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Food Labelling Requirements in Mexico

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Mexican Official Standard: NOM-051-SCFI/SSA1-2010: “Labelling of pre-packaged foods and non-alcoholic beverages for retail sale”



General labelling provisions of NOM-051

Galletas con chispas de chocolate y nuez

INGREDIENTES: CHISPAS DE CHOCOLATE SEMI-AMARGO (AZUCAR, CHOCOLATE, MANTECA DE CACAO, DEXTROSA, LECITINA DE SOYA, SABORIZANTE ARTIFICIAL), HARINA DE TRIGO, AZUCAR, GRASA VEGETAL, MANTEQUILLA, NUECES, COCOA EN POLVO, HUEVO ENTERO EN POLVO, MELAZA, SAL, BICARBONATO DE SODIO, POLVO PARA HORNEAR, SABORIZANTE ARTIFICIAL.
PUEDE CONTENER TROZOS DE CACAHUATES Y/O DE OTRAS NUECES.

INFORMACION NUTRIMENTAL
Tamaño de la porción: 29 g (2 galletas aprox.)
Porciones por envase: 12 aprox.

Contenido por porción	
Contenido energético	149 kcal
Proteínas	1,5 g
Grasas	7,6 g
Carbohidratos	18 g
Sodio	99 mg

Consérvese en lugar fresco y seco
Fecha de Caducidad Y No. de lote:

PRODUCTO HECHO EN CANADA
Exportado por: Biscuits Leclerc, Ltd.
Quebec, Quebec Canada G3A IS9

Importado por: Idacsa S.A. de C.V.
Av Presidente Masaryk #61, 2 Piso, Col. Chapultepec, México
D.F. 11560 R.F.C. IDA970610M05

Cont. Net. 350 g

Product name and description

List of ingredients

Nutritional Information

Preservation legend, Expiration date and Lot No.

Country of origin

Net content

Information of the exporter and the importer

✓ **NOM-051-SCFI/SSA1-2010**: General Labelling Standard for pre-packaged foods and non-alcoholic beverages for direct retail sale to consumers: <http://www.economia-noms.gob.mx/normas/noms/2010/051scfissa1mod.pdf>

✓ **Mandatory information in Spanish that according to NOM-051 must appear in the labels of pre-packaged foods and non-alcoholic beverages for retail sale.**



Health and Nutritional Claims

- According to section 6 of NOM-051, no pre-packaged food or non-alcoholic beverage shall be described or presented in a false, ambiguous or deceiving manner to consumers. The NOM also prohibits certain claims such as:
 - **Claims that cannot be proven**
 - **Claims about the usefulness of a food or non-alcoholic beverage, to prevent, relieve, treat or cure a disease or physiological disorder.**
 - **Claims that a given food constitutes an appropriate source of ALL essential nutrients**
- Exporters strongly advised to work with their Mexican importers and/or private verification units authorized by the Mexican government to certify that labels and claims comply with the NOM-051:
https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/7373/2013_05_21_UVA_NOM_051.pdf
(at the end of the process the verification units can issue a certificate of compliance).



Health and Nutritional Claims

- NOM-051 also states that health and nutritional claims may refer to the content of energy, proteins, dietary fiber, vitamins and minerals, among others. Some of the claims considered in NOM-051 are:
 - Claims highlighting the level of a given nutrient contained in the product. *Examples: “Source of Calcium”; “High Content of Fiber and Low in Fat”*
 - Claims indicating the absence of certain components, according to the applicable provisions. *Example: “Gluten free”, “Sugar free”, etc.*
 - Claims describing the physiological function of a nutrient contained in the product for the growth, development and normal functioning of the body. *Example: “Nutriment X helps in X body function, and is found in Food X”*
 - Claims indicating that a food product has acquired a special or superior nutritional value thanks to the addition of nutrients, in accordance with applicable regulations. *Example: “Food product enriched with X nutrient”*



Amendment to NOM-051-SCFI/SSA1-2010

- March 27, 2020: Amendment to the Mexican Official Standard: NOM-051-SCFI/SSA1-2010 – “Labelling of pre-packaged foods and non-alcoholic beverages for retail sale”.
- The labelling changes are **mandatory** for both domestic and **imported** products, and aim to encourage Mexicans to adopt a healthier diet and fight diseases such as obesity and diabetes.
- Implementation in 3 stages:
 1. **First Stage:** Dec. 1, 2020 - Sept. 30, 2023 **(INCLUDES MAJOR CHANGES)**. Some provisions came into effect on **April 1, 2021**.
 2. **Second Stage:** October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2025
 3. **Third Stage:** October 1, 2025 – onward



