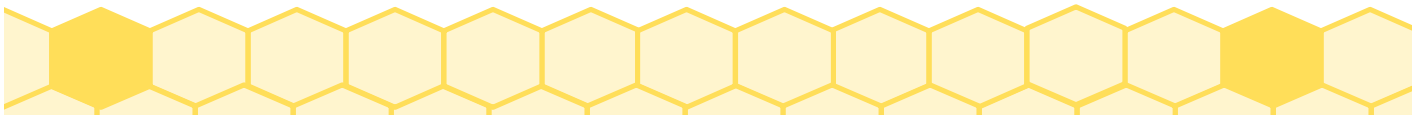


2.1 the main requirements of the current, United Kingdom statutory regulations affecting the handling, preparation for sale, hygiene, composition labelling and weight of packs of honey



In these Regulations “honey” means the natural sweet substance produced by *Apis mellifera* bees from the nectar of plants or from secretions of living parts of plants or excretions of plant-sucking insects on the living parts of plants which the bees collect, transform by combining with specific substances of their own, deposit, dehydrate, store and leave in honeycombs to ripen and mature.

Blossom or Nectar Honey



2

“blossom honey” and “nectar honey” mean honeys obtained from the nectar of plants

Yates is more pedantic: Honey means the fluid, viscous or crystallised food which is produced by honeybees from the nectar of blossoms which the bees collect, transform, complete with substances of their own and store and leave to mature in honeycombs.

A person trading in honey obtained from the nectar of plants must use the name “honey”, “blossom honey” or “nectar honey” in trade as the name of the product. Similarly a person must not use the name “blossom honey” or “nectar honey” in trade as the name of a product if the product is not honey obtained from the nectar of plants.

Honeydew Honey



3

“honeydew honey” means honey obtained mainly from excretions of plant sucking insects (Hemiptera) on the living part of plants or secretions of living parts of plants;

A person trading in a honeydew honey must use the name “honey” or “honeydew honey” in trade as the name of the product.

A person must not use the name “honeydew honey” in trade as the name of a product if the product is not honeydew honey.

Comb Honey



4

“comb honey” means honey stored by bees in the cells of freshly built broodless combs or thin comb foundation sheets made solely of beeswax and sold in sealed whole combs or sections of such combs.

A person trading in a comb honey must use the name “comb honey” in trade as the name of the product.

A person must not use the name “comb honey” in trade as the name of a product if the product is not comb honey.

Chunk Honey / Cut Comb in Honey



5

“chunk honey” and “cut comb in honey” mean honeys which contain one or more pieces of comb honey.

A person trading in a honey that contains one or more pieces of comb honey must use the name “chunk honey” or “cut comb in honey” in trade as the name of the product.

A person must not use the name “chunk honey” or “cut comb in honey” in trade as the name of a product if the product does not contain one or more pieces of comb honey.

Drained Honey



“drained honey” means honey obtained by draining de-capped broodless combs.

A person trading in drained honey must use the name “honey” or “drained honey” in trade as the name of the product.

A person must not use the name “drained honey” in trade as the name of a product if the product is not drained honey.

Extracted Honey



7

“extracted honey” means honey obtained by centrifuging de-capped broodless combs.

A person trading in extracted honey must use the name “honey” or “extracted honey” in trade as the name of the product.

A person must not use the name “extracted honey” in trade as the name of a product if the product is not extracted honey.

Pressed Honey



“pressed honey” means honey obtained by pressing broodless combs with or without the application of moderate heat not exceeding 45° Celsius.

A person trading in pressed honey must use the name “honey” or “pressed honey” in trade as the name of the product.

A person must not use the name “pressed honey” in trade as the name of a product if the product is not pressed honey.

Filtered Honey



“filtered honey” means honey obtained by removing foreign inorganic or organic matters in such a way as to result in the significant removal of pollen.

- (1) A person trading in filtered honey must use the name “filtered honey” in trade as the name of the product.
- (2) A person must not use the name “filtered honey” in trade as the name of a product if the product is not filtered honey.
- (3) A person trading in filtered honey must **not** provide information relating to the floral, vegetable, regional, territorial or topographical origin of the product or specific quality criteria for the product.
- (4) A person must not trade in filtered honey in bulk containers or packs unless the product name “filtered honey” is clearly indicated—
 - (a) on those containers and packs; and
 - (b) on the trade documents relating to the product.

