



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

Template Version 2.09

Voluntary Report - public distribution

Date: 7/30/2004

GAIN Report Number: CH4026

China, Peoples Republic of

FAIRS Product Specific

GB7718-2003 Food Labeling Standard G/TBT/N/CHN/33

2004

Approved by:

Ralph Gifford
U.S. Embassy, Beijing

Prepared by:

Wu Bugang and Adam Branson

Report Highlights:

This report contains an UNOFFICIAL translation of China's drafted National Standard for Labeling of Pre-Packaged Foods (GB7718). It also includes China's related notification to the World Trade Organization (G/TBT/N/CHN/33) dated November 17, 2003. News reports indicate the regulation has been adopted and will be put into gradual implementation with a grace period until October 1, 2005. Note: final approved language is not yet available.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Beijing [CH1]
[CH]

Table of Contents

Disclaimer.....	3
Background	3
Begin Translation.....	4
Preamble	4
GB7718-2003 General Standard of Pre-packaged Food Labeling	5
1. Scope	5
2. Referenced Standards	5
3. Terminology and Definitions	5
4. General Requirements.....	6
5. Labeling Content.....	7
Appendix A.....	12
End Translation	12
WTO/TBT/N/CHN/33	13

Disclaimer

Information in this translated report may not be completely accurate either because policies may change when the regulation is adopted, or because clear and consistent information about these policies was not available. Therefore, U.S. exporters should try to verify all import requirements with their foreign customers, who are normally best informed, before any goods are shipped. Final import approval of any product is subject to the importing country's rules and regulations as interpreted by border officials at the time of product entry. In the event of any errors or omissions in this translation, the original Chinese version shall prevail.

Background

On November 17, 2003 China notified G/TBT/N/CHN/33 to the World Trade Organization. The notified document, the *General Standard of Labeling for Pre-Packaged Foods* (GB7718-2003), revised China's previous National Standard for Food Labeling from 1994 (CH1043). The WTO notification allowed for 60 days of comments. The U.S. delivered comments on January 12, 2004 and received a response from China on February 19, 2004.

News reports indicate the Standard is adopted and products will be granted a grace period until October 1, 2005. Final approved language is not yet available.

Begin Translation

Preamble

This standard is mandatory except for Article 5.3 that is voluntary.

This standard is adopted from, but not equivalent to, (CAC) CODEX STAN 1-1985 the General Standard of Labeling for Pre-packaged Food (revised in 1991, 1999). It also referenced U.S. Federal Law Section 101- Food Labeling.

This standard replaces GB7718-1994 The General Standard of Labeling for Food

This standard has been modified as follows in comparison with GB 7718-1994 as follows:

- Standard title has been changed to the General Standard of Labeling for Pre-packed Food;
- Combines Articles 4 General Principles and Article 8 General Requirements of GB 7718-1994 into Article 4 General Requirements and makes subsequent revisions and supplements;
- Adds "characters, symbols, and numbers of mandatory labeling should not stand lower than 1.8 mm" (Article 4.8);
- Adds "category names may be used in the ingredient list" (5.1.2.2.2);
- Adds "labeling requirements for net content measurements" (5.1.4.3) and "requirement for minimum character height of labeling for net content" (5.1.4.4);
- Adds requirements for labeling of name, address of group company, subsidiary, production base, or entrusted company that produced the pre-packed food;
- Adds food categories that may be exempted from labeling of shelf life;
- Adds "calculation of maximum surface area of packing material or container (Appendix A);

GB7718-2003 is one of the national standards for food labeling.

Other relevant standards include:

GB10344-2003 The General Standard of Labeling for Pre-packaged Drink Wine (replacing GB 10344-1989);

GB13432-2003 The General Standard of Labeling for Pre-packaged Special Dietary Food (replacing GB13432-1992)

Appendix A of this standard is a standardized appendix.

This standard is proposed and managed by the National Technical Committee for Standard of Food Industry.

