



LABELLING IN MEAT INDUSTRY

ANIMAL WELFARE LABELLING AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Cabinet adopts Animal Welfare Labelling Law - what you need to know | 02.06.2020

For the farming of animals there are legal standards and various labels and seals that provide information about animal welfare. The aim of the BMEL (Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture) is to make Germany a pioneer in the field of animal welfare. The animal welfare label should make it clearly visible to consumers which products stand for more animal welfare.

The harmonised labelling of products with the welfare label will give consumers a better overview and enable them to better assess and classify animal welfare - from less to more.

The Federal Cabinet has already adopted the draft law for the introduction and use of an animal welfare label. The first planned animal welfare label for pigs was presented in February 2019 - further animal species are planned. The labelling concepts are based on scientific criteria and practical experience, e.g. from the initiative „Tierwohl“ (animal welfare).

In order for manufacturers in the meat industry to position themselves as pioneers in the market, early implementation of the labelling requirements is necessary.

Animal welfare label and seal - all information on the farming method at a glance

The industry initiative „Tierwohl“ (animal welfare) has already established a system of labelling food in the meat industry with the farming method, in order to provide the consumer with more transparency about animal welfare and origin. Labelling with the farming method is already required and implemented by some supermarkets, such as Aldi, Aldi Süd, Edeka, Kaufland, Lidl, Netto, Penny and Rewe.

Consumers are also demanding more transparency with regard to the farming of animals when they choose their products. On the basis of different factors, such as space, keeping, employment and feeding, the respective type of keeping is classified from 1 to 4. The minimum requirements for achieving the seal differ depending on the type of fattening, such as chicken fattening, turkey fattening, pig fattening, dairy farming or cattle fattening.

The consumer has the possibility to recognise by the seal under which conditions the animals have grown up.

Animal welfare seal at one glance

Supplier of the farming method				
				
Chicken				
Turkey			—	
Pork				
Beef		—		

The classifications in the respective husbandry systems listed here correspond to the status of March 2020. The requirements are revised at regular intervals.

The easiest way to apply the seal is to apply it in the form of a label on the food or food packaging. In addition to the initiative of the seal, there are already special legal requirements for labelling in the meat industry, where a label can serve as an information carrier.

Obligation to indicate origin for pork, sheep, goat and poultry meat

The indication of origin information for fresh, chilled or frozen pork, sheep, goat and poultry meat is mandatory throughout the EU. The basis for this labelling is the EU Food Information Regulation in conjunction with the European Commission’s implementing regulation (EU) No 1337/2013.

The following legal information must be observed:

- **Country of origin** and **slaughtering** of the animal
- where there is evidence that the **birth, rearing and slaughtering** of the animals take place in a single EU Member State or third country, the indication ‚origin‘ may be used
- **Mixed packages** in which meat of the same or different animal species is packed together shall be labelled with different information
- There are special rules for **minced meat and trimmings**
- **additional voluntary indications** of origin are allowed

- **The mixing of meat of different origins** in the production chain is limited by rules on batch formation: a traceability and monitoring system is established along the entire production chain using a code.

Legal requirements for beef labelling

The emergence of BSE led to a loss of consumer trust, which resulted in a huge decrease in the consumption of beef. To create transparency in the beef production chain, obligatory beef labelling was introduced. Traceability is thus guaranteed at all stages of marketing and production. The legal basis for the labelling of beef is the EU Food Information Regulation in conjunction with the implementing regulation of the European Commission (EC) No. 1825/2000.

The compulsory beef labelling particulars are as follows:

- **Reference number/Reference code**
This number is used to trace the meat to an animal or group of animals.
- **Born/fattened/slaughtered in:**
Indicate the relevant EU Member State or third country. If birth/fattening/slaughter takes place in a country, the term „origin“ can be used in a simplified way.
- **Cut into:**
Indicate the relevant EU Member State or third country where the cutting took place.
- **Approval number of the slaughter house**
- **Approval number of the cutting plant**

Additional legal requirements apply to non-prepacked meat, minced beef and meat from third countries. Voluntary additional information is possible, but it must be objective and verifiable by the inspection authority and must be comprehensible to the consumer.

Compulsory labelling is monitored by on-the-spot checks. If there is a failure to comply with beef labelling, various measures are taken, such as the initiation of a fine procedure.

Solutions for meat identification and labelling

In general, there are many possibilities for labelling in the meat industry. The choice of the right technology depends, among other things: the production environment, production speed, product variety, product formats and the number of products. In the following we will inform you about possible solutions.

Labels

Labels for identification in the meat industry must comply with the requirements of food labelling in accordance with Regulation (EU) 10/2011. Whether blank labels for printing or prefabricated labels - thanks to our **own label production**, we offer you the highest quality and fast delivery.

Use of label printers

By using label printers, the posture labels or information labels can be printed directly in the production facility. As a **partner of well-known manufacturers of label printers**, thermal transfer printers and inkjet printers, b+b offers you the right solution for your requirements - depending on the production speed, the number of products to be marked and the production environment. With the help of selected label printers, the information on the labels can be printed in a food-safe condition and is particularly easy to read for the consumer.

Use of print apply systems

The use of label print and apply systems is generally possible. The information is printed on the label and then applied to the product. The **new b+b label print dispenser EDS 420i | EDS 620i** is suitable for the implementation of mandatory information. It is compact, robust and can be flexibly integrated into your

production line.

Use of label design and automation software

With the assistance of a labeling software you can design and print your labels directly with the animal welfare seal as well as mandatory information. The labeling software Labelsplatform 4 from b+b enables you to easily implement the requirements of the meat industry.

Use of semi- and fully automatic labelling systems

Depending on the production volume and the required number of production intervals, manufacturers decide in favour of semi or fully automatic labelling systems. In food production, relevant hygiene regulations must be observed during production.

Depending on the product or packaging format different standard systems from b+b can be used. Whether top, bottom, side, wrap-around or seal labelling - b+b offers you the right solution. In addition to the standard labelling machines b+b also offers bespoke solutions, adapted to your product and packaging formats as well as your requirements.

Track and trace in meat industry

The topic of product tracing is also becoming increasingly important in the meat industry. Product returns can seriously damage the image or brand of a company. Especially due to the increasing speed of communication through social media and the digitalization of communication, information is spread faster and faster and can lead to major damage to the company's image.

By product marking and product tracing the paths of the product can be traced more quickly and thus a product returns can be carried out more quickly. b+b offers you all necessary hardware or software components for the serialization of your products.

Which technology is the best economic solution for your company?

The question of the right technology to implement the food regulation always requires a **differentiated assessment** of the possibilities and the consideration of your production and requirements. b+b will be pleased to help you find the economically best turnkey solution for your company to fulfill your requirements.