B Boreal Trade

LABEL COMPLIANCE · SAMPLE 01

Frozen pork artwork reviewed for Vietnam and Singapore

Prepared for Assiniboine Meats Ltd., Winnipeg, Manitoba · 21 September 2026

Illustrative worked example, not a client engagement. Assiniboine Meats Ltd. is a fictional company invented to show the shape of this deliverable, and the artwork reviewed below is invented with it. Every regulatory value is real: each was read off the primary source listed at the end and carries the date it was read.

What you asked

Whether your existing artwork can go to Vietnam and Singapore as printed. Two formats were sent: a 500 g retail pack and a 10 kg foodservice case.

Answer in one line

The foodservice case fails Vietnam on one particular, and the failure mode is that the load is returned to Canada. Singapore is fixable on arrival and Vietnam is not, which is the opposite of what most producers expect.

1 · The finding that matters

> VIETNAM: THE EXPIRY DATE IS A CONDITION OF ENTRY
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> It is a requirement that the expiry date appears on the product packaging of every meat shipment exported to Vietnam, and the authorities inspect packaging for production and expiry dates on arrival. CFIA states the consequence plainly: if no expiry date is found on the packaging, the load will not be permitted to enter the country and will be returned to Canada. Not held. Not relabelled at the port. Not released against an undertaking. Returned.

Your retail pack carries both dates. **Your foodservice case carries a production date and a lot code and no expiry date.** That is entirely normal for a Canadian foodservice pack, which is exactly why this gets missed: the plant does not print one as a matter of course, and a buyer specifying the product and the grade would never think to raise it. Nobody discovers the omission until the container is already in Vietnam.

Two further points that close the usual escape routes. Food imported into Vietnam is required to be pre-packaged and labelled according to Vietnam's import requirements, and that applies whether the product is retail-ready, intended for further processing, or destined for food service, so a foodservice consignment does not escape the rule. And CFIA is explicit that the exporter and importer are jointly responsible for ensuring products are labelled in keeping with Vietnamese requirements, which is a shared exposure rather than a division of labour.

2 · Marked-up review, particular by particular

RETAIL 500 G PACK · VIETNAM

PARTICULAR	VERDICT	NOTE
Production date	**Present**	Inspected on arrival
Expiry date	**Present**	Condition of entry. Keep it under change control
Pre-packaged presentation	**Compliant**	Required for all uses
Vietnamese-language particulars	*Cannot be assessed*	Vietnam publishes its requirements in Vietnamese and its legal repositories are not reachable from our network. Ask your importer for the current particulars in Vietnamese, since that is the language the label is read in

FOODSERVICE 10 KG CASE · VIETNAM

PARTICULAR	VERDICT	NOTE
Production date	**Present**	Printed as part of the lot code
Expiry date	**Absent**	**Must be added before any consignment ships.** This is the change that matters and it is a plant change, not an artwork change
Pre-packaged presentation	**Compliant**	The foodservice assumption does not apply here

Confirm the change with the plant rather than with the sales office. A date field that exists on artwork and is not populated on the line is the same failure as one that was never drawn.

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3 · Singapore is the opposite shape of problem

There is no label approval step. Prepacked food offered for sale must comply with the Food Regulations, and compliance is asserted rather than certified, so nobody signs your artwork off in advance. That sounds easier and in one sense it is: no queue, no approval to wait on. But it moves the risk. In a pre-approval market an error surfaces during the filing, when it costs a revision. In Singapore it surfaces at or after import, when it costs a consignment.

The Singapore Food Agency is explicit that a business importing food for sale is responsible for ensuring the imports comply with its labelling requirements, and equally explicit that manufacturers' labels often do not, because they are written to serve several countries at once. Importers may apply sticker labels carrying the information needed to comply.

So your Canadian artwork being non-compliant as printed is normal rather than a failure, and the fix is usually cheap. What it requires is an agreement: who applies the stickers, who pays for them, and who is accountable if they are wrong. That agreement is worth more in Singapore than in any other market on this site, because there is no approval step to catch the mistake for you.

Two changes worth knowing about

- Since 2 May 2024, nutrition labelling and nutrition and health claims are regulated by the Ministry of Health and the Health Promotion Board rather than by the Singapore Food Agency. A claim question and a labelling question now go to different places.
- The Food (Amendment) Regulations 2025 took effect on 30 January 2026, changing labelling requirements for prepacked food. Treat any artwork approval or importer sign-off predating that as unverified rather than as settled.

The requirements themselves sit in the Food Regulations and divide into general labelling requirements, additional requirements for particular products, requirements on claims such as organic and gluten-free, prohibited claims, and

requirements on nutrition and health claims. The Agency draws on Codex standards when it reviews them, and its own Guide to Food Labelling and Advertisements is the working document.

4 · A compliant label does not protect a non-compliant consignment

Worth stating because it is the most common misreading of a review like this one. Vietnam applies its own maximum residue limits for chemical residues and its own microbiological requirements, and CFIA warns these may differ from Canadian requirements. Imported product may be tested on arrival and rejected when found out of compliance. A correct label on a consignment that fails a residue limit is no better protected than an incorrect one.

5 · What to do, in order

- **Add the expiry date to the foodservice case.** Plant, before any Vietnamese consignment. Everything else here is cheaper than this and none of it is more urgent.
- **Put labelling responsibility in the Vietnamese contract explicitly.** CFIA puts it on exporter and importer jointly, so an assumption on either side is an exposure on both.
- **Ask your Vietnamese importer for the current particulars in Vietnamese.** We cannot reach the Vietnamese repositories from here and will not guess at a translation.
- **Send the Singapore artwork to your importer to mark against the current Guide,** before you commit to a print run, and settle the sticker question in writing.
- **Check the residue position against Vietnamese limits.** Not a labelling task, and it belongs on the same list because it stops the same container.
- **Send the corrected artwork back for re-review** before the print run. That round is included and is the cheapest moment to find anything still wrong.

Sources

- Vietnam: export requirements for meat and poultry products, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, read 18 September 2026. Expiry date as a condition of entry, joint exporter and importer responsibility, the pre-packaging requirement, and testing on arrival. https://inspection.canada.ca/en/exporting-food-plants-animals/food-exports/requirements-library/vietnam-meat-and-poultry-products
- Vietnam: export requirements for fish and seafood, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, read 18 September 2026. https://inspection.canada.ca/en/exporting-food-plants-animals/food-exports/requirements-library/vietnam-fish-and-seafood
- Labelling Requirements for Food, Singapore Food Agency, read 18 September 2026. No approval step, the structure of the Food Regulations, the May 2024 transfer of nutrition and claims, and the Food (Amendment) Regulations 2025 taking effect 30 January 2026. https://www.sfa.gov.sg/regulatory-standards-frameworks-guidelines/food-labelling-packaging-guidelines/labelling-requirements-for-food
- What You Need to Know for Import of Food for Commercial Sale, Singapore Food Agency, read 18 September 2026. Importer responsibility and the sticker-label route. https://www.sfa.gov.sg/food-import-export/commercial-imports/what-you-need-to-know-for-import-of-food

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