Agricultural Experiment Station
(Amended at ARRS Committee)

12 KAR 3:012. Label format and labeling.

RELATES TO: KRS 250.501, 250.521, 15 U.S.C. 1451-1461
STATUTORY AUTHORITY: KRS 250.521(2)(e), (f), 250.571
CERTIFICATION STATEMENT: This certifies that this administrative regulation complies with the requirements of 2025 RS HB 6, Section 8.
NECESSITY, FUNCTION, AND CONFORMITY: KRS 250.571(1) authorizes the Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station to promulgate administrative regulations necessary for the efficient enforcement of KRS 250.491 to 250.631. KRS 250.521 requires that pet foods be labeled and establishes the information that shall be stated on the label. This administrative regulation establishes a uniform format for labeling information for pet foods and specialty pet foods and delineates criteria for product claims.

Section 1. Definitions.

(1) "All life stages" means gestation or lactation, growth, and adult maintenance life stages for dogs, cats, and other mammals or adult (including breeding animals) and juvenile life stages for non-mammalian species.

(2) "Daily food" means a specialty pet food product, other than a treat, food mixer, or food supplement, for specialty pet species with no recognized nutritional authority.

(3) "Family" means a group of products that are nutritionally adequate for any or all life stages based on the products' nutritional similarity to a lead product that has been successfully test-fed according to an AAFCO feeding protocol.

(4) "Familiar household unit" means a typical feeding unit in volume or count (for example, can, measuring cup, treat, or piece).

(5) "Food mixer" means a pet or specialty pet food product that is intended to top, accompany, or contribute to a complete diet but is not generally intended to be a complete diet.

(6) "Food supplement" means a pet or specialty pet food product that is intended to supply a specific nutrient or nutrients or other food component but is not a complete diet.

(7) "Immediate container":

(a) Means the unit, can, box, tin, bag, or other receptacle or covering in which a pet food or specialty pet food is displayed for sale to retail purchasers; and

(b) Does not mean containers used as shipping containers.

(8) "Ingredient statement" means a collective and contiguous listing on the label of the ingredients of which the pet food or specialty pet food is composed.

(9) "Pet nutrition facts" means a graphic box located on the label containing nutritional information for a pet food product.

(10) "Principal display panel" means the part of a label that is most likely to be displayed, presented, shown, or examined under normal and customary conditions of display for retail sale.

(11) "Specialty pet nutrition facts" means a graphic box located on the label containing nutritional information for a specialty pet food product.

(12) "Veterinary diet" means a pet or specialty pet food product that is intended to be used under veterinary supervision only.Unless a pet food and specialty pet food is identified on the principal display panel as a stew, gravy, sauce, broth, aspic, juice, milk replacer, or other name, the maximum moisture declared on a pet food or specialty pet food label shall not exceed 78.00% or the natural moisture content of the ingredients, whichever is higher.

Section NaN. Section 2.

Section 3. Pet food and specialty pet food shall be labeled with:

(1) Product name and brand name, if any, on the principal display panel as established in 12 KAR 3:017;

(2) A statement that includes the species name of pet or specialty pet for which the food is intended, conspicuously designated on the principal display panel;

(3) "Quantity statement", as defined by KRS 250.501(22) and as established in 12 KAR 2:011, Section 1(9), by weight (pounds and ounces, and metric), liquid measure (quarts, pints, and fluid ounces, and metric) or by count, on the principal display panel;

(4) Guaranteed analysis as established in 12 KAR 3:022;

(5) Ingredient statement as established in 12 KAR 3:027;

(6) A statement of nutritional adequacy or purpose if required pursuant to 12 KAR 3:039;

(7) A statement of calorie content if required pursuant to 12 KAR 3:042;

(8) Feeding directions if required pursuant to 12 KAR 3:032; and

(9) Name and address of the manufacturer or distributor as established in Sections 10 and 11 of this administrative regulation.

Section 4. If a pet food or specialty pet food enclosed in an outer container or wrapper is intended for retail sale, all required label information shall appear on the outer container or wrapper.

Section 5. A vignette, graphic, or pictorial representation on a pet food or specialty pet food label shall not misrepresent the contents of the package.

Section 6. The word "proven," in connection with a label claim for a pet food or specialty pet food, shall not be used unless the claim is substantiated by scientific or other empirical evidence.

Section 7. A statement shall not appear upon the label or labeling of a pet food or specialty pet food that makes false or misleading comparisons between that product and any other product.

Section 8. A personal or commercial endorsement may be used on a pet food or specialty pet food label if the endorsement is not false or misleading.

Section 9. A statement on a pet food or specialty pet food label stating "improved," "new," or similar designation shall be substantiated and limited to six (6) months of production.

Section 10. A statement on a pet food or specialty pet food label stating preference or comparative attribute claims shall be substantiated and limited to one (1) year production, after which the claim shall be removed or re-substantiated.

Section 11.

(1) Raw milk distributed as pet food or specialty pet food shall bear the following statement "WARNING: NOT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION – THIS PRODUCT HAS NOT BEEN PASTEURIZED AND MAY CONTAIN HARMFUL BACTERIA."