Baker’s Honey



10

“baker’s honey” means honey that is suitable for industrial use or as an ingredient in another foodstuff which is then processed.

A person trading in baker’s honey must use the name “baker’s honey”, in trade, as the name of the product.

A person must not use the name “baker’s honey” in trade as the name of a product if the product is not baker’s honey.

A person trading in baker’s honey must **not** provide information relating to the floral, vegetable, regional, territorial or topographical origin of the product or specific quality criteria for the product.

A person must not trade in baker’s honey unless the words “intended for cooking only” appear on the label of the product in close proximity to the product name.

A person must not trade in baker’s honey in bulk containers or packs unless the product name “baker’s honey” is clearly indicated—

- (a) on those containers and packs; and
- (b) on the trade documents relating to the product.

Where baker’s honey is used as an ingredient in a compound foodstuff, the product name “honey” may be used, in trade, in the product name of the compound foodstuff instead of “baker’s honey”.

Where baker’s honey is used as an ingredient in a compound foodstuff and the name “honey” is used in the product name of the compound foodstuff, a person must not trade in that foodstuff unless the list of ingredients for that foodstuff identifies that honey ingredient using the name “baker’s honey”.

Composition and handling of Honey



11

The regulations specify:-

The water content of the honey must be less than 20%.

If it is higher it is liable to ferment. If you extract only honey from comb that has been capped there should be no problem.

The percentages of invert sugars and sucrose must be consistent with that expected from the floral source.

No problem here if you use your own honey.

The honey shall not have been heated in such a way as to significantly destroy enzymes and drive off the volatile aromatic compounds which give each type of honey its unique quality.

If honey is warmed for extraction and bottling, keep the temperature below 35°C and cool quickly when the job is done.

For pasteurisation keep at a temperature of 63°C for 30 minutes then cool rapidly.

The composition of honey is best preserved by storing at low temperatures.

The honey should be free from mould, insects, insect debris, brood and any other organic or inorganic substance foreign to the composition of honey.

Take care to minimise the introduction of foreign materials from the field into the extraction room. The extraction room and all equipment should be washed thoroughly before extraction. The honey must be filtered to remove these foreign materials. The recommended mesh size is 0.2 mm. which will ensure that some pollen remains.

Containers should be made of materials which under normal and foreseeable conditions of use do not transfer their constituents to the honey in quantities which could endanger human health or bring about deterioration in its aroma, taste, texture or colour.

Equipment made of food-grade stainless steel, food-grade plastic and glass meet these criteria.

- See other presentation

Characteristics of Honey



12

Characteristics

1. The honey consists essentially of different sugars, predominantly fructose and glucose, as well as other substances such as organic acids, enzymes and solid particles derived from honey collection.
2. The colour varies from nearly colourless to dark brown.
3. The consistency can be fluid, viscous or partly or entirely crystallised.
4. The flavour and aroma vary but are derived from the plant origin.
5. No food ingredient has been added, including any food additive.
6. No other additions have been made to the honey except for other honey.
7. It must, as far as possible, be free from organic or inorganic matters foreign to its composition.
8. Unless baker's honey it must not—
 - (a) have any foreign tastes or odours;
 - (b) have begun to ferment;
 - (c) have an artificially changed acidity;
 - (d) have been heated in such a way that the natural enzymes have been either destroyed or significantly inactivated.
9. Unless filtered honey no pollen or constituent particular to honey may be removed except where this is unavoidable in the removal of foreign inorganic or organic matter.

Composition of Honey - Sugars



13

Fructose and glucose content (sum of both)

blossom honey - not less than 60g/100g

honeydew honey, blends of honeydew honey with blossom honey - not less than 45g/100g

Sucrose content (*Borago officinalis*)

in general - not more than 5g/100g

false acacia (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*),

Menzies Banksia (*Banksia menziesii*), French honeysuckle

(*Hedysarum*), red gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*), leatherwood

