

Shell Egg Carton Label Requirements

Principal Display Panel (PDP):

- The term principal display panel means the part of a label that is most likely to be displayed, presented, shown, or examined under customary conditions of display for retail sale.
- The principal display panel shall be large enough to accommodate all the mandatory label information required to be placed on the container with clarity and conspicuousness and without obscuring design, vignettes, or crowding.
- The information panel as it applies to packaged food means that part of the label immediately contiguous and to the right of the principal display panel (PDP) as observed by an individual facing the principal display panel.
- If the Top View and/or the Front Lip are selected as the PDP, the information panel would consist of the panel immediately contiguous and to the right of the selected PDP's.

The Statement of Identity (EGGS):

- The Statement of Identity (EGGS) must appear on the PDP.
- The Statement of Identity (EGGS) must be in bold print and be at least $\frac{1}{2}$ the type size of the largest print on the Principal Display Panel (PDP).
- The Statement of Identity (EGGS) must be parallel to the base of the container (carton opening) or the label.

Grade: (AA, A or B)

- The Grade must appear on the PDP. Type size must be a minimum of $\frac{1}{4}$ ".

Egg Size Designation:

- (Jumbo, Extra Large, Large, Medium, Small, or Pee Wee)
- Must appear on the Principal Display Panel (PDP).
- Type size must be a minimum of $\frac{1}{4}$ ".

Declaration of Net Quantity of Content:

- The Net Content must be listed on the Principal Display Panel (PDP). Net Content must be stated as: 6 Eggs, Half Dozen Eggs, 12 Eggs, One Dozen Eggs, 18 Eggs, One and Half Dozen Eggs, etc.

Minimum Type Size of Net Content labeling requirement:

- Split 6-Egg Carton: $\frac{1}{8}$ " (25 to 100 square inches)
- 12-Egg or 18-Egg Carton: $\frac{3}{16}$ " (25 to 100 square inches)
- 30-Egg or 36-Egg Carton: $\frac{1}{4}$ " (100 to 400 square inches)
- Letter heights pertain to upper case or capital letters. When upper and lower case or all lower case letters are used, it is the lower case "o" or its equivalent that shall meet the minimum standards.

Legal Line

- (Name, Address, City, State, and Zip Code)
- The street address may be omitted if the location is listed in a local phone or business directory. If not, the address must appear in the legal line.
- Type size must be at least a minimum of $\frac{1}{16}$ ".

The Legal Line must be placed on the principal display panel (PDP) or information panel.

Safe Handling Instructions: [FDA website](#)

- Safe Handling Instructions must be listed on the PDP, Information Panel, or In-Lid

- If located on the In-Lid, the statement “*Keep Refrigerated*” or words of similar meaning must be listed on the PDP or information panel.
- Type size must be at least a minimum of 1/16”.
- The Safe Handling Instructions statement must be set off in a box by use of hairlines.

SAFE HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS: To prevent illness from bacteria: keep eggs refrigerated, cook eggs until yolks are firm, and cook foods containing eggs thoroughly.

- “**SAFE HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS**” must be all caps and in bold type. The remaining statement should consist of regular font (non-bold type, non-all caps).
- The Safe Handling Statement does not need to be left justified; however, the statement content must be exactly as listed in the above listed example.

Nutrition Fact Panel (NFP):

See <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-labeling-nutrition/changes-nutrition-facts-label> for current requirements.

Small Business Nutrition Labeling Exemption

<https://www.fda.gov/regulatory-information/search-fda-guidance-documents/small-business-nutrition-labeling-exemption-guidance>.

VOLUNTARY (OPTIONAL) LABELING REQUIREMENTS / Claims:

- Mandatory labeling requirements take priority over voluntary labeling requirements.

Sell By / Best By / Use By: Optional

- EXP, Expiration date, Sell By, Not to be sold after date on end of carton, Purchase By, Last sale date on end of carton or other words of similar meaning, can use 30 days, which includes the day of pack. Use Before, Use By, Best Before, Best By, Best if Used By or other words of similar meaning, can use 45 days, which includes the day of pack.

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| Farm Fresh: Optional. |
| Brown Eggs: The color of the egg (brown) is not required on the label. |
| Kosher: Must meet requirements in the Shell Egg Grader Handbook Section 9 |
| Local or Locally Produced: Definition of the term, “Local” can be found in the 2008 Farm Bill , Section 6015. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shell eggs must originate from a source flock(s) located <u>less</u> than 400 miles from the processing facility or within the state in which the eggs originated from and were processed in. |
| Vegetarian Fed/Feed Claims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producer must maintain documentation that no animal byproducts were used to feed the source flock(s). |
| Antibiotic Claims: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No antibiotics may be administered in the laying hen’s diet or through injections. • The producer/packer/distributor must provide documentation validating such claims. |
| National Organic Program (NOP): USDA – 7 CFR 205 Organic standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To utilize the NOP logo, the facility and flock must be NOP certified by an accredited certifying agent. |

Organic Claims:

- An operation can sell, label, or represent their product as “organic” without becoming NOP certified **if** the operation’s gross income from the organic sales totals \$5,000 or less annually [7 CFR § 205.101.(a)(1)].

Exempt operations still need to comply with the organic regulations, including the requirement to maintain records sufficient to prove that their products were produced organically and to verify production amounts.

PRODUCTION PRACTICES

- Shell egg labels making animal husbandry claims must meet the following definitions and be verified.

Cage-Free:

Eggs packed in consumer packages labeled as cage free are laid by hens that are able to roam vertically and horizontally in indoor houses and have access to fresh food and water. Cage-free systems vary from farm-to-farm and can include multi-tier aviaries. They must allow hens to exhibit natural behaviors and include enrichments such as scratch areas, perches and nests. Hens must have access to litter, protection from predators and be able to move in a barn in a manner that promotes bird welfare.

Free-Range:

Eggs packed in consumer packages labeled as free range must be produced by hens that are able to roam vertically and horizontally in indoor houses, and have access to fresh food and water, and continuous access to outdoors during their laying cycle. The outdoor area may be fenced and/or covered with netting-like material. Housing systems vary from farm-to-farm and can include multi-tier aviaries. They must allow hens to exhibit natural behaviors and include enrichments such as scratch areas, perches and nests. Hens must have access to litter, protection from predators and be able to move in the barn in a manner that promotes bird welfare.