The standard-drafting team organized by the National Technical Committee for Standard of Food Industry drafts this standard.

Main drafters of this standard include: Hao Yi, Wang Yijun, Wang Meiling, Bai Demei, Tian Xijing, Tian Mingfu, Xu Hongmin, Yang Guizhi, Yang Xiaoming, Zhang Lijun, Chen Yaojun, Zheng Xin, Zhao Xuejun, Dong Hongyan, Ji Chao, Jain Huiwei, and Li Linan.

GB7718-2003 General Standard of Pre-packaged Food Labeling**1. Scope**

This standard stipulates:

- General requirements of pre-packaged food (Article 4);
- Mandatory labeling content of pre-packaged food (see 5.1);
- Exemption of mandatory labeling content for pre-packaged food;
- Voluntary labeling content of pre-packaged food (see 5.3).

This standard applies to the labeling of all consumer-ready pre-packaged foods.

2. Referenced Standards

The clauses in the following documents that have been cited by this standard become clauses of this standards. For referenced documents with a date, their consequent modifications (not including errata) or revised versions do not apply to this standard. However, parties having reached an agreement based on this standard are encouraged to study whether the latest versions of these documents are applicable. For the referenced documents without a date, their most recent versions apply to this standard.

GB2760 The Hygienic Standard for the Use of Food Additives

GB/T12493 The Classifications and Codes of Food Additives

GB13432 - 2003 The General Standard of Labeling for Special Dietary Food

3. Terminology and Definitions

The following terminologies and definitions apply to this standard.

3.1 Prepackaged foods

Foods that are pre-packaged in certain quantity, placed (poured) in containers and directly served to consumers.

3.2 Food label

Languages, designs, graphics, and all instructions on food packages.

3.3 Ingredient

Any material, including food additive, that is used to produce or process food and that exists (including existence in a modified form) in the final product.

3.4 Processing aid

Materials or substances (not including mechanical equipment and apparatus) used solely to achieve the purpose of a technique, rather than used as ingredients, during processing, blending, or handling.

3.5 Date of manufacture

Date on which a food has become a final product

3.6 Date of packaging

Date on which a food has been placed (poured) into a packing material or container and become ready for ultimate sale

3.7 Date of minimum durability, best before

Expected ultimate time of food consumption given the pre-packaged food is stored under conditions as stipulated on the label. During this time frame, the product is absolutely suitable for sale and maintains adequate quality that does not need to be or has been stated on the label. Food may still be edible within a given length of time beyond this limit.

3.8 Use-by date, recommended last consumption date, expiration date
Anticipated final date of consumption for pre-packaged food under the storage conditions stipulated on the label. Beyond this date, the pre-packaged food may not maintain the quality and features as consumers expect and therefore is not suitable for sale.

3.9 Principle display panel

The most noticeable panel to consumers while pre-packaged food is being sold

4. General Requirements

4.1 All contents of pre-packaged food labels shall comply with state laws and regulations as well as relevant product standards.

4.2 All contents of pre-packaged food labels shall be clear, obvious, durable, and easy for consumers to identify or recognize at purchase.

4.3 All contents of pre-packaged food labels shall be easily understandable, accurate, and science-based. They shall not bear contents of superstition, bad taste, pornography, depictions of other foods, or violations of scientific and nutritional sense.

4.4 All contents of pre-packaged food labels shall neither introduce foods by using erroneous, misleading, or deceptive languages or graphics, nor use distinguished size or color for the characters that may lead to misconception among consumers.

4.5 All contents of pre-packaged food labels shall not use languages, graphics, and designs that may confuse consumers, directly or implicitly, from the purchased food product or its function to another.

4.6 A pre-packaged label shall not be separable from the packing material (container).

4.7 Contents of pre-packaged food labels shall use standardized languages except for trademarks.

4.7.1 May use Pinyin at the same time, but the size shall not be greater than that of the corresponding Chinese characters.

