

## Weighing And Pricing For Butchers

This leaflet contains a general summary of the main requirements of weights and measures and pricing legislation as applicable to butchers.

### ***Weights and Measures Requirements***

Weights and measures law applies to meat (i.e. any part of cattle, sheep or swine) and poultry of any sort whether it is fresh, chilled, frozen, salted, cooked or processed and to items which, although they contain other food, consist substantially of meat or poultry. In general, meat and poultry must be sold by weight, i.e. by the kilogram (kg) and/or gram (g).

Pre-packed items must be marked with a statement of net weight in metric units.

*This requirement does not apply to bath chaps, meat puddings, pies and flans or sausage rolls.*

Non pre-packed items can be sold either by net weight or gross weight.

*This requirement does not apply to bath chaps, meat pies, meat puddings, poultry pies, sausage rolls, cooked poultry, single cooked sausages in natural casings or single sausage meat products weighing less than 500g.*

“Net weight” means the weight of the goods alone without the wrapper or container. “Gross weight” means the weight of the goods plus the weight of any wrapper or container. However, there are strict controls on the permitted weight of the wrapper or container. If you wish to sell by gross weight, for items with a gross weight of 500g or less the container (bag, tray etc) must weigh no more than 5g and for items above 500g in weight the container can weigh no more than 10g per kg of the gross weight e.g. if the pack weighs 900g then the container may weigh no more than 9g if the pack is sold gross weight.

The customer must be informed of the weight before paying for and receiving the goods.

*This can be done either by weighing the goods in front of the customer, so that he/she has a clear, unobstructed view of the weight indication on the scales, or by marking the weight on the wrapper (if pre-packed) or on a separate ticket (if not pre-packed).*

The scales used must be accurate, approved for trade use and stamped with the crown mark.

If the customer does not take the goods “there and then”, you must give a written statement of the weight of the goods either before or at the time of delivery. In the case of trimmed/boned meat and dressed poultry, experience has shown that customers often do not understand that the purchase price may be based on the unprepared weight of the goods and mistakenly think they have been given ‘short weight’, so you may need to explain this.

If the customer asks for the goods to be prepared before they are weighed, it is the prepared weight that must be made known.

### ***Price Marking Requirements – Meat and Poultry***

In general, all foods, whether pre-packed or non pre-packed, must be priced.

The price indication must be in writing, unambiguous, easily identifiable and clearly legible.

Pre-packed items must be marked with the selling price. In addition, the unit price (price per kg) must be indicated either on or near the goods, or on a price list (the unit price must be calculated by reference to the selling price and the weight).

For non pre-packed items, the unit price must be indicated either on or near the goods, or on a price list.

However, there are exceptions. The main ones are as follows:

- (a) For non pre-packed meat and poultry and meat and poultry pre-packed in variable quantities, there is no requirement to indicate the unit price for:
  - i. goods that are not required to be sold by weight, e.g. non- pre-packed pheasants, rabbits, cooked poultry, etc;
  - ii. an assortment of different items sold as a single pack, e.g. "steak and kidney pack", "barbecue packs", etc;
  - iii. meat sold at reduced prices on account of the danger of its deterioration;
  - iv. *portions of meat cut at the request of a purchaser and in his/her presence.*
  
- (b) For meat pre-packed in pre-established quantities and displayed for sale, there is no requirement to indicate the unit price for:
  - i. processed meat, e.g. bacon, cooked meats;
  - ii. beef burgers, hamburgers, pork burgers;
  - iii. meat sold at a reduced price on account of the danger of its deterioration.

The unit price must be the price per kg. You may also show the unit price per lb, but the metric marking should be more prominent.

To calculate a unit price for a pound weight the price per kg should be multiplied by 0.4536.

To calculate a unit price by reference to  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb the price per 100g should be multiplied by 1.134.

In addition, for goods such as non pre-packed processed meat, e.g. bacon, cooked meats etc., beef burgers, hamburgers, pork burgers and poultry which are required to be unit priced, the unit price can be expressed as the price per 100g (and  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb, where imperial units are also used).

If you require any further advice please do not hesitate to contact us.