(*Eucryphia lucida*, *Eucryphia milligani*), *Citrus* spp. - not more than 10g/100g

lavender (*Lavandula* spp.), borage - not more than 15g/100g

Composition of Honey – Water/Moisture content



Moisture content

in general - not more than 20%

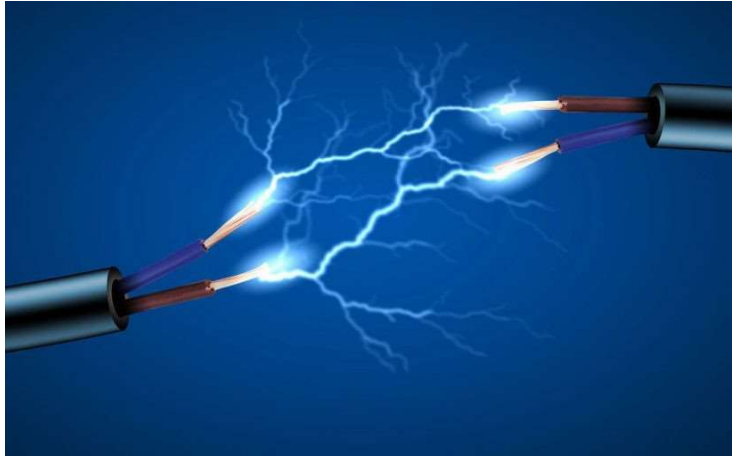
heather (*Calluna*) and baker's honey in general - not more than 23%

baker's honey from heather (*Calluna*) - not more than 25%

Water-insoluble content in general - not more than 0.1g/100g

pressed honey - not more than 0.5g/100g

Composition of Honey – Electrical Conductivity



15

- (a) all honey except for bell heather (*Erica*) honey, chestnut honey, eucalyptus honey, honeydew honey, lime (*Tilia* spp.) honey, ling heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) honey, manuka or jelly bush (*Leptospermum*) honey, strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*) honey and tea tree (*Melaleuca* spp.) honey - not more than 0.8mS/cm
- (b) blends of honeys to which paragraph (a) applies - not more than 0.8mS/cm
- (c) honeydew honey - not less than 0.8mS/cm
- (d) blends of honeydew honey except blends of that honey with bell heather (*Erica*) honey, eucalyptus honey, lime (*Tilia* spp.) honey, ling heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) honey, manuka or jelly bush (*Leptospermum*) honey, strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*) honey and tea tree (*Melaleuca* spp.) honey - not less than 0.8mS/cm
- (e) chestnut honey - not less than 0.8mS/cm
- (f) blends of chestnut honey except blends of that honey with bell heather (*Erica*) honey, eucalyptus honey, lime (*Tilia* spp.) honey, ling heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) honey, manuka or jelly bush (*Leptospermum*) honey, strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*) honey and tea tree (*Melaleuca* spp.) honey - not less than 0.8mS/cm

Composition of Honey – Free Acid

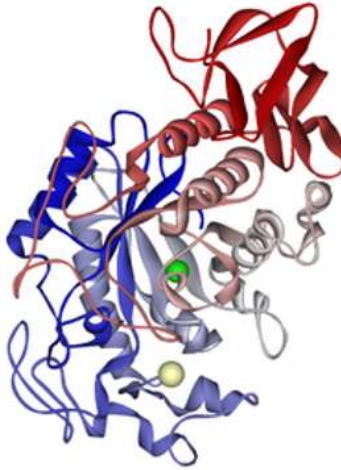


16

(a) all honey except for baker's honey - not more than 50 milli-equivalents acid/kg

(b) baker's honey - not more than 80 milli-equivalents acid/kg

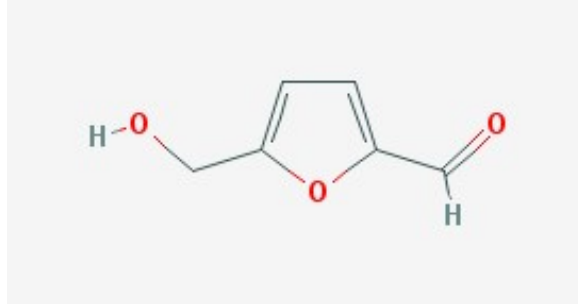
Composition of Honey – Diastase Activity (Schade scale)



17

- (a) diastase activity (Schade scale) —
- (i) all honey except baker's honey and honey specified in sub-paragraph (ii)
not less than 8
 - (ii) honey with a low natural enzyme content (e.g. citrus honey) and an HMF content of not more than 15mg/kg
not less than 3