Amendment to NOM-051-SCFI/SSA1-2010

- **Non-compliant products removed from the Mexican shelves** as of **Dec. 1, 2020** or not allowed to be sold in Mexico. Food producers, importers and traders could also be subject to penalties if non-compliant.
- Companies are strongly advised to work with their Mexican importers and/or **private verification units authorized by the Mexican government** to certify that labels comply with the Amendment to NOM-051:
https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/7373/2013_05_21_UVA_NOM_051.pdf
- Following is a summary of SOME key labelling changes, but companies should review all changes in the full text of the Amendment to NOM-051:
http://www.dof.gob.mx/2020/SEECO/NOM_051.pdf (only available in Spanish).

Front of Package Warning Black Seals

- In order to encourage a healthy diet, as of **Dec. 1, 2020**, black, octagonal-shaped warning seals with the word **“Excess”** are required to appear in the front-of-package (FOP) of foods and non-alcoholic beverages that meet 2 conditions:

1) That have “added” sugars, fats or sodium, and

2) That “exceed” certain pre-established thresholds

- Labels must include as many warning signs as applicable (from 1 up to 5) in the following order from left to right:



- Products with a FOP ≤ 40 cm² should include **only ONE seal** indicating the number of components in excessive amount, as follows:



Front of Package Warning Black Seals

- Details about the size and font type for the seals are available in the Amendment to NOM-051.
- Examples of how the warning seals should be placed when more than 1 seal is required:

a) Two seals



b) Three seals



c) Four seals

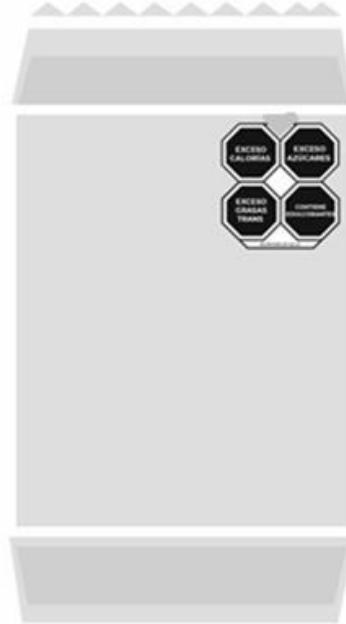


d) Five seals



Front of Package Warning Black Seals

- The warning black seals should appear in the **upper right corner of the FOP**, except for products with a FOP smaller than 60 cm², in which case the seals would be allowed to appear in any part of the FOP.



FOP ≤40 cm²



- Exempted products:** some single-ingredient products such as: vegetable oils, animal fats, sugar, honey, salt and cereal flour.



Front of Package Warning Black Seals

- Following are the thresholds and conditions by stage that determine when black warning seals must be included in the labels of **products with added sugars, fats or sodium (key trigger)**.
- Some thresholds become **stricter** from one stage to the other:

Thresholds for Stage 1 (Dec. 1, 2020 – Sep. 30, 2023)

Applies to products with **added** sugars, fats or sodium (the criteria to be evaluated depends on the added component)

	Energy	Sugars	Saturated Fats	Trans Fats	Sodium
Solids in 100 g of product	≥ 275 total kcal	≥ 10 % of the total energy coming from free sugars. Beverages with <10 kcal of free sugars are exempted from the seal	≥ 10 % of the total energy coming from saturated fats	≥ 1 % of the total energy coming from trans fats	≥ 350 mg
Liquids in 100 mL of product	≥ 70 total kcal or ≥ 10 kcal of free sugars				Calorie-free beverages: ≥ 45 mg
Legend to use	EXCESO CALORÍAS (Excess of Calories)	EXCESO AZÚCARES (Excess of Sugars)	EXCESO GRASAS SATURADAS (Excess of Saturated Fats)	EXCESO GRASAS TRANS (Excess of Trans Fats)	EXCESO SODIO (Excess of Sodium)

Notes:

- If added sugars are included during the production process, then sugars and energy/calories must be evaluated.
- If fats are added during the production process, then saturated fats, trans fats and energy/calories must be evaluated.
- If sodium is added during the production process, then only sodium must be evaluated.

