



## Section 6, Country of Origin

### In this section, you will learn:

- ▶ What is meant by the country of origin?
- ▶ When and how should the country of origin be indicated?

### What is the country of origin?

The country of origin is the country where the food has been produced or manufactured.

Production refers to the growing of vegetables or cattle rearing, for example. Manufacture refers to the combination of a food with other ingredients and cooking, preserving and other similar treatments.

If the food has been produced in more than one country, the country in which it underwent the last substantial manufacturing measure is considered to be the country of origin.

The packaging, sorting, cleaning, simply drying or other minor treatments that do not substantially alter the food are not considered to be manufacturing.

### When is the country of origin indicated?

The food's country of origin must be indicated whenever its absence is likely to mislead consumers or it is required by law to be indicated.

### When can an absence of the country of origin mislead consumers?

The country of origin must be indicated if it is possible that other labelling for the product, such as the name, logo or trademark of the supplier or pictures or symbols may otherwise give a misleading impression of its origin.

For example, if the product has been manufactured in Sweden but the labelling includes the name and address of a Finnish food business operator, the country of origin must be indicated.

The **country of origin must be indicated** for the following foods:

Food/food category	Applicable legal act
Beef (fresh, chilled and frozen)	(EC) No 1760/2000, (EC) No 275/2007 and (EC) No 1825/2000
Swine, sheep, goat and poultry meat (fresh, chilled and frozen)	(EU) No 1337/2013

Food/food category	Applicable legal act
Fresh, chilled or frozen meat (beef, pig, sheep, goat and poultry meat) used as an ingredient in a meal in catering establishments	Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 154/2019 (valid from 1 May 2019 to 30 April 2021)
In products manufactured and packaged in Finland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>meat used as an ingredient in food</li> <li>milk</li> <li>milk products</li> <li>milk used as an ingredient in certain similar products</li> </ul>	Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 218/2017 and Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 361/2020 (valid from 1 June 2017 to 31 December 2021)
Fishery products	(EU) No 1379/2013
Fresh whole vegetables, fruits and berries	(EU) No 543/2011
Honey	Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 392/2015
Olive oil	(EU) No 29/2012 (EU) No 1308/2013

### Non-prepacked foods

**Retail establishments** must indicate the country of origin of a non- prepacked food where there is mandatory provision or where failure to do so may mislead the consumer.

**Catering establishments** must display in writing the country of origin of the fresh, chilled or frozen meat used as an ingredient in a meal. This requirement applies to beef, pig, sheep, goat and poultry meat. This requirement does not apply to ready-made meat products such as cooked meatballs or to raw meat products such as marinated chicken fillets that the catering establishment buys.

### How is the country of origin indicated?

In order to avoid misleading labelling, the country of origin should be indicated in a visible place, such as on the front of the packaging.

The indication may simply be the name of the country of origin, a generally understood abbreviation of the name or the region of origin.

Exceptions to this are fresh whole vegetables, fruits and berries, for which the full name of the country must be indicated instead of an abbreviation. The name of the region or area of production may also be included.

Instead of the country of origin, the indication may refer to the area, place, region or state of origin within the country if this can be considered to be generally understood, for example Åland, Scotland, Sicily, Hawaii or California.

When the country of origin (or place of provenance) of the food is given and it is not the same as that of its primary ingredient, the country of origin (or place of provenance) of the primary ingredient needs also to be declared or at least indicated as being different to that of the food, e.g. (name of the primary ingredient) does not originate from (the country of origin).

For further information, see section 6.10 of the Food Information Guide for Food Supervisors and Food Operators (in Finnish and Swedish).

You can test your knowledge with the revision exercises found in Section 11 of this guide.

#### Summary

- ▶ The country of origin must be indicated whenever its absence is likely to mislead consumers or it is required by law to be indicated.