POSITIVE ID LABELS

GB FOOD LABELS 2028

SPS deal: food labels are changing

- New health and ID mark format
- EU organic logo and origin wording
- Honey, olive oil and new origin foods
- Planning your label stock

WHAT'S INSIDE

KEY DATES
20 Nov 2026 to 19 Aug 2032

CHECKLIST
16 actions by team

ARTWORK
ID marks, organic, origin

STOCK
Sell-through and run planning

HOW WE CAN HELP
Short runs, coding, adhesives

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How to use this checklist

The UK-EU SPS agreement was concluded on 20 November 2026. Defra says it applies from **1 March 2028**, subject to UK and EU procedures, and that the label changes apply to every business placing food on the GB market, including those that only sell at home. Work through each section with the people who own that part of your labels. This checklist is general information, not legal advice. It reflects Defra guidance published on 20 November 2026; the legislation itself has not yet been made.

Ready to plan new label runs? Call Positive ID Labels for a fixed-price quote: **01332 864895** **sales@pid-labelling.co.uk**

Key compliance dates

DATE	REGULATION	REQUIREMENT
20 Nov 2026	UK-EU Summit	SPS agreement concluded. Defra publishes guidance on food label changes.
30 Nov 2026	Defra webinar	Webinar: what is changing and what it means for your business.
Due shortly	Targeted consultation	Proposed food and feed legislation, including optional early use of the new health and ID marks. No date yet.
Early 2027	Defra engagement	Engagement on proposed legislation; talks with NIRMS members on using up "Not for EU" stock (indicative).
By Sep 2027	Defra guidance	Final implementation guidance and readiness checklists (indicative).
1 Mar 2028	**SPS alignment applies**	**GB food label changes become legal requirements. Goods already on the GB market can still be sold in GB.**
19 Aug 2028	Reg (EU) 2026/1739	"Fair", "equitable" and "short supply chain" claims restricted.
19 Aug 2029	**Reg (EU) 2026/1739**	**Meat terms such as "beef", "chicken" and "steak" reserved for meat products.**
19 Aug 2032	Reg (EU) 2026/1739	Latest date to sell non-conforming stock made or imported before 19 Aug 2029.

Your SPS label changeover checklist

Tick each item when it is done. CRITICAL items affect most food businesses; URGENT items are worth starting now because they drive print and stock planning.

■ BRAND OWNER AND TECHNICAL TEAM

- [ ] **1. List every affected product**
  Flag SKUs with a health or ID mark, an organic logo, origin wording, honey or olive oil, a "fair" or "short supply chain" claim, or a meat name on a plant-based product. **CRITICAL**

- [ ] **2. Read the Defra food labelling guidance**
  Defra, "Food labelling changes: preparing your business" (20 Nov 2026) lists each change by product. Check which rows apply to you.

- [ ] **3. Confirm content with the right people**
  Your local authority food team, the FSA or your trade association can confirm what your label must say. Label content stays your responsibility.

- [ ] **4. Watch for the early ID mark consultation**
  The government plans to let businesses use the new "UK(GB) [number] EU" marks before 1 March 2028. Sign up for Defra SPS email alerts. **URGENT**

■ ARTWORK AND DESIGN

- [ ] **5. Redraw health and ID marks**
  New format: "UK(GB)", establishment number, "EU", for example "UK(GB) 1234 EU". Applies to meat, dairy, fish and egg products whatever the destination. **CRITICAL**

- [ ] **6. Update organic packs**
  Add the EU organic logo to GB-produced prepacked organic food. Put the control body code and the origin line (e.g. "UK Agriculture") in the same visual field, origin directly below the code.

- [ ] **7. Change origin wording**
  Replace "non-UK" with "EU" or "non-EU" where you use shorthand origin terms. A GB component counts as "EU". Don't combine "UK and EU" for one ingredient.

- [ ] **8. Add origin to newly covered foods**
Nuts, all dried fruits, non-cultivated mushrooms, capers, saffron and ripened bananas need a country of origin, for example "Origin: France, UK".