4.7.2 May use foreign or ethnic minority languages, but shall have corresponding relations with the Chinese language (except for name, address of imported food producer, and name, address, web site of its overseas agent). The letter size of all foreign languages shall not be greater than that of the corresponding Chinese (except for foreign trademarks).

4.8 The Chinese characters, symbols, and numbers in mandatory labels shall not stand lower than 1.8 mm when the surface area of the packing material or container is greater than 20 cm².

4.9 There is no need to label the outer package if all or part of the mandatory labeling content on inner packing material or container can be clearly identified through the outer package.

4.10 If inner packaging is covered by outer packaging (larger packaging) that is ready for consumer delivery, mandatory labeling can be placed only on outer (larger) packaging.

5. Labeling Contents

5.1 Mandatory labeling content

5.1.1 Food name

5.1.1.1 The specific name reflecting genuine features of food should be placed at a noticeable position on the label.

5.1.1.1.1 When national or industry standards have stipulated one or more names for one food, should select one of them or its equivalent.

5.1.1.1.2 In the absence of the afore-mentioned names, a common name that will cause no misunderstanding or confusion among consumers should be adopted.

5.1.1.2 When an "innovative name", "fancy name", "transliteration name", "brand name", "slang name", or "trademark name" is used, a food name stipulated in Article 5.1.1.1 should be placed next to it.

5.1.1.2.1 When an "innovative name", "fancy name", "transliteration name", "brand name", "slang name", or "trademark name" contains likely misconception languages or terms (words), a specific name reflecting the true features of the food should be placed next to the demonstrated name.

5.1.1.2.2 If different sizes of the characters in specific food name lead to misconception about food features, uniform-sized characters shall be applied. For example, "orange juice" and "drink" in "orange juice drink", "chocolate" and "sandwich cookies" in "chocolate sandwich cookies", they shall all use one-sized characters.

5.1.1.3 In order to avoid misunderstanding or confusion among consumers about the true features of food, physical state, or processing methods, words or phrases may be attached to the beginning or end of the food name. For instances, dried, condensed, reconstituted, smoked, fried, powdered, granulated, etc.

5.1.2 List of ingredients

5.1.2.1 Pre-packaged food labels, except for single-ingredient food, should contain a list of ingredients.

5.1.2.1.1 Ingredient list should be entitled "ingredients" or "list of ingredients".

5.1.2.1.2 All ingredients should be listed in a descending order based on the input level in the course of food manufacturing or processing. Ingredient input of no more than 2% may not be listed in descending orders.

5.1.2.1.3 If a compound ingredient consists of two or more other ingredients, the name of the compound ingredient should be identified in the "ingredient list" followed by parenthetical information that lists the original ingredients in a descending order based on input levels. When national or industry standards for the compound ingredient exist, there is no need to list the original ingredients of the compound ingredient if it accounts for less than 25 percent, inclusive, of the total food weight. However, food additives playing a regulatory role in the final product should be identified.

5.1.2.1.4 Water used during food manufacturing or processing shall be indicated in the ingredient list unless the water has volatilized, and the rule applies to other volatile ingredients.

5.1.2.1.5 Edible packaging materials shall be included in the ingredient list with their original ingredients being identified, such as edible capsules, and sticky-rice paper for candies.

5.1.2.2 All ingredients shall be identified with their names in accordance with Article 5.1.1 except in the following situations:

5.1.2.2.1 Sweeteners, preservatives, colorings shall be identified with specific names. Other food additives may be indicated with specific names or category names in line with GB 2760. When two or more coloring agents have been added to a foodstuff and it is difficult to list all ingredients due to limited labeling space, they may be indicated with category names (coloring) followed by their codes as stipulated in GB2760 in parenthesis. For example, if one food has turmeric yellow, coreopsis yellow, tempt red, michx brown, and roselle, they can be labeled as "coloring (102, 113, 012, 131, 125)".

