



## The use of the Designation 'formed' to Accompany the Name of the Food In Compliance with EU FIC\* Annex VI, Part A, Point 7

### ADVICE

#### The Issue

Labelling to indicate that a meat product, meat preparation or fishery product is formed is required in circumstances where a consumer might be misled into believing that they are purchasing a product which is made from a single piece of meat or fish when, in fact, they are not.

Annex VI, Part A, Point 7.

*Meat products, meat preparations and fishery products which may give the impression that they are made of a whole piece of meat or fish, but actually consist of different pieces combined together by other ingredients, including food additives and food enzymes or by other means, shall bear the following indication: in English: 'formed meat' and 'formed fish'.*

There is also a requirement to provide information to ensure that consumers are able to know the true nature of the food and are able to distinguish it from other foods with which they could confuse it (Art 17, Para 2.). Therefore in some circumstances, the labelling of a product as 'formed fish' or 'formed meat' may not be appropriate to sufficiently inform the consumer of the true nature of the food that they are buying. This is particularly true when making the distinction between products that are made from distinct pieces of meat or fish and products made from minced, chopped or comminuted meat or fish.

The intent of this provision in EU FIC was to indicate, as part of the name of the food, that it is made or 'formed' from **pieces** of meat or fish and not more finely chopped or comminuted pieces. This guidance therefore serves to give advice on where and how the term 'formed' should and should not be used and where alternative terms will be more appropriate to allow the consumer to make the distinction between products of different quality.

#### When the term 'formed' is required

The requirement to indicate formed meat or fish in the name of the food *applies only in the case of meat products, meat preparations and fishery products as defined which appear to be made from one piece of meat or fish but are not*. This would apply both to products that appear to be a whole piece of meat such as a chicken breast fillet or whole fish fillet and to the products thereof, such as slices that appear to be taken from a whole single piece meat e.g. sliced ham shoulder. Where the designation of formed is required, there is no flexibility around the use of this word.

The need to label with 'formed' is only required for products that give the impression that they are made from a single piece of meat or fish. The product includes the entirety of the food stuff, its packaging and the labelling on it or affixed to it.

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### **When the term 'formed' is not required**

Indications that make it clear that the product is made from more than one piece of meat or fish which therefore ensure that the consumer is not misled into believing that it is made from one piece of meat or fish. Such indication could include the shape and appearance of the product or indications appearing as part of the packaging or labelling, as long as they are sufficiently clear and prominent to ensure that the consumer cannot be misled. Therefore a fish finger sawn from a block of fillets would not require the designation 'formed' by virtue of its shape, whereas a portion again cut from a frozen block of fillets then moulded into the form of a fillet and breaded would require the designation of 'formed'.

A further example would be Wholetail or Whole Scampi, which is made from up to three whole scampi tails. However if this name is qualified in accordance the Code of Practice on the Declaration of Fish Content In Fish Products of March 1998 with a statement to the effect: *made from more than one scampi* or *made from up to 3 whole scampi tails*, it no longer gives the impression that it is made from a single piece and the use of 'formed' would no longer be required. In this example the use of the word 'formed' would not be helpful to enable the consumer to distinguish the Wholetail Scampi described above from 'formed scampi' that is made from pieces of scampi tail.

The products to which the provision applies are meat preparations, meat products and fishery products as defined in Annex I of Hygiene Regulation 853/2004. It would not apply to composite products where meat products, meat preparations or fishery products are used as ingredients. This would include the ham used on pizzas or chicken used in a meat pie. However it would still be necessary to use the appropriate designation for the ingredient in the ingredients list.

### **How to use the word 'formed'**

The Regulation, in English, specifies 'formed meat' and 'formed fish'; however where the food business operator prefers to state the species more specifically the word meat and fish can be replaced with the meat species or commercial name in the case of the fish e.g. 'formed chicken' or 'formed cod' in order to provide the consumer with more specific, detailed and useful information.

The word 'formed' can be used as part of a descriptive phrase that represents the name of the food. It is not necessary for the words 'formed' and 'meat' or 'fish' (pork or cod) to be next to each other in the name.