Composition of Honey – Hydroxymethylfurfural - HMF



18

All honey except baker's honey - not more than 40mg/kg

Honeys of declared origin from regions with tropical climate and blends of these honeys not more than 80 mg/kg

Labels & Packaging Regulations

- 1) The Honey (England) Regulations 2003, S.I. 2243 or the corresponding Regulations for Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland if labelled there
- 2) The Food Labelling Regulations 1996, S.I. 1499
- 3) The Food (Lot Marking) Regulations 1996, S.I. 1502
- 4) Weights and Measures requirements
- 5) Food Safety Act 1990
- 6) Food Premises Registration 1993
- 7) Trade Descriptions Act 1968
- 8) The Consumer Protection Act from unfair Trading Act 2008 no 127
- 9) Plastic Materials & Articles in Contact with Food Regulations Act 1992
- 10) Glazed Ceramic Ware (Safety) Regulations 1988
- 11) Council of the European Union Directive 2001/110/EC of 20 December relating to honey (still applies?)
- 12) Codex Alimentarius Honey: Honey Quality & International Standards



The label must show the name, the best before date and the weight in the same field of view.

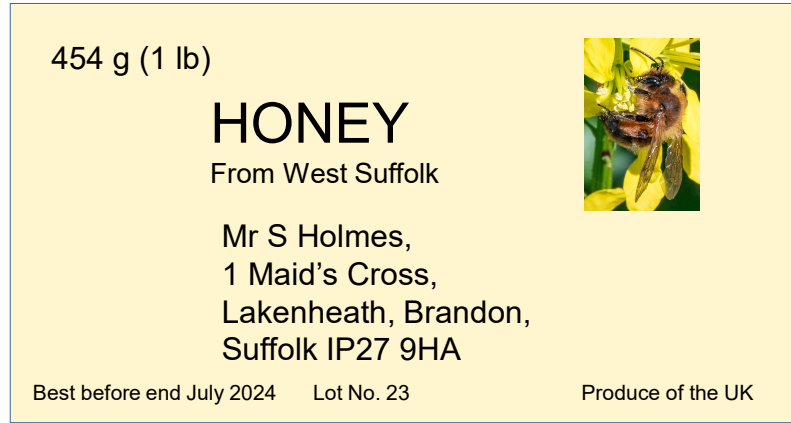
Typeface for weight has size requirements but the rest just has to be clearly legible and indelible, also uncluttered.

Just the name and country of origin is enough if for direct sale.

The names in the Honey Regulations have to be used in order to comply with the Labelling Regulations.

The packer's or seller's name and address must be on the label, as must for formal statement of the country/(ies) of origin.

Labels



20

Printing must be clearly legible and permanent. Labels should be fixed to the side of the container.

The lettering must be

- 3 mm high for weights between 50 and 200 g,
- 4 mm high for weights between 200 g and 1 kg
- 6 mm high for greater weights

Only the weight declarations have to be a certain size.

The criterion for the size of all the other statutory information is that it must be easy to understand, clearly legible, indelible, not interrupted by other written or pictorial matter and in a conspicuous place such as to be easily visible. The information given on the label must be true in every respect and in no way misleading.

Labels

Description must not mislead and must confirm to the reserved descriptions

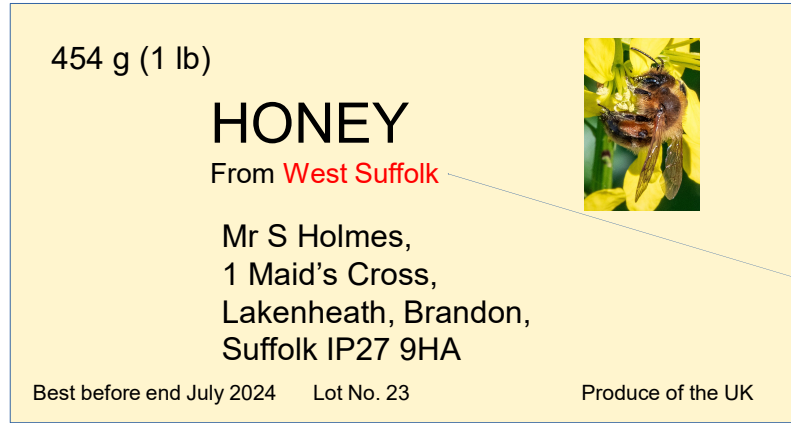


21

This must be one of the following reserved descriptions:

