

LABELLING SEAFOOD IN YOUR HOSPITALITY BUSINESS

From 1 July 2026, hospitality businesses in Australia that serve seafood must clearly label where their seafood comes from. This requirement helps customers make informed choices about whether the seafood they eat is Australian, imported, or a mix of both. These labelling rules are part of the Australian Consumer Law and apply to all seafood served for immediate consumption.

How to Label Your Dishes

You must label the origin of your seafood in a way that customers can easily see before they order. This can be done on printed or online menus, menu boards, or clear signs within your business. There are three approved ways to label seafood: single letter AIM labels, detailed AIM labels, or a single statement for your entire business.

Single Letter AIM Labels

Use one letter to show the origin of the seafood in a dish:

A – Australian

I – Imported

M – Mixed (includes both Australian and imported seafood)

For mixed dishes, you can choose to label each seafood ingredient separately with 'A' or 'I'. Include a legend on your menu explaining what each letter means.

Example:

- Grilled barramundi (A)
- Steamed New Zealand mussels (I)
- Pad Thai with prawns and squid (M)

Detailed AIM Labels

Instead of using letters, you can write out the full words 'Australian', 'imported', or 'mixed'. You don't need a legend if you use this method. For example:

- Grilled barramundi (Australian)
- Steamed New Zealand mussels (contains imported seafood)
- Pad Thai with prawns (Australian) and squid (imported)

Single Statement

If all seafood in your business is from the same origin, you may use a single clear statement instead of labelling each menu item. For example:

- We only serve Australian seafood
- All fish is imported

You cannot use this option if you serve both Australian and imported seafood.

Businesses That Must Follow These Rules

These rules apply to hospitality businesses that serve seafood ready for immediate consumption. This includes dine-in, takeaway, and home delivery services. Examples include:

- Restaurants and cafes
- Pubs, clubs and hotels (including room service)
- Takeaway and fast-food outlets
- Food trucks and market stalls
- Casinos and amusement parks

They do not apply to canteens, schools, prisons, hospitals or medical institutions.

Dishes You Need to Label

You must label dishes that are marketed as being or containing seafood. This includes dishes where the name or description refers to seafood (for example, fish and chips, chilli prawns, surf and turf, or ceviche). Seafood includes fish, crustaceans (like prawns and crabs), molluscs (like oysters and mussels), other aquatic animals, and their eggs or roe.

When You Don't Need a Label

You don't need to label seafood origin for:

- Dishes not marketed as seafood (e.g. a supreme pizza containing anchovies)
- Seafood in liquid or powder form (e.g. fish sauce or prawn oil)
- Shelf-stable chopped or processed seafood (e.g. canned tuna or shrimp paste)
- Seafood served at fundraising events
- Seafood served more than 24 hours after ordering (e.g. pre-booked set menus)
- Reptiles, amphibians, mammals, lab-grown seafood or food made for special medical purposes.

Examples

- A prawn and chorizo pizza must be labelled because it is marketed as containing seafood.
- A spaghetti marinara must be labelled because it is commonly associated with seafood.
- A combination laksa must be labelled if the description mentions prawns.
- A spicy fried rice with small amounts of prawn does not need a label if not marketed as seafood.
- Stir-fried broccoli in oyster sauce does not need a label because the seafood is in liquid form.
- A tuna sandwich made with canned tuna does not need a label because canned tuna is shelf-stable.
- Food sold at a charity fundraiser does not require labelling, though businesses may choose to include it.

If you have any questions about your seafood labelling obligations, please call us on 1800 019 319 or email us at consumer@nt.gov.au.

See overleaf for a Guide Table to specific ingredients and when labelling is and isn't required.

Specific ingredients

This table shows some example ingredients you generally do and don't need to provide origin labels for.

Ingredient	Do you need to label the country of origin?
Whole fish or shellfish	Yes
Pieces of fish or shellfish	Yes
Chopped, diced, minced, pureed or shaved fish or shellfish that is not shelf-stable	Yes
Caviar or roe	Yes
Canned tuna or salmon	No (seafood is chopped and shelf-stable)
Fish, oyster or Worcestershire sauce	No (seafood is in liquid form)
Shrimp paste	No (seafood is a shelf-stable puree)
Anchovy paste	No (seafood is a shelf-stable puree)
Pre-chopped anchovies (canned or jarred)	No (seafood is chopped and shelf-stable)
Bonito flakes	No (seafood is shaved and shelf-stable)
Dashi and other seafood stocks	No (seafood is in liquid form)
Sea urchins or sea cucumbers	Yes (these are aquatic animals)
Crocodile meat	No (crocodiles are reptiles)
Frogs' legs	No (frogs are amphibians)
Snails	Yes (snails are molluscs)
Squid ink	No (not an aquatic animal, eggs or larvae. The ink is also not in a solid form)
Seaweed	No (not an aquatic animal, eggs or larvae)