Label better, less waste

Fresh chicken guidance

Helping reduce consumer food waste through changes to products, packs, labels and retail

Produce of

wrap
Food Standards Agency
Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
Visual guide

There are many considerations when deciding on pack design, label layout and content. This visual guide has been produced to help illustrate examples of how the recommendations in this guidance could look, be applied and, specifically, which labelling and design features are most effective in helping consumers reduce fresh chicken waste. These can be adapted to your organisation’s style (in design, wording and layout) and to take account of other factors, such as pack size and costs.

The labelling recommendations in this guidance are consistent with those contained in the main labelling guidance document.

Front of pack

Split pack function makes it easier for the consumer to freeze and use the whole pack, or part-pack.

Split pack function gives the consumer longer to use the chicken (within the ‘Use By’ date). This is particularly useful where ‘open life’ is used on pack, because consumers can just open part of the pack and have more flexibility on when they use the rest.

Use of icon makes it easy for consumers to find information.

Back of pack

- On pack tips or consumer messaging can link to recipes or provenance information.
- Use of icon makes it easy for consumers to find information.
- Clearly shows that chicken can be frozen right up to the ‘Use By’ date.
- Shows people how long they can store, and uses quality as the reason.
- Clear defrosting guidance and food safety covered.
- Helps people understand how the pack format and features benefit them.
- Helps people understand that cooked chicken can be frozen.

Fresh chicken guidance

Energy Value

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>kcal</th>
<th>888 kcal</th>
<th>888 kcal</th>
<th>888 kcal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kJ</td>
<td>88888 kJ</td>
<td>88888 kJ</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Typical Values

- Fat 8.8g (88.8g)
- Saturates 8.8g (88.8g)
- Sugars 8.8g (8.8g)
- Protein 8.8g (88.8g)
- Salt 8.8g (8.8g)

Nutrition

- Carbohydrates 8.8g (888g)
- High 88g (40%)
- Moderate 88g (66%)
- Low 8g (39%)
- Reference intake of an average adult (6400kJ/2000kcal).

Ingredients

- Customerservice @shop.co.uk
- Freephone 0000 0000 000
- Email 7 days a week

Storage

- At home, keep in the original packaging and store in the fridge, below 5ºC to keep it fresher for longer.
- Once cooked, this chicken can be frozen, even if previously frozen, at home.
- Do not re-freeze raw meat.
- Once defrosted, use immediately/on the same day.
- Defrost thoroughly in the fridge before use.
- Freeze by the date shown.

Freezing

- Best within X months of freezing.
- Defrost thoroughly in the fridge before use.
- Once defrosted, use immediately/on the same day.
- Do not re-freeze raw meat.
- This pack splits in two!
- You can freeze or use each half separately.
- Once cooked, this chicken can be frozen, even if previously frozen when raw.

Suitable for freezing

- Helps people understand how the pack format and features benefit them.
- Helps people understand that cooked chicken can be frozen.

Disposal

- Rinse before recycling.
- Will regain strength on standing.
- This container may soften slightly but not currently recycled.
- Film - Film widely recycled.
Top actions for consumer waste prevention

- Put freezing / defrosting / re-freezing guidance on pack
  - Remove ‘open life’ (‘Use within X days of opening’) guidance where the food safety risk is sufficiently covered by the ‘Use By’ date. For example, this may be the case if modified atmosphere packaging (MAP) is not used. Where ‘open life’ is still needed for food safety, extend it to the maximum possible.

- Make consumer food waste the focus of product, packaging and process innovations
  - Put recipe advice and motivational messaging on pack
  - Give clear defrosting and use guidance, to address food safety.

Best practice freezing/re-freezing guidance

1. Use the snowflake logo with the wording ‘suitable for freezing’ underneath - front of pack, where possible.

2. Provide clear freezing instructions:
   - Use the snowflake logo again back of pack.
   - Make it clear that chicken can be safely frozen, right up to midnight on the ‘Use By’ date. Do not use the words ‘Freeze on day of purchase’.
   - Give an indication of how long chicken can be frozen for, to maintain it’s quality.

3. Help consumers understand when the product can be refrozen:
   - ‘Cooked chicken can be refrozen’.

- Give clear defrosting and use guidance, to address food safety.
- Highlight any pack features that help make it easier to freeze the chicken.
- Do not apply ‘open life’ where food safety is already sufficiently covered by the ‘Use By’ date. For example, this may be the case where packaging does not have a modified atmosphere. Where ‘open life’ is still needed for food safety, extend it to the maximum possible.
- Consider other ways of innovating – e.g. processing, supply chain or protocol innovations to add product life. Adding even 1 day’s life can reduce store waste, improve on shelf availability, and help reduce consumer waste1.

Product, packaging and process innovations

- Where possible, provide split packs or other portion solutions – particularly for products over 500g to give people longer to use the chicken and allow more flexibility in freezing and use.
- Make a range of pack sizes available, and where possible minimise any difference in cost/kilo.
- Explore ways to extend product life.

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Top actions for consumer waste prevention

Recipe advice/motivational messaging

1. Recipes and other consumer tips:
   - For chicken, a large proportion of edible waste is carcass meat.
   - Consumers are known to respond well to easily accessible on-pack tips, so information that helps people use up carcass meat would be particularly useful on a pack of whole chicken.

2. Provenance messaging

Research has found that consumers are drawn to messages relating to where food comes from and how it's produced, making them think differently about what they are throwing away. For example:

'It takes 4,300 litres of water to produce 1kg of the nation's favourite meat. Yet we chuck 110,000 tonnes of chicken a year. Why not show your appreciation for the closest living relative of the tyrannosaurus and use up the extra from dinner in this delicious recipe*?'

Because more 70% of the edible waste is carcass meat (i.e. meat on whole birds), consumer messaging, recipe advice and information provided on packs of whole chickens should focus on helping people use more of the chicken they have purchased.

* Links to on-pack recipe
Evidence on consumer waste at home\(^2\)

UK consumers waste

280,000 tonnes of poultry* a year, which equals 34% of purchases.

110,000 tonnes of it* is edible food – not skin, bones or giblets, etc, which equals 13% of purchases.

70% edible waste

More than 70% of the edible waste is carcass meat – i.e. meat on whole birds.

*this data covers all poultry, but the vast majority is fresh chicken.

Consumer insights

A recent FSA consumer survey found that guidance on freezing is the biggest information need and very few people re-freeze chicken that has been defrosted and cooked\(^3\).

WRAP focus panels have found that consumers respond well to ‘motivational’ messaging on the story of food.

A WRAP survey also reported that consumers value packaging innovations that improve convenience and make products last longer\(^4\).

An on-shelf survey found that open life (use within...) guidance for some products (e.g. chilled chicken) has increasingly moved from ‘1–3 day’ to ‘immediately’\(^5\).

Reasons for not eating poultry purchases

- Not used in time (date code) 20%
- Not used in time (not date code) 9%
- Cooked/served too much 43%
- Fussy eating 11%
- Accidents 6%
- Other 11%

2 Household Food & Drink Waste – A Product Focus, WRAP 2014


4 http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/food-packaging-perception-and-reality


* this data covers all poultry, but the vast majority is fresh chicken.
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