(2) This statement shall be displayed in a conspicuous manner and shall not be smaller than the height of the minimum font required by the federal Fair Packaging and Labeling Act 15 U.S.C. 1451-1461, for the quantity statement as shown in the following table:

Panel Size	Minimum Warning Statement Type Size
≤ 5 in.^{2}	1/16 in.
>5-≤ 25 in.^{2}	1/8 in.
>25-≤ 100in.^{2}	3/16 in.
>100-≤ 400in.^{2}	1/4 in.

>400 in.^{2} 1/2 in.

Section 12. The label of a pet food or specialty pet food shall state the business or corporate name and address of the manufacturer or distributor. This information shall appear under the header "Manufactured for __", or "Distributed by __", or any other wording that expresses the facts, if the business whose name appears on the label is not the manufacturer.

(1) Except as established in subsection (2) of this section, the statement of the place of business shall include the street address, city, state, and zip code.

(2) The street address may be omitted if the street address is shown in a readily accessible, widely published, and publicly available resource, including for example, a printed directory, electronic database, or website,current city directory, or telephone directory for the city listed on the label.

Section 13. If a person manufactures or distributes a pet food or specialty pet food in a place other than the principal place of business, the label may state the principal place of business in lieu of the actual place where each package of the pet food or specialty pet food was manufactured or packaged or from where each package is to be distributed.

Section 14. Pet food and specialty pet food shall be labeled with:

(1) Product name and brand name, if any, on the principal display panel as established in 12 KAR 3:017;

(2) A statement of the intended use of the products as established in 12 KAR 3:017;

(3) "Quantity statement", as defined by KRS 250.501(22) and as established in 12 KAR 2:011, Section 1(9), by weight (pounds and ounces, and metric), liquid measure (quarts, pints, and fluid ounces, and metric) or by count, on the principal display panel;

(4) Pet Nutrition Fact or Specialty Pet Nutrition Facts as established in 12 KAR 3:022;

(5) Ingredient statement as established in 12 KAR 3:027;

(6) Feeding directions as required pursuant to 12 KAR 3:032; and

(7) Name and address of the manufacturer or distributor as established in Sections 11 and 12 of this administrative regulation.

Section 15. If a pet food or specialty pet food enclosed in an outer container or wrapper is intended for retail sale, all required label information shall appear on the outer container or wrapper.

Section 16. A vignette, graphic, or pictorial representation on a pet food or specialty pet food label shall not misrepresent the contents of the package.

Section 17. The word "proven," in connection with a label claim for a pet food or specialty pet food, shall not be used unless the claim is substantiated by scientific or other empirical evidence.

Section 18. A statement shall not appear upon the label or labeling of a pet food or specialty pet food that makes false or misleading comparisons between that product and any other product.

Section 19. A personal or commercial endorsement may be used on a pet food or specialty pet food label if the endorsement is not false or misleading.

Section 20. A statement on a pet food or specialty pet food label stating "improved," "new," or similar designation shall be substantiated and limited to six (6) months of production.

Section 21. A statement on a pet food or specialty pet food label stating preference or comparative attribute claims shall be substantiated and limited to one (1) year production, after which the claim shall be removed or re-substantiated.

Section 22.

(1) Raw milk distributed as pet food or specialty pet food shall bear the following statement "WARNING: NOT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION – THIS PRODUCT HAS NOT BEEN PASTEURIZED AND MAY CONTAIN HARMFUL BACTERIA."

(2) This statement shall be displayed in a conspicuous manner and shall not be smaller than the height of the minimum font required by the federal Fair Packaging and Labeling Act, 15 U.S.C. 1451-1461, for the quantity statement as shown in the following table:

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>400 in.^{2}	1/2 in.

Section 23. The label of a pet food or specialty pet food shall state the business or corporate name and address of the manufacturer or distributor. This information shall appear under the header "Manufactured for __", or "Distributed by __", or any other wording that expresses the facts, if the business whose name appears on the label is not the manufacturer.

(1) Except as established in subsection (2) of this section, the statement of the place of business shall include the street address, city, state, and zip code.

(2) The street address may be omitted if the street address is shown in a readily accessible, widely published, and publicly available resource, including for example, a printed directory, electronic database, or website.

Section 24. If a person manufactures, packs, or distributes a pet food or specialty pet food in a place other than the principal place of business, the label may state the principal place of business in lieu of the actual place where each package of the pet food or specialty pet food was manufactured or packaged or from where each package is to be distributed.

Section 24. Incorporation by Reference.

(1) "Official Publication", (2025 Edition), Association of American Feed Control Officials, is incorporated by reference for Sections 1 and 13 through 23.

(2) This material may be inspected, copied, or obtained, subject to applicable copyright law, at the Division of Regulatory Services, 103 Regulatory Services Building, College of Agriculture, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky 40546-0275, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

(012 KAR 003:012. AES-2(1973)-PF 2; 1 Ky.R. 1001; eff. 6-11-1975; 23 Ky.R. 1613; eff. 1-10-1997; 25 Ky.R. 1088, 2359; eff. 4-14-1999; 45 Ky.R. 109, 628; eff. 9-28-2018; Crt to Am; filed Am 9-11-2025; 52 Ky.R. 582, 1344, 1666; eff. 6-30-2026.)

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