

Food labelling guidance for charitable food providers

Labelling rules vary depending on how food is provided to service users and where it is packed. Even if your organisation is non-profit, if you are a registered food business there are no exemptions in the labelling requirements.

There has been a recent meeting with DEFRA/Food Standards Agency and various food retailers/trade associations to discuss this issue. At the moment the position is as per the following guidance. Having listened to the various issues this raises, they have agreed to consider them but at the moment the position remains any registered food businesses have to comply with food labelling requirements. The main issue is to try to reduce food waste but also to give people who receive the food the required information.

We have tried to provide clarification about the scenarios that were sent into Trading Standards, however it is the responsibility of each organisation to ensure that they are complying with the relevant food information requirements and are providing safe food to the community.

It is important to remember that if you begin to use other kitchens or supply other food banks/organisations then full mandatory labelling will be required.

Please see below for the Food Standards Agency guidance for charitable organisations and definitions of the terms used below.

[Providing food at community and charity events | Food Standards Agency](#)

Definitions

Prepacked Food Full Mandatory Labelling

Name of Food

Name and address of Food Business Operator

Ingredients in descending order of weight with allergens either highlighted/bold/italics

Date Marking

Storage conditions

Instructions for use if applicable

<https://www.businesscompanion.info/en/quick-guides/food-and-drink/labelling-of-prepacked-foods-general>

Prepacked for Direct sale (PPDS)

Prepacked for direct sale means food that is placed into packaging (prepacked) before being supplied from the premises on which it was packed by that organisation, or from a mobile stall or vehicle used by that organisations - for example, sandwiches that are packaged in the shop from which they will be sold.

Name of Food

Ingredients in descending order of weight with allergens either highlighted/bold/italics

<https://www.businesscompanion.info/en/quick-guides/food-and-drink/labelling-of-prepacked-for-direct-sale-foods>

Loose Food (not Prepacked) and Food that is packaged at the request of the consumer

Allergen information for loose food can be given in a number of ways, the easiest way is to signpost service users to speak to you if they have allergies and have the allergen information available.

<https://www.businesscompanion.info/en/quick-guides/food-and-drink/labelling-of-non-prepacked-foods>

Scenario 1

Volunteer cooks/bakers cook at home and supply to food banks. Food banks then provide these meals or baked items directly to service users who come into the food bank.

Prepacked Full Mandatory Labelling unless Food Bank repacks then PPDS

Scenario 2

Surplus foods are donated in bulk by businesses and unpacked and repacked by food bank volunteers for distribution to service users that come into the food bank

A food business that donates prepacked food that is intended for further handling and preparation before it is supplied to a consumer, must provide the mandatory particulars, including allergen information, to the community food scheme. This can be provided on the outer case of the food, a label attached to the outer food packaging or on commercial documents. Once you repack this information can be used to meet PPDS labelling requirements.

Scenario 3

Surplus fruit donated by businesses made into jam by food bank volunteers and packed and provided direct to food bank users

If the jam is produced and packed at the food bank then the labelling required would be PPDS. If the jam is packed at another site or the jam is distributed to other food banks then full labelling will be required.

Scenario 4

Surplus bread donated by businesses in black bags/paper bags. Bread then placed into paper bags by food bank for direct supply to food bank users

A food business that donates loose food that is intended for further handling and preparation before it is supplied to a consumer, must provide the mandatory particulars, including allergen information, to the community food scheme. This can be provided on the outer case of the food, a label attached to the outer food packaging or on commercial documents. Once you repack this food, the information should be used to meet PPDS labelling requirements.

Scenario 5

Take away lunches – prepared on site and distributed to service users directly coming into the food bank

PPDS labelling

Scenario 6

Hot and or chilled/frozen meals delivered to houses

If the meals are packed per the service users order like a takeaway delivery service then loose food labelling would apply.

If the service users meals are prepacked then full mandatory labelling would be required as PPDS does not apply to distance sales.

Scenario 7

Dehydrate veg and distribute via charities and food projects (as soup packs with recipes) – indirect supply

Full Mandatory Labelling