

Selling metric

A guide for retailers

Q What about advertising?

A The changes also apply to weights and prices quoted in advertisements and on posters.

Q How can I find out more?

A For more advice on converting your weighing machines, you can contact the United Kingdom Weighing Federation, whose members can undertake the work, on 01604 622023.

The National Weights and Measures Laboratory can advise on which machines can be converted. They can be contacted via e-mail at: metric@nwm.l.dti.gov.uk or by fax on 0181 943 7270, or phone 0181 943 7272.

This leaflet is for information only and has no legal standing. For further information about these changes, contact your local authority trading standards department – you'll find the number under 'Local Authority' in your telephone book.

For more information on the metric system, visit our web site at <http://www.dti.gov.uk/cacp/ca/metric/index.htm>

Q How can I get extra copies of this leaflet and Shopping metric: A guide to buying loose foods and the Weight Comparison chart?

A Call the Metric Helpline on 0845 601 0540, quoting reference numbers URN 99/508, URN 99/507 or URN 99/509 respectively.

The text of this leaflet is also available in the following languages: Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Turkish, Urdu, Vietnamese, and Welsh.



Prepacked products are already sold by the gram or the kilogram, but many goods that are weighed and priced at the point of sale – at the checkout, counter or market stall – are still sold by the ounce or pound. **By 1 January 2000, all loose goods must be weighed and priced in grams and kilograms.**

The types of goods affected by this change include fruit and vegetables, meat and meat products like sausages and cooked meats, poultry, fish and other seafoods, and cheese and other dairy products. **Non-food products sold loose by weight – such as nails – will also be affected.** We have produced this leaflet to tell you about the latest changes and how they will affect you as a retailer.

Questions and answers

Q Why change the way loose goods are weighed?

A Since 1965, the United Kingdom has gradually been changing to the international system of metric weights and measures. Switching to grams and kilograms for weighed-out goods is part of that process. Prepacked goods are already sold in grams and kilograms, so the change will make it easier for consumers to make direct price comparisons.

Q How do I prepare for 1 January 2000?

A If you sell loose goods:

- you must convert or replace your weighing machines which only show imperial units. Most machines can be converted. You can continue to use machines which show both sets of weights, provided the metric units are at least as prominent as the imperial units and used for every sale
- you must convert any computer systems and ticket-printing machines to grams and kilograms. Printed customer information about weights and prices – including labels, shelf-edges and point-of-sale displays – must refer to grams or kilograms
- you can continue to display customer information in ounces and pounds alongside, and in characters no larger than, the equivalent information in grams and kilograms

- you should make sure that you and your staff are familiar with pricing and weighing in grams and kilograms.

You should contact your weighing machine supplier as soon as possible to talk about converting your existing equipment or buying a new weighing machine. For more advice on converting your weighing machines, contact the United Kingdom Weighing Federation on the number at the back of this leaflet.

Q When should I start?

A From 1 January 2000, all weighed-out goods must be sold in grams and kilograms. You can change over sooner if this is more convenient for your business.

Q How do I explain the change to my customers?

A There are a number of ways you can help your customers get used to the change:

- you can explain that because prepacked goods are already sold in grams and kilograms, the change will make it easier for consumers to make price comparisons
- you can display our free leaflet, *Shopping metric: A guide to buying loose foods*. There is a copy enclosed with this leaflet. To order more free copies, telephone the Metric Helpline on the number at the back of this leaflet
- you can display the *Weight Comparison* chart which comes with this leaflet
- you can display prices per 4 ounces or per pound alongside, and in characters no larger than, the price per 100 grams or per kilogram.

Q What if customers continue to ask for goods in ounces or pounds after I have switched to grams and kilograms?

A Simply supply the equivalent weight in grams or kilograms and let the customer know that's what you're doing.