- Honey
- Comb honey
- Chunk honey
- Baker's honey intended for cooking only
- The word 'honey' with any other true description, e.g. Honeydew honey, Pressed honey, Blossom honey
- The word 'honey' with a regional, topographical or territorial reference

Labels

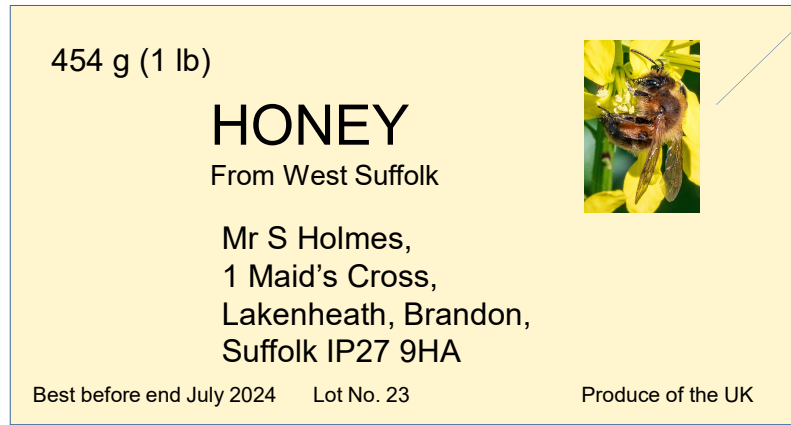


Must come entirely from an identified source

22

If reference is made to a geographical origin the honey must come wholly from that place.

Labels



Any
illustrations
must not
mislead

23

If there is any reference to a particular plant or blossom (either pictures and/or words), the honey must have come wholly or mainly from that blossom or plant - i.e. the honey must be characterised by that blossom or plant.

Labels

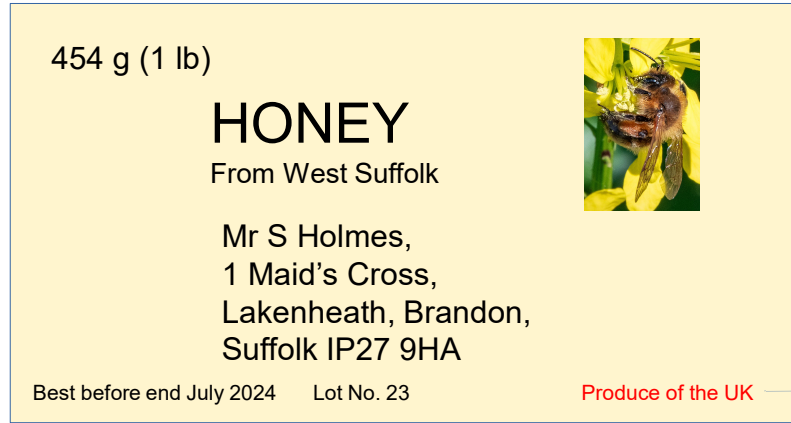


Name and address of producer, packer or seller.

24

Sufficient information is needed in order to trace the producer by an address within the EU.

Labels



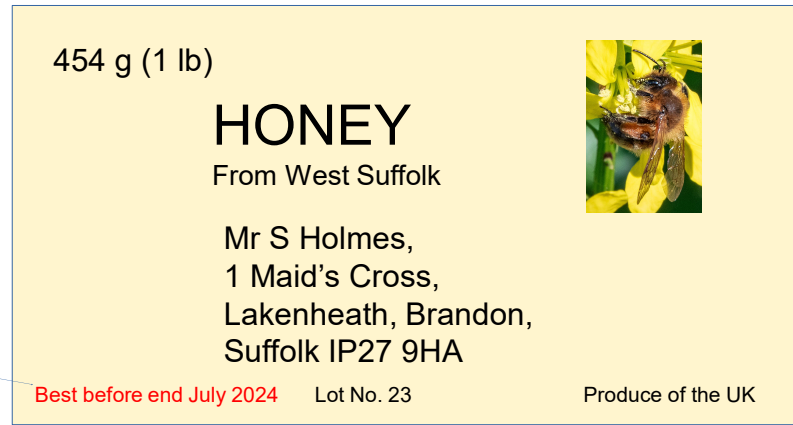
You must
put country
of origin

25

Honey must be labelled with the country/ies in which the honey was harvested. This may be a member state of the EU. If produced in England should be 'Product of the UK' must be IN ADDITION to the address. Also acceptable blend of EU honeys, blend of EU and non-EU honeys and blend of non-EU honeys.

