

## Information Card 1

### Food Labelling

#### Going Shopping

Have you ever looked at the labels on foods? Perhaps you may be allergic to peanuts and need to check whether the food contains nuts. Perhaps someone in your family is trying to cut down on the amount of fat they are eating. The labels give us some important and useful information about the food we are buying.

When we go shopping for food, we are protected by many laws which cover the way in which the foods are processed and labelled. These laws protect us by making sure that the food we buy is safe to eat and that we are fully informed about what it contains.

When we are buying products, many of the things we look for on the **label** are tightly regulated. For example, the information about how much the product weighs, or how many items the bag contains, is regulated by the Weights and Measures Act.

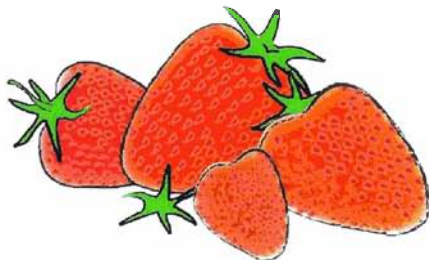
These are some of the other things we might look out for when we are shopping which are closely controlled by **food labelling laws**.

The name of the food – the way food is described is strictly controlled. For example if you buy “**Pure Fruit Juice**” you are entitled to expect that nothing has been added or taken away. “**Fruit drink**” on the other hand usually consists of mainly water with a small quantity of juice added.

A list of ingredients – this is particularly important for people who are concerned about the number and type of additives (e-numbers) in food or those who perhaps have to be on a special diet where they need to avoid particular types of food.

- An indication of certain allergens in food, such as peanuts, milk, eggs and fish that can cause common allergic reactions.

The quantity of certain ingredients or categories of ingredients eg. if you buy a strawberry yogurt which has a picture of lots of strawberries on the label, the percentage of strawberries in the yogurt must be given.



- An indication of how long the food is likely to last – a “Best before” or “Use by” date – after all you need to know how long you can keep the cheese in the fridge before you have to eat it.

What other information is on the label in the picture? You will learn more about food labelling in Card 2.

