**Annex 1 of resolution No. 332-2013 (COMIECO-LXVI)[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**CENTRAL AMERICA RTCA 67.01.05:11**

**TECHNICAL**

**REGULATION**

**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES. FERMENTED ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES. LABELLING REQUIREMENTS.**

CORRESPONDENCE: This regulation does not necessarily correspond with any other legislation or international regulations.

**ICS 67.160.10 RTCA 67.01.05.11**

Central American Technical Regulation, edited by:

* Ministry of Economy and Commerce Agency, MINECO (Guatemala)
* El Salvador Technical Regulation Agency, OSARTEC (El Salvador)
* Ministry of Trade and Industry, MIFIC (Nicaragua)
* Department/Ministry of Trade and Industry, SIC (Honduras)
* Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, MEIC (Costa Rica)

**REPORT**

The respective technical committees for technical regulation through bodies of technical regulation of the Central American countries, are the agencies responsible for conducting the study or the adoption of technical regulations. They are made up of representatives from Government, private enterprise, consumer, and academic sectors.

This Central American Technical Regulation RTCA 67.01.05:11 ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES. FERMENTED ALCOHOL. LABELLING REQUIREMENTS was adopted by the Subgroup of Standardisation Measures of Central America. The formalisation of this Technical Regulation entails the adoption by the Council of Ministers for Economic Integration (COMIECO).

PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

**For El Salvador**

OSARTEC

**For Guatemala**

MINECO

**For Nicaragua**

MIFIC

**For Honduras**

SIC

**For Costa Rica**

MEIC

1. **OBJECT**

To establish the requirements to be met for labelling of pre-packaged fermented alcoholic beverages for human consumption.

1. **SCOPE**

Applies to the labelling of all fermented alcoholic beverages, alone or mixed, in their final presentation unit and marketed in the territory of the Central American countries.

1. **DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY**
   1. **Food Additive:** any substance not normally consumed as food by itself and not normally used as a typical food ingredient, whether or not it has nutritive value, the intentional food addition for technological purpose (including organoleptic) in the manufacture, processing, treatment, packing, packaging, transport or storage results, or may reasonably be expected to result, directly or indirectly, by them or their products becoming a complement of food or affect their characteristics. This definition does not include contaminants or substances added to food for maintaining or improving nutritional qualities.
   2. **Alcoholic beverage**: alcoholic product, suitable for human consumption, obtained by fermentation of raw materials of vegetable origin and which is subject (or not) to distillation, rectification, infusion, maceration or cooking of natural products, with an alcohol content greater than 0.5% by volume; the product can be aged or not, and various ingredients and additives may be added or not.
   3. **Fermented alcoholic beverage**: alcoholic beverage obtained by the fermentation of sugary fruit juices or by fermentation of sugars derived from starch from cereals, by any conversion process.
   4. **Mixed fermented alcoholic beverage**: fermented alcoholic beverages containing other ingredients.
   5. **Consumer**: individual or collective, natural or legal person who purchases or receives food in order to meet his/her needs.
   6. **Net content**: quantity of liquid contained in a specific container. It is stated in SI units, and any other unit deemed suitable by the manufacturer.
   7. **Container**: any receptacle containing fermented alcoholic beverage for delivery as a single product, that covers all or part.
   8. **Label**: any tag, label, mark, image or other descriptive or graphic material that has been written, printed, stencilled, marked in relief or intaglio-engraved or superimposed to the container.
   9. **Additional label**: any label used to make available to consumers required information in the original label when it is in a language other than in Spanish, or to add required elements not included on the original label (and that this regulation requires).
   10. **Labelling**: any written, printed or graphic material containing the label accompanying the fermented alcoholic beverage.
   11. **Due date or best before date**: the end date of the period during which the manufacturer guarantees the product quality attributes normally expected by the consumer, provided they have been stored under conditions specified by the manufacturer. After this date the product will not be considered sellable.
   12. **Alcohol content**: percentage by volume of ethyl alcohol in an alcoholic beverage, reference to 20°C.
   13. **Ingredient**: any substance, including food additives, that is used in manufacturing, preparation and storage of beverages and is present in the final product, although possibly in a modified form.
   14. **Lot**:a quantity of fermented alcoholic beverages produced under essentially the same conditions, which are identified by a code when packing.
   15. **Cap**: parts with which containers are covered.
2. **GENERAL CONDITION OF THE LABELS**
   1. Fermented alcoholic beverages shall not be described or presented on any label or labelling in a manner that is false, misleading or deceptive or likely to create an erroneous impression regarding its character in any respect.

Fermented alcoholic beverages shall not be described or presented with a label or labelling which use words, artwork, or other graphic representations that refer to or suggest, directly or indirectly, any other product that the product concerned can be confused, or in such a way that may induce the purchaser or consumer to suppose that the alcoholic beverage is related in any way to that other product.

* 1. The information that must appear on the label, pursuant to this technical regulation, or any other product-specific technical regulations must be provided with clear, visible, indelible, and easy to read characters easy to read by the consumer under normal conditions of purchase and use.
  2. To present the information on the label characters whose height is not less than 1 mm is to be used, it being understood that height and distance ranges from the baseline to the upper base of an uppercase character.
  3. Labels must be written in Spanish, and when the language in which the original label is not drafted in Spanish, a supplementary label containing the mandatory information set out in section 5 of this regulation should be placed.
  4. On labels that stick to the container, inscriptions may be in the back of them, provided they are clearly legible and visible through the container with its contents.
  5. When the container is covered by a wrapper, the wrapper shall contain all necessary information, or the label on the container shall be readily legible through the outer wrapper or not obscured by it.
  6. Label indications attributing a preventive or curative action to the product are not allowed.

