

CHECKLIST

FOOD PACKAGING



Pre-packaged food must list the ingredients contained in the food. Some can be difficult to understand, or it is not clear why they are contained in a particular food. But not all ingredients used **beforehand**, when the food was produced, have to be listed on the packaging. If you do not understand something listed on pre-packaged food, you can get advice from the Consumer Advice Centre (Verbraucherzentrale).

LIST OF INGREDIENTS

Many finished food products consist of different ingredients. These ingredients are listed on the packaging. The ingredient with the largest amount is listed first, the ingredient with the smallest amount is listed last. **Sometimes, the exact amount of an ingredient is listed, for example: 10 % chocolate.**

EMULSIFIERS

Food products often contain fats and water. Emulsifiers are used in order for these to combine. Some are made of animal substances, including pork. **This is not listed on the packaging.** Emulsifiers may also be listed using an E-number. If you do not eat pork, please avoid food products containing the **E-numbers 470 to 473.**

GELLING AGENTS

Gelling agents are used to make liquid or soft food products firmer, for example jelly. One well-known gelling agent is gelatine. It is made of animal substances, including pork. However, there are many other **plant-based gelling agents**, such as agar-agar made of seaweed. Fruit juices may also be treated with gelling agents to make them appear clear. **This is not listed in the packaging.**



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ALCOHOL

There are many different types of alcoholic drink. For many German consumers, they are easily recognised by name. Please ask in the shop if you are unsure.

Many food products contain **flavouring substances** to make the food smell and taste better. These flavouring substances are often manufactured with alcohol. **This is not listed on the packaging.**

CHYMOSIN

Chymosin is a substance used in the manufacture of cheese. Traditionally, it is derived from calves' stomachs. But more and more people do not wish to eat anything made from slaughter animals. For this reason, chymosin is also frequently made using micro-organisms.

Cheese packaging does not have to contain an explanation of how the cheese was made.

BEST-BEFORE DATE

Food packaging contains a **date**. This date means that the food product may be eaten safely up to this date. But it may have a longer shelf life. Try smelling the food and eat a small amount. If it still smells and tastes good, it can be safely eaten. Minced meat and fresh poultry must be eaten by the best-before date. **You may become ill if you eat it after this date.**

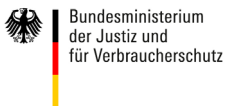
ADVERTISING

Many food packages look appealing, e.g. they often have **colourful pictures**. These are intended to let customers know that the food is tasty or healthy. But unfortunately, these pictures do not always tell the truth. **Many food products contain a lot of fat or sugar, despite the pretty pictures.**

CONSUMER ADVICE CENTRES (VERBRAUCHERZENTRALE)

The Consumer Advice Centres in Germany offer advice on issues of food and nutrition. You can find your nearest Consumer Advice Centre on the website **www.verbraucherzentrale.de**. You can also send your questions to a Consumer Advice Centre by email.

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