

INTRODUCTION

Getting food labelling correct is technical and time consuming. But when labels on retail products are printed incorrectly there can be enormous financial and legal implications, regardless of whether the product is being sold at a farmers market or in a large retail chain. However, the main concern is that all information about the food is clearly legible to ensure that the consumer can make an informed choice regarding the items they purchase and that they are not misled in any way.

This document aims to help IOA licence holders ensure that their products are labelled in compliance with European organic legislation and the **Organic Food and Farming Standards in Ireland Edition 2, as amended**.

GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF THE IRISH ORGANIC ASSOCIATION SYMBOL (Certification Mark)

The Certification Mark of the Irish Organic Association is to be used by IOA Symbol holders. The purpose of the Symbol is to show that the product has been approved by IOA and fulfils the Organic Food and Farming Standards in Ireland. It has been designed as a simple, direct and timeless symbol which communicates one thing: that a food or feed product/service has been approved as organic by the Irish Organic Association, in line with current EU Organic Regulations. It is not meant to communicate any other message.

As an Irish Organic Association (IOA) licence holder you are only permitted to market and sell organic products covered by your IOA licence. It is the policy of IOA to exercise control over the ownership, use and display of licences, certificates and the IOA logo/symbol. No operator is permitted to use the IOA logo on any packaging/labelling until they receive in-conversion/organic status. All labels/packaging must be forwarded to IOA for prior approval. Licence holders shall only make use of claims regarding certification in respect of the scope for which certification has been awarded, as specified on the certificate. On applying to IOA the new applicant is requested to sign a certification agreement. The IOA Logo remains the property of IOA at all times and may only be used by valid licence holders.

An electronic version of the Irish Organic Association Certification Mark, in formats suitable for use by printers when reproducing this Symbol, is available from the office [Jpeg (.jpg) and Vector (.eps)].

HOW THE SYMBOL IS TO APPEAR

The IOA Certification Mark must only appear whole and complete. No part of the Symbol may be divorced from the rest of the Symbol. The words 'IRISH ORGANIC ASSOCIATION' are part of the Symbol as shown. The letters IOA will appear underneath the Symbol as shown. No alternative typeface is permitted for these words.

SIZE

The minimum size for the Symbol is 11mm in diameter.

For exceptionally small labels/packs permission may be granted for a smaller Symbol on a case by case basis.

There is no limit as to how large the Symbol may appear.

COLOUR

The Symbol may appear black or green (pantone reference Green 369C). A negative version (white) may also be used on black or dark coloured backgrounds.

WHERE THE SYMBOL IS TO APPEAR

The Symbol may appear anywhere on the packaging that the Symbol holder desires, with the following stipulation:

- It may not in any way be attached to other words or symbols – it must be separate and complete in its own right.
- It must be clearly visible to the consumer – therefore it must not be hidden from view on any packaging, leaflet or promotional item.
- Where the Symbol is used in conjunction with other type and/or graphics, no device must be used to enclose the IOA Symbol or to otherwise incorporate it with type or graphics.

PRIVATE STANDARDS

The guidelines outlined above also apply to operators certified under the Catering Standard, Health & Beauty Standard and Certified Product Scheme. See below for the relevant Symbols.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR FOOD AND FEED PRODUCTS

In the first instance, all food processors should consult and become familiar with the most up to date general food labelling and food information legislation. This is available from the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, www.fsai.ie, and their various Labelling Guidelines documents can be obtained (in hard copy or by download) free of charge. *You should be aware that the EU Food Information to Consumers Regulations (Regulation 1169/2011) are applicable since 13th December 2014.* Some of the requirements of this Regulation include a minimum font size for mandatory information, allergen labelling for foods sold unpackaged, labelling requirements regarding foodstuffs sold via the internet, country of origin labelling and mandatory nutrition labelling for many pre-packaged foodstuffs. The link below will direct you to the appropriate web location.

<https://www.fsai.ie/business-advice/labelling>

- Secondly, all operators labelling their produce and/or involved in food/feed processing should consult section **12** of the **Organic Food and Farming Standards in Ireland Edition 2**. Here you will be given detailed instruction on the conditions for labelling organic food and feed products, including the use of the EU organic logo, its size and colour and additional compulsory indications. The EU logo can be downloaded from the following link:
https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/farming/organic-farming/organic-logo_en
- Operators are **required** to send drafts of all new labels/packaging to IOA for approval prior to going to print– this will help reduce the chance of costly errors. You will receive communication in writing as to the status of your label review. However, it is your responsibility to ensure that your labels comply with the general labelling legislation. When IOA approve a label, they are merely stating that the organic section of the label is in compliance with the IOA Standards and IOA cannot be held responsible for any costs incurred by you in the printing of errant labels nor for any breaches of labelling legislation on your part.
- We have generated some helpful examples of [retail food](#) and [non-retail food](#) labels to demonstrate the requirements set out in section **12** (although these examples do not necessarily incorporate all of the requirements of the general labelling legislation such as storage instructions, Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine approval numbers, nutritional information etc.). For guidance on the labelling requirements for animal feed, please refer to the IOA Compound Feed Labelling Guidelines linked below.
<https://www.irishorganicassociation.ie/wp-content/uploads/IOA-Compound-Feed-Labelling-Guidelines.pdf>

RETAIL SALE PRODUCTS

Example 1.

Here are two **correct** sample labels for the same product. The ingredients come from different parts of the world. However, the packer is licenced by IOA. Note that IOA's certification code numbers (IE-ORG-02 for the Republic of Ireland and XI-ORG-07 for Northern Ireland) and the place of farming **must** appear on the label, while the inclusion of the license number is optional.