1. **COMPULSORY LABELLING OF FERMENTED ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**

On the label of the fermented alcoholic beverages should appear the following information[[2]](#footnote-2):

* 1. **Product name**: should indicate the true nature of the fermented alcoholic beverage.
     1. You can use an “imaginary” or “fabricated” or a “brand” name.
     2. When you do not have a specific name, a common or usual name established by common usage which is not misleading or confusing to the consumer should be used as an appropriate descriptive term.
  2. **Alcohol content**: the alcoholic strength in SI units must be indicated, by using “% Alc / Vol..” or other abbreviations or equivalent phrases. Additionally, the unit of measure “G.L.” (degrees Gay-Lussac) may be used.
  3. **Net content**: must indicate the net content in units of the international system (SI).
  4. **List of ingredients:** except in the case of single-ingredient foods, a list of ingredients must appear on the label.

The list of ingredients must be headed or preceded by an appropriate title which consists of the term “ingredients”, or include, in the case that the drink is mixed with other goods, those must be declared. The list of ingredients should be in descending order. When additives other than manufacturing auxiliaries are incorporated, they must be declared.

* 1. **Name and address**
     1. The name and address of the manufacturer, packer, distributor or exporter for domestic products shall be indicated, as appropriate.
     2. Imported products must indicate the name and address of the importer or distributor of the fermented alcoholic beverage.
  2. **Sanitary registration**: should indicate the registration number issued by the competent authority. The statement must begin with a phrase or abbreviation clearly indicating to the consumer this information and may use the phrase “Health Check” and abbreviations such as Reg. San., RS, among others.
  3. **Precautionary or warning caption[[3]](#footnote-3)**: on the label should include a warning that “the excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages impairs health” should be included on the label or something similar.
  4. **Batch identification**: each package must be embossed or otherwise marked, but indelibly, with an indication to identify the number or batch code. The statement must begin with words such as “batch”, “batch number”, “batch code”, “N Lot”, “C Lot” and recognised abbreviations such as ; “Lot”", “L” or “NL”. It may be followed by identifying the number, or indicating where it is located.
  5. **Expiration Date Mark**
     1. The expiration date must be placed directly by the manufacturer, indelibly and not be altered, and be clearly visible.
     2. If an imported product does not indicate the expiration date on the above conditions, the information shall be affixed by the importer or packer, according to the technical information of the manufacturer or supplier. Such information should be available by the importer and be facilitated if the competent authority so requests.
     3. It shall remain in force following the date marking:

1. The date shall be declared using one of the following phrases and abbreviations:

* Expiration date
* Consume before
* Expires
* Best before date
* Expires on
* EXP
* VTO
* Venc.
* V.
* Cad.
* Ven.
* Or any other phrase clearly indicating to the consumer the product’s expiration date.

1. The sentences prescribed in paragraph 5.9.3 shall be accompanied by:

* The same date, or
* A reference to where the date appears.

1. This shall consist at least of:

* day, month and year for products with an expiry date within three months
* month and year for products with an expiry date of more than three months. If the month is December it will be enough to indicate the year, in which case it must be expressed in four digits

1. The day, month and year shall be declared in non-coded numerical order separated by hyphens, dots, or slash, with the caveat that the month may be indicated by letters, including abbreviated three-letter format. Furthermore the use of spaces is permitted and if the date is expressed in alphanumeric form, no separation will be required. The order of the day and month will be allowed to be changed as long as the month is expressed in letters or their respective abbreviations.
2. If this date is not specified in the conditions mentioned above, the format must be adjusted and placed by the importer.
3. The indication of the durability date, expiration or shelf life for beverages containing 10% or more alcohol by volume is not required;
4. Fermented alcoholic beverages with an alcohol content of less than 10% Alc./Vol. as well as beverages containing animal milk, egg or any other ingredient that can become perishable, must state the expiry date (month and year) in a prominent place on the label, which may be expressed as indicated in subparagraph i of this paragraph.
   1. **Use of the term “Low”, “Light”, or “light”**

For the fermented alcoholic beverage to be called “small, light or light”, it must contain a reduction of at least 25% of the energy value in respect of the fermented alcoholic beverage in the same category with which it is compared.

Alcoholic beverages compared should be different versions of the same fermented alcoholic beverage, of which one is the benchmark.

* 1. **Country of origin**
     1. The country of origin should be indicated in the fermented alcoholic beverage.
     2. When a fermented alcoholic beverage undergoes processing in a second country which changes its nature, the country in which the processing is performed shall be considered as a country for the purposes of labelling

1. **REFERENCES**

For the development of this standard the following documents are taken into account:

CODEX STAN 1-1985 (Rev. 1-1991 and amended at its 23rd, 24th, 26th, 28th, 31st and 33rd sessions, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2008 and 2010), GENERAL STANDARD FOR FOOD LABELING pre-packaged.

1. **MONITORING AND INSPECTION**

Monitoring and inspection of the technical regulation corresponds to the ministry or competent authority in the territory of States in accordance with its law.

**-— END OF THE TECHNICAL REGULATIONS--**

1. COMIECO – Consejo de Ministros de Economía de Centroamérica, or Council of Ministers of Trade of Central America [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, States may request statement on the MSRP, as set out in national legislation. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The wording of the warning or cautionary caption may differ according to the laws of each State, provided it does not contradict the provisions of this paragraph. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)