Front of Package Warning Black Seals

Thresholds for Stage 2 (Oct. 1, 2023 – Sep. 30, 2025)

Applies to products with added sugars, fats or sodium (the criteria to be evaluated depends on the added component)

	Energy	Sugars	Saturated Fats	Trans Fats	Sodium
Solids in 100 g of product	≥ 275 total kcal	≥ 10 % of the total energy coming from free sugars.	≥ 10 % of the total energy coming from saturated fats	≥ 1 % of the total energy coming from trans fats	≥ 1 mg of sodium per kcal or ≥ 300 mg
Liquids in 100 mL of product	≥ 70 total kcal or ≥ 8 kcal of free sugars				Calorie-free beverages: ≥ 45 mg
Legend to use	EXCESO CALORÍAS (Excess of Calories)	EXCESO AZÚCARES (Excess of Sugars)	EXCESO GRASAS SATURADAS (Excess of Saturated Fats)	EXCESO GRASAS TRANS (Excess of Trans Fats)	EXCESO SODIO (Excess of Sodium)

Notes:

- If added sugars are included during the production process, then sugars and energy/calories must be evaluated.
- If fats are added during the production process, then saturated fats, trans fats and energy/calories must be evaluated.
- If sodium is added during the production process, then only sodium must be evaluated.



Front of Package Warning Black Seals

Thresholds for Stage 3 (Oct. 1, 2025 – onward)

Applies to products with added free sugars, fats or sodium (if any component is added, then ALL criteria to be evaluated)

	Energy	Sugars	Saturated Fats	Trans Fats	Sodium
Solids in 100 g of product	≥ 275 total kcal	≥ 10 % of the total energy coming from free sugars.	≥ 10 % of the total energy coming from saturated fats	≥ 1 % of the total energy coming from trans fats	≥1 mg of sodium per kcal or ≥300 mg
Liquids in 100 mL of product	≥ 70 total kcal or ≥ 8 kcal of free sugars				Calorie-free beverages: ≥ 45 mg
Legend to use	EXCESO CALORÍAS (Excess of Calories)	EXCESO AZÚCARES (Excess of Sugars)	EXCESO GRASAS SATURADAS (Excess of Saturated Fats)	EXCESO GRASAS TRANS (Excess of Trans Fats)	EXCESO SODIO (Excess of Sodium)

If no sugars, fats or sodium are added to the product during the production process, benefit of not having to evaluate the product for including warning black seals. However, consult with an expert/authorized verification unit your particular case.

Notes:

These provisions will apply:

- If either free sugars, fats or sodium are added to the product during the production process; and
- The value of energy, quantity of free sugars (*total sugars including added sugar plus the sugar naturally present in the product*), saturated fat, trans fat and sodium, exceed the thresholds indicated in the above table.
- All the provisions included in section 4.5.3 of the amendment to NOM-051 will be applied once this last stage starts.



New front-of-package look

- Example of the new front of package look:



New Label



Old Label



Cautionary Legends on Caffeine and Sweeteners

- As of **Dec. 1, 2020**, rectangular-shaped cautionary legends must be used (**when applicable**) with the following text and in the following format/legend (specific size and font indicated in the text of the NOM):

CONTIENE EDULCORANTES, NO RECOMENDABLE EN NIÑOS

(CONTAINS SWEETENERS, NOT RECOMMENDED FOR CHILDREN)



CONTIENE CAFEÍNA – EVITAR EN NIÑOS

(CONTAINS CAFFEINE – AVOID IN CHILDREN)



- These cautionary legends must be placed below the black warning seals (when applicable).

Use of Stickers and other provisions

- According to an official criteria to evaluate compliance of NOM-051 that Mexico published on July 10, 2020, **stickers are allowed on imported products**, as long as they comply exactly with all the commercial/sanitary information requirements included in the Amendment to NOM-051:
http://dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5596558&fecha=10/07/2020



- Products without octagonal warning seals or cautionary legends are allowed to include a legend saying: **“Este producto no contiene sellos ni leyendas” (This product does not contain warning seals or legends).**
- In the nutritional declaration now use **available carbohydrates** instead of total carbohydrates.
Available carbohydrates = Total carbohydrates – Dietary fiber

Other Changes or New Provisions

As of **April 1, 2021** the following changes/new provisions have also been implemented:

- **No cartoons, celebrities or athletes allowed** on the labels of products with one or more octagonal warning signs.
- **Endorsement of products by organizations or associations** only allowed if proper scientific documentation is presented, and the products do not exceed one or more octagonal warning signs.
- **“Substitute products”** are required to include the word “IMITACIÓN” (IMITATION) in capital letters and bold before the name of the product.
- **Trans-fats** are required to be declared in the labels (not including intrinsic trans fats that are present in dairy or meat ingredients in a natural state).
- **Added sugars** must be declared as: “azúcares añadidos” (added sugars) in the list of ingredients.



