.doh.wa.gov/localhealthfoodcontacts). See FDA guidance for additional details on labeling: [www.fda.gov/media/81606/download](http://www.fda.gov/media/81606/download).

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| **Section 1: Food Establishment Information** |
| **Establishment Name** | **Phone**      |
| **Street (Physical Address)**      | **City**      | **ZIP**      | **Email**      |
| **Contact Name**      | **Title / Position**      |
| **Section 2**: **Examples of Food Needing Labels when Packaged at Retail** |
| * Food prepared off or on premises and packaged in advance for customer self-service from a rack, shelf, tabletop display, grab and go counter, refrigerated case, or similar
* Raw or undercooked animal foods (need safe handling statement or consumer advisory)
* Foods prepared in one location and packaged for service in satellite locations
* Meal kits packaged before customer request
* Packaging of foods not prepared on premises need full label with nutrition information if sold for off-site consumption
 |
| **Section 3: Required Label Components for Foods Packaged at Retail** |
| Each food item packaged at retail must be labeled with the following six items. Label text must include English and be easy to read in size, type, and color. For font size, the lowercase letter “o” should be at least one-sixteenth (1/16) inch in height.See Section 4 for additional label requirements for specific foods. |
| **Label Item** | **Description** |
| **Name of Food** | Package must have the common name of the food or a statement that accurately describes the product in a **bolded**, prominent font. |
| **Ingredients** | Foods with more than one ingredient must list the ingredients in descending order by weight. Ingredient that weighs the most is listed first and the ingredient that weighs the least is listed last. Use common names for ingredients such as ‘sugar’ instead of ‘sucrose’. Items made from prepared foods with multiple ingredients must include the sub-ingredients such as ‘rice, soy sauce (water, wheat, soybeans, salt), nori’. Chemical preservatives must be listed by name and function such as “ascorbic acid to promote color retention”. |
| **Quantity** | The net quantity of contents must be written in the bottom 30% of the label. Food labels must show the net contents in both metric (grams, kilograms, liters, etc.) and U.S. Customary (ounces, pounds, etc.) terms. Individual serving sizes of less than half-ounce are exempt from weight labeling. |
| **Allergens**(Fish, crustacean shellfish, eggs, milk, tree nuts, soy, peanuts, wheat, sesame) | The name and source of major food allergens must be declared on the label by one of two ways:1. Indicate the source of the allergen in parentheses within the ingredient list, such as:

**Ingredients**: Whey (milk), eggs, and lecithin (soy).1. Place the word “Contains,” followed by the name of the food source of each allergen immediately after or adjacent to the list of ingredients, such as:

**Ingredients**: Whey, eggs, and lecithin.**Contains**: Milk, egg, and soyWhen listed in the ingredients, the specific type of nut (almond, pecan, etc.) or species of fish (salmon, cod, etc.) and crustacean shellfish (shrimp, crab, etc.) must be declared.See Allergen Awareness Toolkit and materials: [www.doh.wa.gov/foodrules](http://www.doh.wa.gov/foodrules) |
| **Manufacturer** | The name and place of business that manufactured, packed, or distributed the food must include the street address, city, state, and ZIP code. The street address may be omitted if it is in a current city or telephone directory. Imported foods must include the country of origin. |
| **Nutrition Information** | Food prepared inside a retail establishment and packaged for sale within the establishment does not need nutrition information unless nutrition or health claims are included on the label or advertisement. See FDA guidance for additional details on nutrition labeling: ([www.fda.gov/media/81606/download](http://www.fda.gov/media/81606/download)) |



Labeling Food Packaged at Retail

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| **Section 4: Foods with Additional Labeling Requirements if Packaged at Retail for Customer Self-Service** |
| The following foods **packaged** at retail have labeling requirements **in addition** to those listed in Section 3.  |
| **Juice** | Unless under an approved HACCP plan or treated to attain a 5-log reduction, juice packaged in a food establishment must be labeled with the following customer notice.**WARNING:** This product has not been pasteurized and, therefore, may contain harmful bacteria that can cause serious illness in children, the elderly, and persons with weakened immune systems.Only beverages with 100% juice may be called ‘juice’ otherwise additional information such as ‘drink, beverage, \_\_\_% juice’ must be used. |
| **Perishable Food** | Food that might spoil within 30 days must be labeled with a pull date to indicate the last date the food may be offered for sale. This does not apply to raw agricultural commodities; frozen foods; and fresh meat, poultry, fish, or shellfish. The pull date would need to be within 7 days if subject to date marking. |
| **Raw Meat & Poultry** (nonRTE) | Raw eggs must include the following label on the main display panel or on the inside of the egg carton lid.**SAFE HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS:** To prevent illness from bacteria: keep eggs refrigerated, cook eggs until yolks are firm, and cook foods containing eggs thoroughly.If this statement is on the inside of the lid, the words “Keep Refrigerated” must appear on the main label. |
| All non ready-to-eat meat from animals subject to federal inspection (cattle, swine, sheep, goat, equine, poultry, etc.) must include Safe Handling Instructions. See USDA’s Safe Handling Instructions label for meat and poultry:[www.fsis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2020-10/safe\_handling\_label\_lo.jpg](https://www.fsis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2020-10/safe_handling_label_lo.jpg).Beef and veal also need to provide nutrition information: www.fsis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/import/Beef\_Veal\_Nutrition\_Facts.pdf |
| **Bulk Food** | Bulk foods for customer self-service need the manufacturer’s label or other method with the product name, ingredients, allergens, and nutrition information prominently posted for the consumer. |
| * Bulk and unpackaged foods dispensed by the employee *upon customer request* do not need to be labeled if there is no health or nutrient claim and the food is made by the food establishment (or other establishments under the same ownership).
* Bulk foods packaged *before customer request* need a full label, with nutrition statement.
 |
| **Salmonidae Fish** | Salmonidae fish, such as salmon (pink, coho, sockeye, chinook, Atlantic, and chum) and trout (rainbow, cutthroat, and brown) fed with the color additives Canthaxanthin and Astaxanthin must be labeled in the list of ingredients on the package or bulk container to notify the customer of the specific color additive. |
| **Undercooked Animal Foods** (RTE) | Raw and undercooked raw animal foods sold as ready-to-eat, such as cold-smoked lox, poke, or ceviche must include a consumer advisory with proper disclosure and reminder on the label. |
| **Shucked Molluscan Shellfish** | Each self-service container must have the original shellfish label Information on each package:* Name, address, and certification number of the shucker/packer; and
* The "sell by", "best if used by", or “date shucked” from the original package

Label information must be tracked for when the shellfish are sold or served and maintained for ninety days. |
| **Shellstock** | Each self-service container must have the original shellfish tag Information on each package:* Harvest area name (with state or country abbreviation) and date, and dealer’s certification number; *or*
* Marked with a code to correlate to the original tag information

Tag information must be tracked for when the shellfish are sold or served and maintained for 90 days. |
| **Additional Guidance** | Some foods have additional labeling requirements beyond this guidance.* Foods packaged specifically for infants and children under 4 years of age. [www.fda.gov/media/81606/download](http://www.fda.gov/media/81606/download)
* Country of Origin Labeling requirements for larger grocery stores that sell over $230,000 of produce per year <https://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/cool>
 |
| **Section 5**: **Staff Training** |
| [ ]  | Who will be trained to review and prepare proper food labels for foods packaged in the food establishment?[ ]  All staff [ ]  Person in Charge/Manager [ ]  Main chef/cook [ ]  Other:       |
| **Section 6: Signature** |
|                    |
| Signature Date | Printed Name Phone |

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