Labels

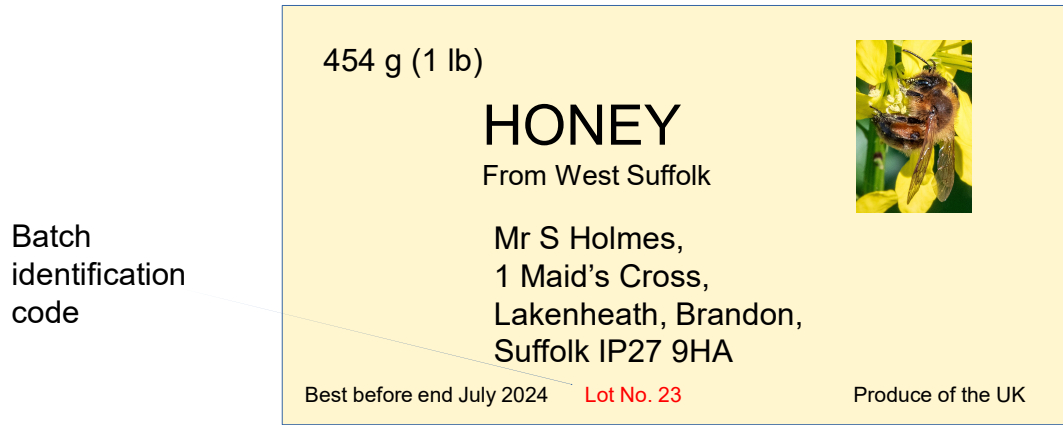
Suggest 2 years from extraction.
Note: if you quote dd/mm/yy then the lot number is not required.



26

Honey lasts for many years but an appropriate durability or “best before” date must be given. Two years is reasonable. If “best before” date specifies day, month and year a lot number is not required.

Labels



27

A lot means a batch of sales units of food produced, manufactured or packaged under similar conditions. It enables problems to be traced.

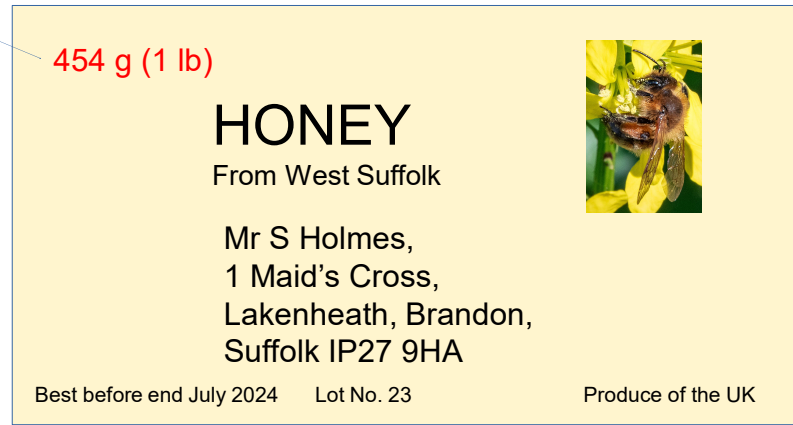
The lot number is preceded by the letter L to distinguish it from other indicators. The number may be a short code comprising letters and/or numbers identifying the appropriate batch. It is prudent to have small lot sizes.

The beekeeper is required to keep a record of each batch with its provenance and destination and retain this for the shelf life plus 6 months.

Lot numbers and “Best before” date are not needed for direct sales at farmers markets or at the door.

Metric figures must be at least 4mm high.
Metric figures must precede imperial figures (if used)

Labels



28

From April 2008, honey can be sold in any weight, (including the traditional UK ones). Imperial units can be added after the metric ones but must not be in larger type and there must be no other print between them. The abbreviation for gram is g and for kilogram is kg. An s must not be added. There must be one type space between the numerical value and the unit or its abbreviation.