5.1.2.2.2 The following food ingredients may be identified with category names as stipulated in Table 1.

Table 1

Ingredient	Category name
Vegetable oils or refined oils, excluding olive oil	"Vegetable oil" or "refined vegetable oil"; in case of having been hydrogenated, "hydrogenated" or "partially hydrogenated" should be indicated
Starches, excluding chemically modified starches	"Starch"
Condiments or their extracts, accounting for no more than 2% of the food total weight, regardless of individual or combined weight	"Condiment", "of condiment", or "compound condiment"
Basic gum agents in chewing candies	"Gum basic agents"
Preserved fruits, accounting for no more than 10% of the food total weight	"Preserved fruit"

Note: animal fat (oil) should be identified with the name of specific nature, for example pig fat, beef fat, and sheep fat.

5.1.2.3 In case raw materials are altered to other materials in the course of processing (i.e. fermented products, such as wine, soy sauce, vinegar), "raw materials" or "raw and adjuvant materials" can be used to replace "ingredients", "ingredient list", and the raw and adjuvant materials, and food additives shall be listed in accordance with Article 5.1.2.1.2.

Processing aids used in the course of food manufacturing or processing do not require labeling in the ingredients.

5.1.3 Labeling of ingredient amount

5.1.3.1 If values or special features of one or more ingredients have been emphasized on the pre-packaged food label or instruction, the volume of the emphasized ingredient should be indicated.

5.1.3.2 Identically, if emphasizing low content level of one or more ingredients, ingredient content levels in the final product shall be indicated.

5.1.3.3 An ingredient mentioned in food name but not emphasized in the labeling, there is no need to indicate content level of the ingredient in the final product. Condiment ingredients with little input levels and no emphasis in the label do not require labeling of content levels in the final product.

5.1.4 Net content and drip-dried material (solid) content

5.1.4.1 Indication of net content shall consist of net content, numbers, and official measurements, for example, "net content 450g".

5.1.4.2 The following methods should be adopted to indicate net content of food in packing material (container) based on official measurements:

- A. Liquid food, measured in volume - L (liter), mL (ml);
- B. Solid food, measured in weight - g (gram), kg;
- C. Semi-solid food or viscous food, measured in volume or weight.

5.1.4.3 Net content measurements should be indicated as in Table 2.

Table 2

Measuring method	Scope of net content (Q)	Measurement
Volume	Q < 1,000 mL	mL (ml)
	Q = 1,000 mL	L (l)
Quantity	Q < 1,000 g	g
	Q = 1,000 g	kg

5.1.4.4 Minimum character height of net content shall comply with stipulations in Table 3.

Table 3

Net content (Q)	Minimum height of characters (mm)
5ml < Q = 50ml	2
5g < Q = 50g	2
50ml < Q = 200ml	3
50g < Q = 200g	3
200ml < Q = 1L	4
200g < Q = 1 kg	4
Q > 1 kg	6
Q > 1L	6

5.1.4.5 Net content should be placed in the same display panel on packing material or container along with the food name.

5.1.4.6 If a container contains both solid and liquid materials (e.g. canned pear in sweetened water), aside from indication of net content, the content of drip-dried material should also be indicated by weight or weight percentage.

For example:

Canned Pear in Sweet Water

Net content 425g

Drip-dried material (or solid, pear pieces): no less than 255 g, or no less than 60%

If, in the same container, several independent foods are packed together, in addition to indication of net content, the quantities or pieces of food shall also be identified, not including small packages inside a larger package that are not sold in pieces, e.g. small pieces of candies.

5.1.5 Name and address of manufacturer and distributor

5.1.5.1 The name and address of any legally registered entity responsible for food manufacturing, packaging, or distribution shall be indicated. In case of the following situations, (name and address) shall be indicated accordingly.

5.1.5.1.1 Names and addresses of group companies and its subsidiaries that undertake independent legal liabilities shall be indicated respectively.

