

specific requirements for label size or location. According to the new regulations, labels can be in several languages, as long as the size of the Spanish version is equal to that of the other languages.

The country of origin was "mistakenly" not included in the official decree, however, it is now necessary to include this information, according to the new regulations. Until a revised decree is formally published, exporters would be wise to include this information, in addition to the other requirements set out in the official decree.

### **LABELLING REQUIREMENTS FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGE PRODUCTS**

Labelling requirements for food and beverage products have been established by the *Secretaría de Salud*. Food and beverage labels must include the following:

- product description;
- date of expiration;
- list of ingredients; and
- nutritional content (if nutritional quality is claimed).

These requirements are in addition to the requirements for generic product labelling. New regulations regarding the labelling of food and beverage products were announced recently, and are expected to be in effect by November, 1994. They are described briefly at the end of this summary.

### **ADDITIONAL LABELLING REQUIREMENTS FOR PRODUCTS COVERED BY NOMS**

Products for which *Normas Oficiales Mexicanas* (NOMs) have been issued must be tested in Mexico and a compliance certificate must be obtained from the *Secretaría de Comercio y Fomento Industrial, Dirección General de Normas (SECOFI)*, the Standards Branch of the Ministry of Trade and Industrial Development or from an agency accredited by them. This certificate must accompany the goods when they are imported.

Some of the NOMs include special labelling requirements and these are now enforced at the border. A partial list of products for which NOMs have been issued, specified by Mexican tariff classification number, is provided at the end of

### **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR SPANISH LABELS**

#### **All Consumer Products**

1. Name of the product or good (including a product description, if not described in the name of the product or good).
2. Name or trade name and address of the importer (this information may be displayed on a separate label and may be added after importation).
3. Country of origin of the product.
4. Net contents in accordance with Official Mexican Standard NOM 030-SCFI-1993.
5. Warnings or precautions in the case of dangerous products.
6. Instructions for use, handling and/or preservation of the product.

**Source: Government of Canada translation of Article Five of the March 7, 1994 Decree, as amended by letters of clarification from SECOFI.**

this summary. Exporters of these products should obtain a copy of the NOM for each relevant product to learn about any special labelling regulations.

### **SOME PRODUCTS SUBJECT TO SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

Mexico's product labelling regulations contain special treatment for textiles and leather products, electrical and electronic products and refrigerators that differ from the general and NOM-based regulations described above.

#### **Textiles and Leather**

Textiles, clothing and accessories (NOM-004-SCFI-1993), leather shoes and leather products (NOM-020-SCFI-1993) must meet specific labelling requirements specified in the labelling decree (see box) which are enforced at the border. But they do not have to be accompanied by a certificate of compliance, even though they are subject to NOMs, which include labelling standards. For these products, labels must be affixed to the product and not just to the packaging.

#### **Electronic and Electrical Products**

In a letter of clarification issued March 10, 1994, the Ministry of Trade and Industrial Development stated that electronic and electrical products and household appliances are not subject to the general requirement that product labels contain instructions for use and care. The reason is that such products are already

subject to NOM-024-SCFI-1993, which requires instructions and warranties to be provided at the point of sale.

#### **Refrigerators**

Refrigerator labels must comply with a number of very specific requirements including adherence to certain energy-efficiency regulations in addition to all of the requirements for textiles and leather. The label must show the refrigerator's type, size in cubic metres, the model number, the estimated average energy consumption and the annual energy cost.

### **EXEMPTIONS**

The official decree (Article Six) lists several categories of goods which are exempted from both the labelling and certification provisions. A number of other exclusions have been established by letters of clarification. The following goods are exempt:

- A maximum of three units submitted to the relevant Mexican authorities for the purpose of obtaining a certificate of compliance with an official standard.
- Goods that are part of accompanied passenger luggage on international flights.
- Goods that are part of the household effects of persons domiciled in Mexico.
- Goods imported by educational, scientific and non-commercial organizations including any organizations authorized to accept donations under the Income Tax Act.
- Samples with no commercial value.
- Temporary imports for repair or in-bond assembly.
- Goods which are new, one-of-a-kind or highly specialized and involve a security risk may be imported up to a maximum of 25 items per customs declaration. They must be accompanied by a contract that assigns risk to the recipient and states that the items are not for sale to the public.
- Capital and intermediate goods, provided that a written statement of final use accompanies the goods.
- Bulk goods (except where included in a NOM), defined as goods that "must be weighed or measured in the presence of the consumer at the time of sale".

