Top 10 Food Labeling Compliance Mistakes (and How TVT helps)

Avoid the most common pitfalls in food labeling that can put your brand and reputation at risk - plus, see how TVT supports compliance every step of the way.

1. Missing allergen information

Ⓧ Mistake:

Failing to list or highlight allergens like peanuts, soy, or gluten in a clear and compliant manner.

? How it happens:

If the approved document contains the error, knowledge or workflow deficits are likely responsible.

✔ How TVT helps:

TVT verifies allergen information is present, flagging any missing allergen against the approved ingredient list. In addition, TVT will flag all allergens to ensure they have been properly highlighted as per EU, UK, Canadian and US State regulations.

2. Non-compliant nutritional facts

Ⓧ Mistake:

Incorrect or missing nutritional information, such as calorie counts or serving sizes.

? How it happens:

Nutritional facts tables follow strict regulatory formats which can change based on new regulations. A glitch here means the downstream document has deviated from requirements, or that the new regulation was not implemented.

✔ How TVT helps:

TVT compares nutritional tables to source data and regulatory requirements to ensure completeness and accuracy, down to the period, and comma!

3. Unapproved health claims

Ⓧ Mistake:

Using phrases like "lowers cholesterol" or "boosts immunity" without scientific backing or approval.

? How it happens:

Either you have not maintained an accurate glossary of approved claims or you have deviated from these in the downstream document. First, ensure that your claims in the approved document are correct and accurate.

✔ How TVT helps:

Once you have a correct glossary of your approved claims for the product, verify these in TVT. TVT will catch all deviations – even the small ones, such as comma placement as it can change the meaning and result in non-compliance.

4. Incorrect net quantity statements

Ⓧ Mistake:

Mislabeling the weight or volume of the product.

? How it happens:

Inconsistencies have slipped into your statements. Often this occurs through human error. But there may be other root causes.

✔ How TVT helps:

TVT ensures net quantity statements are accurately listed and consistent across all label versions.

5. Inconsistent Branding or Claims Across Product Lines

ⓧ Mistake:

Branding elements or marketing claims (e.g., "natural," "sugar-free," "dermatologist-tested") appear inconsistently across similar products, violating brand guidelines or triggering regulatory scrutiny.

❓ How it happens:

When multiple SKUs are created or updated in parallel, especially across regions or languages, it's easy for claims to be added, dropped, or changed unintentionally. This inconsistency can confuse consumers and lead to non-compliance if claims aren't substantiated across all markets.

✔ How TVT helps:

TVT allows teams to compare label content across versions and SKUs to catch inconsistencies in claims, descriptors, and branding elements. By spotting even subtle deviations, TVT helps ensure brand integrity and regulatory alignment across product lines.

6. Non-compliance with font size requirements

ⓧ Mistake:

Using font sizes too small for mandatory information, like allergens or nutrition facts.

❓ How it happens:

Regulations require specific minimum font sizes and x-heights for legibility, but these can be compromised when artwork is adapted for different packaging sizes or shapes. For example, a font may meet the required point size but fail to meet x-height requirements after a marketing-driven design update or font switch.

✔ How TVT helps:

TVT verifies that key information, like allergens and nutrition facts, retains the correct font size and x-height across label versions. It flags changes that could impact readability, helping teams maintain compliance and avoid costly packaging recalls.

7. Incorrect barcode information

ⓧ Mistake:

Using barcodes that don't match the product, lead to the wrong website or are unreadable.

❓ How it happens:

It is crucial to verify readability and the information in the barcode itself. You might lack the technical capabilities to do this.

✔ How TVT helps:

TVT reviews barcode data (Linear, 2D) to ensure it matches product specifications and technical printing requirements, reducing supply chain errors.

8. Omitting required country of origin information

ⓧ Mistake:

Not clearly stating the origin of the product as required by local regulations.

❓ How it happens:

Few jurisdictions in the world do not require this information. If it is absent entirely or incorrect for the regulatory jurisdiction, look for a possible root cause in the approved document version. Where, when and on what products is this happening, and why? If it's downstream, you probably have a workflow problem to fix.

✔ How TVT helps:

TVT ensures country-of-origin details are consistently present and compliant with regional requirements.

9. Inconsistent ingredient order

ⓧ Mistake:

Failing to list ingredients in descending order of weight, as required by law.

❓ How it happens:

If labeling has been revised but not the product itself, there is no reason for ingredient order to change. Find the root cause (knowledge, human error, workflow checks and balances not working?).

✔ How TVT helps:

TVT detects the discrepancy in ingredient order, ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements. For label-only revisions where regulations have not changed, you might run a precautionary check with TVT on the previous labeling version as well as on the current approved document. Maybe a non-critical element has changed on the label, but the ingredient order shouldn't!

10. Failure to adapt labels for global markets

(X) Mistake:

Using a single label across different regions without adhering to local regulations.

(?) How it happens:

Your global processes are not in order, perhaps because of a lack of awareness of different market regulations, perhaps it's cultural – you have structural HQ-subsidiary interface or hierarchy challenges. You need to find out. If the briefs are fine, your workflow is failing you.

(✓) How TVT helps:

TVT compares label versions against approved local briefs in any language.

Bonus!

11. Overlooking "Best Before" or "Use By" Dates

(X) Mistake:

Shelf-life details like "best before" or "use by" dates are missing or improperly formatted.

(?) How it happens:

These elements are often added late in the production workflow, inline during print or packaging, rather than being included in the master artwork. As a result, they're not always captured in early review stages, increasing the risk of omission or error further downstream.

(✓) How TVT helps:

TVT ensures "best before" and "use by" are present on the label. However, since this data is frequently added during final printing, companies should complement TVT's capabilities with robust inline QA processes.

Interested in finding out more? Read our article on Top Regulatory Challenges in Food Labeling and How to Overcome Them

Book Your Free Demo