5.1.5.1.2 For group company subsidiaries or manufacturing bases that do not undertake independent liabilities, the names and addresses of the group company, its subsidiaries (manufacturing bases) can be indicated, or simply that of the group company.

5.1.5.1.3 In case that an entrusted company processes pre-packaged food for its client but does not undertake marketing, the name and address of the client shall be indicated.

5.1.5.2 In addition to the name and address of its legally registered agent, importer, or distributor in China, an imported pre-packaged food should be indicated with the name of origin country or region (refers to Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan).

5.1.6 Indication of date and storage instructions

5.1.6.1 The manufacturing date (or date of packaging) and date of minimum durability should be identified with indication of use-by date being optional. If indication of date is in the form of "see...on the package", it should specify the position on the package.

Indication of date should not apply in the forms of sticker, reprint, or tempering.

5.1.6.1.1 Date should be indicated in a sequence of year, month, and date, e.g. 2004 01 15 (with spaces in between), 20040115 (without spaces), 2004-01-15 (with hyphen in between), January 15, 2004.

5.1.6.1.2 One of the following forms should be adopted in identification of date of minimum durability or use-by date:

A. Applies to date minimum durability

"Recommended to eat before..." or "recommended to drink before...";

"Best before...", "best eat before..." or "best drink before...";

"Best before this date...", "best eat before this date..." or "best drink before this date...";

"Date of minimum durability ends on...";

"Date of minimum durability is for xx months" (xx days, x years).

B. Applies to use-by date

"Eat before...", or "drink before...";

"Eat before this date...", or "drink before this date...";

"Use-by date ends on ...";

"Use-by date is for xx months (xx days, x years).

5.1.6.2 If the date of minimum durability or use-by date is associated with storage conditions, the particular storage conditions for the food should be indicated.

5.1.7 Product standard coding

Domestically produced and pre-packaged food (not including imported pre-packaged food) shall be indicated with national standards, industry standards, local standards that the enterprise adopts, or registered enterprise standard codes and serial numbers.

5.1.8 Quality grade

Food quality grade shall be indicated if product standards that the enterprise adopts have specified the quality grade of the food.

5.1.9 Other mandatory labeling content

5.1.9.1 Food processed with ionization

5.1.9.1.1 Any food processed with ionized radioactivity or ionized energy shall be indicated along with the food name as "food processed with ionization".

5.1.9.1.2 Genetically modified food

Labeling of genetically modified food shall comply with the administrative regulations of the State Council.

5.2 Exemption of mandatory labeling content

5.2.1 The following prepackaged foods can be exempted from indicating minimum durability date:

Drink wines with alcohol content of 10% or above; vinegar; grade salt, solid sugar.

When the maximum surface area of the packing material or container is less than 10 cm², only product name, net content, and the manufacturer (or distributor) name should be indicated.

Imported pre-packaged foods shall be labeled with origin country or region (refers to Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan), and name and address of its registered agent, importer, or distributor in China. There is no need to label the name and address of the manufacturer.

5.3 Voluntary labeling

5.3.1 Batch number

Batch number can be indicated if necessary.

5.3.2 Serving instruction

If necessary, instructions that are helpful to consumers can be indicated, such as container opening method, serving preferences, daily (per meal) intake, cooking methods, and re-heating method, etc.

5.3.3 Calorie and nutrient

If labeling of caloric value, nutrient content, claims of nutrient content levels, comparison of nutrient content, and nutrient functions is in place, it should comply with stipulations of GB13432-2003.

Appendix A

(Standardized appendix)

Calculation of the Maximum Surface Area of Packing Material or Container

A.1 Calculation of rectangular prism packing material or container

Height (cm) of the largest rectangle of the rectangular prism-shaped packing material or container multiplies its width (cm).

A.2 Calculation of cylindrical (or similar) packing material or container

Height (cm) of packing material or container multiplies 40% of the perimeter (cm)

A.3 Calculation of packing material or container of other shapes

40% of the total surface area of the packing material or container

If a packing material or container has an obvious principle display panel, the panel area should be considered the maximum surface area.