Happy Foods Organic Muesli

Ingredients: Organic **Oat** Flakes (**gluten**), Organic Jumbo **Oats** (**gluten**), Organic Sultanas, Organic Raisins, Organic Malted **Barley** Flakes (**gluten**), Organic Dried Banana Flakes, Organic Sugar, Organic Palm Oil, Organic Chopped Apricots, Organic Ground Spices, Salt.

Allergens in bold

500g

Happy Foods Ltd., 1 Main Street, Newtown, Co. Westmeath.




IE-ORG-02
EU/Non-EU Agriculture

Castle Foods Organic Muesli

Ingredients:
***Oat Flakes (gluten), *Jumbo Oats (gluten), *Sultanas, *Raisins, *Malted Barley Flakes (gluten), *Dried Banana Flakes, *Sugar, *Palm Oil, *Chopped Apricots, *Ground Spices, Salt.**

Allergens in bold

***Certified Organic Ingredients**

500g

Castle Food Products, 1 Castle Road, Newry, Co. Down.




XI-ORG-07
EU/Non-EU Agriculture

Example 2.

These two **correct** labels are for the same product. The only ingredient is tea which is not of agricultural origin in the EU and hence the use of the EU organic logo is optional, even though the product is packed in the EU (i.e. in Ireland).

Happy Foods Organic Tea

Ingredients: Organic Tea Leaves
Product of India

40g

Packed in Ireland by Happy Foods Ltd., 1 Main Street, Newtown, Co. Westmeath.



IE-ORG-02

Happy Foods Organic Tea

Ingredients: Organic Tea Leaves
Product of India

40g

Packed in Ireland by Happy Foods Ltd., 1 Main Street, Newtown, Co. Westmeath.




IE-ORG-02
Non-EU Agriculture

Example 3.

Here are two **correct** sample labels; one is for 100% Irish milk and the other is 100% Northern Irish milk. The agricultural origin under the EU organic logo can be stated as “Ireland Agriculture” or for Northern Ireland one of the following options should be used: “UK (NI) Agriculture”, or “United Kingdom (Northern Ireland) Agriculture”. However, it could also state “EU Agriculture” in both cases without misleading the consumer in any way. Note that including the licence number is **optional** for all retail labels.

Happy Foods Fresh Organic Milk

Ingredients: Organic Milk

500ml

Happy Foods Ltd., 1 Main Street,
Newtown, Co. Westmeath.




IE-ORG-02
Ireland Agriculture

Castle Foods Fresh Organic Milk

Ingredients: Organic Milk

500ml

Castle Food Products, 1 Castle Road,
Newry, Co. Down.




XI-ORG-07
UK (NI) Agriculture

Example 4.

This product contains some organic ingredients, but not enough to enable it to be labelled organic in its product description or name (i.e. the percentage organic ingredients is <95%). The additives used are permitted (they are listed in section 5.05 of the Standards) and hence the reference to organic production of the relevant ingredients can be made. Note that neither the IOA logo nor the EU organic logo can be used in this instance, but the certification body code for IOA (IE-ORG-02) must be used to demonstrate that the product and processor are subject to inspection and are not making unsubstantiated claims regarding the organic status of their ingredients.

Happy Foods Wholemeal Bread

Ingredients:

*Wholemeal **Wheatflour (gluten)**,
 *White **Wheatflour (gluten)**,
Buttermilk (milk), Raising agent –
 bicarbonate of soda, salt.

Allergens in bold
 *Certified Organic Ingredients, total 50%

500g

Happy Foods Ltd., 1 Main Street,
Newtown, Co. Westmeath.

IE-ORG-02

Example 5.

Organic fish products are produced under organic aquaculture production rules, and the origin can be stated as “aquaculture” or “agriculture”. In this instance, the fish has been farmed in Ireland hence the term “Ireland Aquaculture”. Although the sea salt has not come from Europe, it is not of agricultural origin and hence no reference to its origin is required. Note that the EU organic logo can be used both as black and white (see labels in Example 3) and its inverted version shown on this label.

Happy Foods Organic Smoked Salmon

Ingredients: Organic Atlantic **Salmon**
 (*Salmo salar*) (**fish**), sea salt.

Allergens in bold
 Organically farmed in Ireland.

500g

Happy Foods Ltd., 1 Main Street,
Newtown, Co. Westmeath.




IE-ORG-02
Ireland Aquaculture

NON-RETAIL/WHOLESALE PRODUCTS

Example 1.

Here are two **correct** sample labels for the same product. Non-retail/wholesale labels or accompanying documents (e.g. invoices) **must** include: (1) Name and address of the certified operation, (2) Product name, (3) IOA's certification code number and/or name, and (4) traceability information, such as lot numbers, where applicable. The use of the EU organic logo is **optional**, however, if used it must be accompanied by the applicable certification code and place of farming immediately below.

Happy Foods Organic Molasses

Product code: ORG999

Lot number: 081223

Net weight: see weighbridge ticket

Best before: 08/06/24

Organic Control Body: Irish Organic Association

Happy Foods Ltd., 1 Main Street,
 Newtown, Co. Westmeath.

Happy Foods Organic Molasses

Product code: ORG999

Lot number: 081223

Net weight: see weighbridge ticket

Best before: 08/06/24

Happy Foods Ltd., 1 Main Street,
 Newtown, Co. Westmeath.



IE-ORG-02
 Non-EU Agriculture

