Compulsory labelling indications
for fresh and frozen beef

Indication 1: Reference number or code

Indication (1) is a **traceability reference number** or **reference code** which makes sure there is a link between the meat and the animal or group of animals from which it is derived.

**For a slaughterhouse** – the reference number or code may be the identification number or any other number or code relating to the individual animal concerned, or to a group of animals, carcases or quarters. Carcases should be individually identifiable by the kill number. Where carcase batches are created in a slaughterhouse the individual animal’s identity must remain with the carcase. If the kill number does not remain on any cuts the batch/cutting records must show the relevant kill numbers and the new batch identity on the labels.

**For a cutting plant** – the reference number or code may be the identification number or any other number or code relating to the animal from which the cut meat is derived. However, it could be a batch number. For this purpose, a batch may comprise at most one day’s production in a cutting plant. A batch formed in a cutting plant may only be formed from beef which has been slaughtered in the same slaughterhouse and, if relevant, cut previously in the same cutting plant or plants. If you are cutting meat from a number of different slaughterhouses, beef from each slaughterhouse must be assigned a different reference number. You may, however, include in a single batch, beef slaughtered in the same slaughterhouse but on different days.

**For a retail outlet or wholesaler** – any reference number or code enabling traceability within your premises can be used provided there is a link through your register and documentation to your supplier’s reference number or code. It could be a batch number.
Indications 2 and 3: Country of origin (birth and rearing)

Indication (2) must show the Member State or non-EC country in which the animal or group of animals were born. The indication shall read ‘born in’ and the country name. This must be a single Member State or a single non-EC country. Care must be taken to ensure that beef imported into the UK is appropriately labelled with the correct country of origin. A regional name approved under the Beef Labelling Scheme, for example, ‘Devon’ or ‘England’ is not sufficient. Meat from animals born in different countries cannot be put in the same batch. Beef from an animal or a group of animals which were born in the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands should be labelled as ‘born in UK’.

Indication (3) must show the names of all the Member States or non-EC countries where the animal or each of the animals in the group lived between birth and slaughter. The indication shall read ‘reared in’ or ‘raised in’ and the name of the country or countries of rearing. Beef from an animal or a group of animals which were raised in the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands should be labelled as ‘reared in UK’ or ‘raised in UK’. Only cattle reared in the same country/countries can be included in a batch. If the animal or animals spent less than 30 days immediately after birth in the country of birth, you do not have to list that country on the label as a country of rearing. Also, if the animal spent less than 30 days immediately before slaughter in the country of slaughter then you do not have to list that country on the label as a country of rearing.

Where your beef comes from animals that were born, raised and slaughtered in the same Member State or same non-EC country, instead of showing separate indications (2) for birth and (3) for rearing, your labelling can be shown as ‘Origin: [name of Member State] or [non-EC country]’, along with indications (1) and (4) to (7). The following is an example, ‘British Beef - Origin: UK’, and the label would also have to show the indications ‘Slaughtered: in UK (approval number), Cut in: UK (approval number)’, together with the reference number or code. Any imported cattle slaughtered in the UK can not be labelled as Origin. For example, beef imported from Eire should be labelled accordingly:

- Born in IE
- Reared in IE/UK
- Slaughtered in UK (plus plant number)

Operators should ensure that the carcases of these cattle are not boned and batched with UK origin beef.

This also includes animals imported outside the E.U. which under Cattle Identification Regulations 2007 have to be retagged and given a ‘UK’ passport.
and ear tag. It is the operator’s responsibility to ensure that these are identified in appropriate records and labelled accordingly.

Indication 4: Country of slaughter

Indication (4) must show the Member State or non-EC country in which the slaughterhouse is located. Your labelling must include the words: ‘Slaughtered in: [name of Member State or non-EC country]’. This must be a single Member State or a single non-EC country for example, ‘Slaughtered in: UK’. A regional name approved under the Beef Labelling Scheme, for example, ‘Devon’ or ‘England’ is not sufficient.

Indication 5: Slaughterhouse licence number

Indication (5) is the licence number of the slaughterhouse in which the animal or group of animals was slaughtered. This is the veterinary approval number which has been allocated to the establishment or premises, and which appears on the health mark stamp. There must be only one slaughterhouse number on the beef label and to ensure traceability, all beef sold together in a pack or batch must be from one slaughterhouse only. Plant numbers must be adjacent to the wording of the indication. Beef from two or more slaughterhouses must not be combined to form a pack or batch.

Indication 6: Country of cutting

Indication (6) must show the Member State or non-EC country in which the cutting plant is located. Your labelling must include the words: ‘Cutting in: or Cut in: [name of Member State or non-EC country]’. This must be a single Member State or a single non-EC country. A regional name approved under the Beef Labelling Scheme, for example, ‘Devon’ or ‘England’ is not sufficient.

Indication 7: Cutting plant licence number

Indication (7) is the licence number of the cutting plant in which the beef was cut (and/or deboned). This is the veterinary approval number which has been allocated
to the establishment or premises, and which appears on the health mark stamp. For traceability purposes where a batch of beef is processed through more than one cutting plant, your labelling must show the licence numbers of all the cutting plants at which the meat was processed. **Plant numbers must be adjacent to the wording of the indication.** Beef which has not been slaughtered in the same abattoir or cut in the same cutting plant or series of cutting plants must **not** be mixed to form a pack or batch. Where beef is cut in unlicensed premises, for example, butchers, farm shops or other shops, the address of the premises must be shown in place of a licence number. But where the beef is cut and sold in the same unlicensed premises, the indication may state “on these premises”. If a slaughterhouse also does the cutting then the slaughterhouse licence number should be used if no cutting plant number is allocated.