Other Changes or New Provisions

As of **April 1, 2021** the following changes/new provisions have also been implemented:

- **The list of allergens** that must be declared was extended to include additional products, such as molluscs. In the case of food products with the possibility of cross-contamination of allergens, the following legend needs to be added: “Puede contener...” (May contain).
- In the case of imported products, the following legend is allowed: “***fabricado o envasado por o para***” (produced or bottled for), followed by the name and address of the importer.
- **The name of the product** must appear in the main exhibition surface of the product in bold, with a specific size, and using the same font.
- **Health and nutritional claims** are allowed in products that have octagonal black seals, but under special conditions.



Verification and Compliance of Labels

- The Embassy can provide general guidance about the Amendment to NOM-051. However, given the level of detail of the new labelling requirements and the specifics of each case, Canadian exporters are strongly encouraged to work with Mexican authorized verification units (UVAs) to ensure the labels are compliant with the new NOM-051:
https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/7373/2013_05_21_UVA_NOM_051.pdf
- Once the label is approved by the verification unit, it issues a “**compliance certificate**” that can be presented when the products arrive at the Mexican border to facilitate the inspection/import process.



Exemptions to NOM-051

- The following products can be exempted from complying with the labelling requirements of NOM-051:
 - *Agri-food products in bulk / exemption criteria in the following link:*
<http://www.economia-noms.gob.mx/normas/noms/2010/DGN.418.01.2020.3009.pdf>
 - *Raw materials such as ingredients and additives / exemption criteria in the following link:*
<http://www.economia-noms.gob.mx/normas/noms/2010/DGN.418.01.2020.3010.pdf>
 - *Agri-food inputs used in the foodservice industry (food for restaurants) / exemption criteria in the following link:* <http://www.economia-noms.gob.mx/normas/noms/2010/DGN.418.01.2020.3011.pdf>
- In the past, Mexico accepted that importers presented a letter under oath requesting the exemption, but as of **Oct. 1, 2020**, Mexican importers need to declare in the “PEDIMENTO” (official document that is presented at Mexican Customs for importing a shipment), a specific identification code to identify the products as excluded from NOM-051.



Exemptions to NOM-051

- For products exempted from complying with NOM-051, Canadian exporters would just need to include a simple label with some general information such as:
 - *Name of the product*
 - *Net content*
 - *Country of Origin*
 - *Lot number*
 - *Name and address of the exporter*
 - *Name and address of the importer*

PRODUCTO: CACAHUATE CON CASCARA
PRESENTACION: CON CASCARA
LOTE: 3700D133660186
PAIS DE ORIGEN Y/O PROCEDENCIA: CHINA
CONTENIDO NETO: 20KG / BAG
NOMBRE DE EXPORTADOR: JUNAN QICHAHE PEANUT FOOD COMPANY LIMITED.
DIRECCION: JUNAN COUNTY, SHANDONG PROVINCE, CHINA
IMPORTADOR : DIPRODESA IMPORTACIONES S.A. DE C.V.
DIRECCION: PROLONGACION VALLE NORTE 320 ORIENTE
ENTRE LAS VIAS DEL FFCC Y CARRETERA MONTERREY
MONCLOVA COL JUAN BAUTISTA DE VILLARREAL
EL CARMEN NUEVO LEON CP 66550 RFC: DIM001009FCA



Exemptions to NOM-051

- Samples can also be exempted from complying with NOM-051 if:
 - *The products are only for sampling purposes and not for sale*
 - *Labelled as samples*
 - *At the time of import the Mexican customs broker must declare that the products are just samples*