### **Existing Advice - BMMA Code of Practice**

In determining the appropriate designation for meat products, existing advice can provide useful direction. The BMMA Code of Practice on the Labelling of 'Re-formed' Cured Meat Products (1985) defines three categories of meat preparation as:

- Category 1 - the natural product, either on or off the bone;
- Category 2 - products which have undergone different combinations of process according to the practices of the manufacturer and the requirements of the specification, but which will generally include tumbling or massaging, the selection and combinations (re-arranging) of muscles from more than one leg (in the case of ham) to form an artefact having the appearance of a cut, joint, slice or portion of meat; \*(see note) and;
- Category 3 - the "re-arranged" product as in category 2 with the addition of finely comminuted meat and/or meat emulsion.

Category 2 products are consistent with the requirement to label with the formed designation.

Category 3 would be described as re-formed or chopped and shaped.

\*Note: The UKAFFP 1978 "Code of Practice for the Labelling of certain Quick Frozen Meat Products made from or containing substantial quantities of Reformed Meat" identifies "chopped and shaped" as an alternative description for chopped / comminuted category 3 products.

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having legal backing for participating members.



## Examples to Assist Understanding

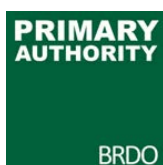
Fish/Meat Product	Formed Label Requirement
a) Cod fishcakes	No label - shape alone excludes it.
b) Cod Fillet Fish Finger	No label - shape alone excludes it.
c) A breaded fish portion made from a sawn portion of fish from a block, pressure formed in a mould into the shape of a fillet	Label required - state as 'formed fish'.
d) A breaded fish portion made by hand-laying 3 – 4 pieces of fish fillet together in a mould the shape of a fillet and freezing.	Label required – state as 'formed fish'.
e) A circular shape presentation of raw salmon made by rolling two whole fillets together and then slicing across.	No label <i>if</i> presentation is culinary or aesthetic and does not deceive the consumer. In the unlikely event that the effect was to present the product as a salmon steak then labelling would be required as 'formed salmon'
f) A breaded flat fish product (e.g. plaice, lemon sole) made by filleting a flat fish and laying the top and bottom fillets back together and then freezing together.	No label <i>if</i> the intention was to present the product as a fish that had been headed, gutted, deboned and breaded. The 'reassembly' of the fish would not be material, even if the two fillets came from different fish.
g) What about the same scenario above (f) but where 3 or 4 fillets are stacked together (can sometimes be done if fish are small, or to create a chunkier product).	Label required – state as formed eg. 'formed plaice' or 'formed lemon sole'.
h) Breaded goujons made from flat fish i.e. scenario in row (f), but then these frozen paired top and bottom fillets are sliced across the cross section into goujons.	Label required – state as formed. A goujon is usually thought of as a small strip of fish or chicken, coated in breadcrumbs and deep-fried. The name would distinguish the product from a fish finger and would imply a strip from a single fillet. In this example the expectation would not be fulfilled and therefore labelling with the designation 'formed fish' would be required.
i) Seafood sticks	Best described as chopped and shaped fish portions (or similar to suit product), 'formed fish' would not be appropriate as it is made from minced fish not pieces
j) Salmon en Croute, salmon core cut from 7.5kg block made up of pieces of salmon fillet	Label required – state as 'formed salmon'
k) Chicken Burger	No label – shape alone excludes it.
l) Chicken Grill - Chicken Breast shaped formed from pieces of chicken – breast and thigh	Label required – state as 'formed chicken'.
m) Chicken Grill – Chicken Breast shaped product formed from 100% Chicken Breast	Labelling required – state as 'formed chicken breast'. Good practice would indicate that an indication of the degree of comminution (chopped, chunks of) would be appropriate.

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**Examples to Assist Understanding Continued...**

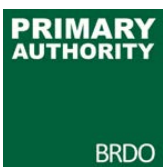
<b>Fish/Meat Product</b>	<b>Formed Label Requirement</b>
n) Sliced ham from a joint formed from pieces of ham.	Label required – state as ‘formed ham’.
o) Formed ham on a Pizza	No label required, Pizza is a composite product, the ham is an ingredient
p) Single Whole Tail Scampi	Only one tail is used in the scampi, name accurately describes product, not formed
q) Wholetail or Whole Scampi	Descriptions for products where a maximum of three wholetails are placed beside or on top of each other before coating – the name should include phrase to the effect of: ‘made from more than one scampi’ formed is not required
r) Formed Scampi	Product made from a combination of whole and pieces of scampi or pieces of scampi, label as ‘formed scampi’
s) Reformed Scampi	Any inclusion of minced scampi should be restricted to products described as ‘minced reformed scampi’. The name of the ingredients list should be ‘minced scampi’

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