- [ ] **9. Check honey, olive oil and mustard**
Honey blends: each country with its % share in the principal field of vision. "Filtered honey" becomes "baker's honey". Olive oil blends: EU / non-EU wording. Mustard emphasis no longer needed for behenic acid emulsifiers E470a, E471, E477.

- [ ] **10. Allow space on small packs**
Country lists and percentages take room. Consider a larger label, a second panel or a multipage or peel-and-reveal label.

■ PRODUCTION AND PACKING

- [ ] **11. Check reformulated products**
New composition rules for fruit nectars, jams and jellies, reduced-sugar spreads, coconut water and some fortified foods may mean a recipe change, and so a label change.

- [ ] **12. Plan batch and date coding**
If you code at the packing line, labels with an overprintable varnish or blank thermal labels let you add variable data without reprinting artwork.

- [ ] **13. Review GB to Northern Ireland lines**
Most goods won't need "Not for EU" labels from 1 March 2028. Some retail fish and wine still will. Use-up arrangements for existing stock are not yet agreed.

■ PURCHASING AND STOCK

- [ ] **14. Record your label stock** URGENT
Note how many old-format labels you hold for each SKU and your monthly usage. Guidance on printed label stock has not been published yet.

- [ ] **15. Order smaller runs as the date nears**
Avoid being left with obsolete labels on 1 March 2028. Shorter digital runs suit a staged changeover.

- [ ] **16. Book the changeover with your printer**
Agree artwork sign-off and delivery dates early. Many brands will switch at the same time.

What Positive ID Labels can do

Staged changeovers. Our digital presses suit short runs, so you don't have to hold a year's stock of a design with months left. The Xeikon prints premium paper labels at 1200dpi; the Screen prints polypropylene at 600dpi for chilled and wet conditions.

More information in less space. Multipage and peel-and-reveal labels fit longer origin lists and percentage declarations onto small packs.

Coding at the packing line. Overprintable varnish (Xeikon and Screen) and blank thermal labels let you add batch codes and dates on site.

The right adhesive. Acrylic freezer adhesive applies down to -10°C and holds to -30°C. Wet pack adhesive grips wet and warm surfaces such as fresh meat. Test on your own product before a full run.

High-volume repeats. We hold over 1,000 flexo dies, so tooling is often free.

Fixed prices. We quote a price, not an estimate. Press-ready artwork is processed free.

Sources and important note

Defra, Food labelling changes: preparing your business (20 November 2026).
gov.uk/guidance/food-labelling-changes-preparing-your-business

Defra, Food and drink changes: preparing your businesses (20 November 2026).
gov.uk/guidance/food-and-drink-changes-preparing-your-businesses

UK-EU Summit 2026 Explainer: SPS (20 November 2026).
gov.uk/government/publications/ukeu-summit-2026-key-documents

Defra, How the SPS Agreement affects Northern Ireland (20 November 2026).
gov.uk/guidance/how-the-sps-agreement-affects-northern-ireland

Defra, SPS Agreement: what happens next (20 November 2026).
gov.uk/guidance/sps-agreement-what-happens-next-and-how-to-stay-informed

Important: this checklist explains the rules as we understood them on 23 November 2026. The GB legislation has not yet been made, and details may change. It isn't legal advice, and we don't check label content for compliance. You're responsible for what your label says. For advice on your product, contact your local authority food safety team or the Food Standards Agency.

NEXT STEPS

Planning your changeover?

Fixed-price quotes. Press-ready artwork processed free.

Positive ID Labels prints food labels in Melbourne, South Derbyshire, on digital and flexo presses.

When your new artwork is ready, we'll print it. Tell us the materials, sizes and quantities and we'll give you a fixed price, not an estimate.

We print the content you approve. Label content and its legal compliance remain your responsibility.

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SCAN TO READ THE FULL GUIDE

pid-labelling.co.uk/sps-agreement-food-labelling-changes/