Other labelling standards for specific products



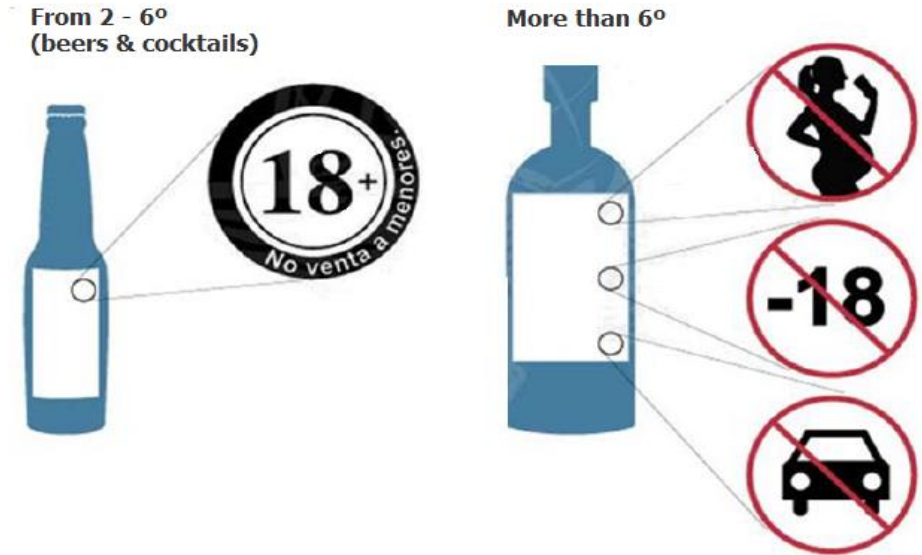
NOM-142-SSA1/SCFI-2014 for alcoholic beverages

- NOM-142 establishes labelling provisions for beer and alcoholic beverages (http://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5386313&fecha=23/03/2015):
 - *Product name or generic definition (vino tinto, brandy, ron)*
 - *Brand (uppercase)*
 - *Description – destilado, añejado (distilled, aged)*
 - *Name and address of exporter and importer*
 - *Lot (Tracking purposes)*
 - *Preferred consumption date (same format as in food)*
 - *Country of origin (same format as in food)*



NOM-142-SSA1/SCFI-2014 for alcoholic beverages

- Quantity – volume expressed in l, cl, ml
- Alcoholic content – indicated in units followed by the symbol “% vol”
- Precautionary Legend: EL ABUSO EN EL CONSUMO DE ESTE PRODUCTO ES NOCIVO PARA LA SALUD (The abuse in the consumption of this product is hazardous to your health)
- Prohibition symbols (restrictions of alcohol consumption for less than 18 year-old people, pregnant women, and driving under the influence)
- Label must be in Spanish, fixed to bottles
- Tags/Government seals (*Marbetes*): required to import the product, provided by Mexican importer



Other labelling standards for specific products:

- **Chocolate NOM-186-SSA1/SCFI-2002:** sanitary and commercial information.
- **Cereals and bakery products NOM-247-SSA1-2008:** *Preservation legends, Nutrition facts based, Specific names for flours, Mandatory vitamins and nutrients declaration.*
- **Milk NOM-222-SCFI/SAGARPA-2018:** sanitary and commercial information.
- **Cheese NOM-223-SCFI/SAGARPA-2018:** sanitary and commercial information.
- **Fish and seafood products NOM-242-SSA1-2009:** sanitary, microbiologic and labelling provisions.
- **Processed meats NOM-213-SSA1-2002:** sanitary and commercial information.

Before shipping, make sure to check with your Mexican importer/customs broker the applicable labelling requirements for your products.





Mexican requirements for organic products



Mexican requirements for imports of organics:

- On **January 1, 2022**, Mexico implemented **new import requirements for organics (LPO)** stating that **any imported products to be sold in Mexico as organic must meet the requirements of the Mexico Organic Standards** or be shipped to Mexico under an equivalency arrangement.
- The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (**CFIA**) and its Mexican counterpart (**SENASICA**) are **working on an organic equivalency arrangement yet to be completed**. Once this arrangement is finalized, Mexico is expected to accept a certificate issued by an organic certification body under the Canada control system.
- **In the meantime, any Canadian product that wants to be sold as organic in Mexico, must be certified by a SENASICA-approved certification body, according to Mexico's new organic products law (LPO).**



Mexican requirements for imports of organics:

- As per our knowledge, the following certification bodies may be in a position to certify to Mexico's LPO standard:

ECOCERT

<https://www.ecocert.com/en-CA/certification-detail/organic-farming-mexico-lpo>

CCOF

<https://www.ccof.org/page/mexico>

Quality Assurance International

<https://www.qai-inc.com/news-events/qai-now-offers-certification-to-mexicos-organic-products-law.php>

Organic Crop Improvement Association

<https://ocia.org/about-ocia/services/>

https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/615194/Padron_Organismos_de_Certificacion_de_Productos_Organicos_2021-02-10.pdf





Questions?