Note: In case of bottle or jar, the calculation of surface area should not include flanges of shoulder, neck, top or bottom.

End Translation

WTO/TBT/N/CHN/33

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

G/TBT/N/CHN/33

17 November 2003
(03-6147)

Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade NOTIFICATION

Original: English

The following notification is being circulated in accordance with Article 10.6.

1.	Member to Agreement notifying: <u>THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA</u> If applicable, name of local government involved (Articles 3.2 and 7.2):
2.	Agency responsible: Standardization Administration of the People's Republic of China (SAC) Name and address (including telephone and fax numbers, e-mail and web-site addresses, if available) of agency or authority designated to handle comments regarding the notification shall be indicated if different from above:
3.	Notified under Article 2.9.2 [X], 2.10.1 [], 5.6.2 [], 5.7.1 [], other:
4.	Products covered (HS or CCCN where applicable, otherwise national tariff heading. ICS numbers may be provided in addition, where applicable): All pre-packaged (filled) processed food and unprocessed natural food.
5.	Title, number of pages and language(s) of the notified document: General Standard of Labelling for Pre-packaged food (10 pages, in Chinese)
6.	Description of content: This standard provides basic requirements as well as contents of mandatory labelling, exemption from mandatory labelling, and voluntary contents of labelling for pre-packed food. Basic requirements include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All contents on the label shall be easy to understand, accurate, and on a scientific basis. Contents based on superstition, derogation on other food, vulgar/obscene information as well as those contrary to science are not allowed to be described on the label; 2. label contents of pre-packaged food shall not be described by false words, pictures or colours etc., that mislead or deceive consumers; 3. label contents of pre-packaged food shall not be described by words, pictures or symbols that refer to directly or indirectly any other product or characters of other products with which such food might be confused; 4. the wording of labels shall be in standard Chinese, except registered trademarks; 5. the minority nationality or foreign languages may be used on the label, but should correspond to the Chinese words (except name and address of the manufacturer of imported food, name, address and website of

	<p>overseas distributors). All characters of foreign languages shall not be bigger than the corresponding Chinese words, except the foreign registered trademarks;</p> <p>6. in the case where the surface area of the packaging or container is larger than 20cm², the height of characters, symbols and numbers of mandatory labelling shall not be smaller than 1.8mm.</p> <p>Mandatory requirements on labelling include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The following contents on the label shall be clearly indicated: name, ingredients, net content of food; name and address of the manufacturer; manufacturing date; best before; the product standard code and irradiated food or ingredients. 2. This standard is a revision of General Standard of Food Labelling (1985, 1994) in line with CAC CODEX STAN 1-1985 (1991, 1999), Food Hygiene Law of the People's Republic of China, Product Quality Law of the People's Republic of China. 3. For pre-packaged food sold in China (not including Hong Kong, Macao and Chinese Taipei) that does not comply with the General Standard of Labelling of Pre-packaged Food, penalty shall be imposed according to the level of seriousness.
7.	<p>Objective and rationale, including the nature of urgent problems where applicable: To protect consumers, prevent cheating, and maintain fair trade.</p>
8.	<p>Relevant documents: CAC CODEX STAN 1-1985 (1991, 1999)</p> <p>Food Hygiene Law of the People's Republic of China</p> <p>Product Quality Law of the People's Republic of China</p> <p>Product Label and Labelling Regulation [Issued by The State Bureau of Technical Supervision (1997) No. 172]</p> <p>Rules for Measurement Supervision on Pre-packaged Commodities [No. 43 Ordinance of The State Bureau of Technical Supervision]</p>
9.	<p>Proposed date of adoption: }</p> <p>Proposed date of entry into force: } To be determined</p>
10.	<p>Final date for comments: 60 days after the date of notification</p>
11.	<p>Texts available from: National enquiry point [X] or address, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail and web-site addresses, if available of the other body:</p>