

Preparing for the New Vegan Trademark Design: FAQs for Clients

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1. Why is the trademark design changing?

We acknowledge that many businesses and consumers recognise and value the current trademark design. Its success demonstrates that over the past 30 years, The Vegan Society has established a clear and credible understanding of what “vegan” means in the marketplace.

The market has changed considerably during that time. Vegan products now reach broader and more diverse audiences, and the trademark is used by an expanding range of businesses across product categories and territories. This recognition creates an opportunity to build on the trademark’s strong foundations.

The update comes ahead of the implementation of the EU’s Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition Directive, commonly referred to as EmpCo, which introduces new requirements relating to consumer-facing environmental and sustainability claims, including the use of third-party certification schemes, for traders who sell in the EU.

The change will help ensure that the trademark remains distinctive, credible and effective for the future. It will continue to support businesses in communicating vegan certification clearly and confidently, while helping consumers continue to identify products that meet the relevant standards. In addition, the updated mark will be better positioned to operate within evolving requirements governing vegan and related environmental claims.

The underlying purpose and meaning of the trademark will remain unchanged: to provide consumers with trusted assurance and to give businesses a recognised and reliable way to demonstrate certification.

Further information about the reasons for the change, the implications of EmpCo, the transition timeline and the support available to current licensees will be provided through our official guidance and support materials.

2. When do I need to change my packaging?

We recommend transitioning to the new trademark at your earliest practical convenience, with all future print runs using the new artwork once it has been made available.

Updated artwork and usage guidelines will be provided to help businesses plan packaging changes and minimise unnecessary waste or disruption. In line with the licence agreement, licensees will have 6 months to implement the new design.

If you are preparing or commissioning a print run before the new trademark and guidance are released, you may continue to use the current trademark, subject to your existing licence agreement. However, you should carry out your own assessment of the relevant legislative requirements for your products and markets before proceeding. The decision to continue using the current trademark during this period rests with your business; the Trademark team cannot make that decision or provide assurance on legislative compliance on your behalf.

Specific provisions may apply to the run-through of packaging stock in the EU for EmpCo. For further information on the EU position, please refer to: Common understanding on old stock situations under [Directive \(EU\) 2024/825 on Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition](#).

3. Will I be penalised or legally liable if I continue using the old mark?

The licence agreement contains provisions giving The Vegan Society the right to change the trademark design, including the applicable notice period and requirements for implementing that change. Use of the old artwork during an agreed transition or stock run-through period will be managed in accordance with those provisions. We will not penalise licensees for use that remains within the terms of their licence agreement.

Once the permitted transition period has ended, continued use of the old artwork may fall outside the terms of the licence agreement and could be addressed under our Trademark Misuse Policy: www.vegansociety.com/vegan-trademark-misuse-policy. We encourage any business that anticipates difficulty meeting the transition requirements to contact their account manager as early as possible so that its circumstances can be reviewed.

For information concerning stock already placed on, or intended for, the EU market, please refer to Common understanding on old stock situations under [Directive \(EU\) 2024/825 on Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition](#).

4. Will there be support with wasted packaging, printing costs or compensation?

We understand that changing packaging can result in additional costs, particularly where packaging has already been printed or a business has only recently completed certification.

Businesses should plan their transition carefully and make their own commercial and regulatory assessment about whether and for how long existing packaging can continue to be used in each market.

Printing costs, packaging write-offs, refunds, renewal discounts or other forms of compensation are not available. Any concerns raised in meeting transition requirements will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

If you have recently printed packaging, recently completed certification or hold significant existing stock, please contact your account manager as soon as possible. Please provide details of:

- when the packaging was ordered and printed;
- the quantity and value of the remaining stock;
- the products and territories concerned; and
- your planned production and stock run-through dates.

We will review the circumstances against the licence agreement, and the relevant internal policies. Businesses should not incur further costs or dispose of existing stock on the assumption that those costs will be reimbursed.

5. How does this align with sustainability?

We recognise the sustainability concerns around replacing packaging, especially for brands with long product lifecycles or large volumes of printed stock. Our aim is to protect trademark integrity while also being as practical and proportionate as possible.

Where brands have sustainability concerns, long-life packaging, slow-moving stock or complex distribution arrangements, we encourage early contact as outlined in question 4, so that the most appropriate route can be considered.

6. Why are there two versions of the mark on the market?

During a transition period, consumers may see more than one version of the trademark in market. This can happen because products are produced, distributed and sold across different timelines and territories.

The presence of an older version does not automatically mean misuse, but any concerns about incorrect or unauthorised use should be reported through the

appropriate reporting channel: <https://www.vegansociety.com/trademark/report-trademark-logo-misuse>

Our primary focus for the first phase is to make the new trademark accessible for use in as many territories globally as possible, as quickly as practicable. Following the initial rollout, we will consider further phases, including whether territory-specific versions of the trademark are needed. Details of any additional versions and their implementation timelines will be communicated through our official guidance and support materials.

7. How does this affect international markets and exports?

Brands exporting products or importing products from other markets should check the guidance for the territories in which the product is sold.

8. What should I do if I see misuse or old labels?

If you believe the trademark is being used incorrectly, without authorisation, or in a way that may mislead consumers, please report it through the official reporting route: <https://www.vegansociety.com/trademark/report-trademark-logo-misuse>. Include as much detail as possible, such as the product name, brand, market/retailer, country, photographs of the packaging, and where the product was seen.

Seeing an older version of the mark during a transition period may not automatically be misuse, so each report will be reviewed in context.

9. Why do self-made vegan-style logos or botanical/leaf designs still appear on products?

Organisations may take different approaches to managing the upcoming legislative requirements.

Following careful assessment, The Vegan Society has adopted an approach designed to protect consumer confidence, support our licensees and ensure that our certified trademark remains credible and accessible across different territories. This is why we are introducing changes to our trademark and requiring licensees to follow the transition arrangements set out in their licence agreements and updated guidance.

Other labels, including self-declarations and marks operated by other certification bodies, may have alternative approaches.

The continued presence of other vegan-style logos, leaves or botanical imagery on the market does not remove a licensee's responsibility to comply with:

- the terms of our licence agreement and transition arrangements;
- the laws and regulatory requirements applying in each relevant territory; and
- the requirement for all claims to be accurate, clear, substantiated and not misleading.

The Vegan Society's role is to manage the use of our own trademark in accordance with our standards and licence terms. We do not regulate or approve self-declared claims or trademarks belonging to other organisations. Any business choosing to create or use its own vegan-style mark must undertake its own legal and regulatory assessment and accept responsibility for the associated risks.

10. Are "plant-based", "vegan", "cruelty free" or "not tested on animals" claims affected?

Our guidance will explain the approach we are taking to our own trademark. It should not be interpreted as confirming whether alternative wording, imagery or self-declared marks comply with the applicable requirements.

11. Have the Vegan Trademark standards or certification process changed?

The Vegan Trademark's underlying standards and definition of veganism are not changing as part of this process. Products will continue to be assessed against the applicable certification standards.

We are introducing some changes to our processes to continue to protect the integrity and credibility of the trademark. These are primarily internal measures and are not expected to affect the client experience, account management arrangements or the overall way businesses work with us.

If you are already applying for certification, your application will continue to be managed as expected. We will contact you directly if any additional information or action is required.

The emerging legislation and guidance do not provide a definitive legal definition of veganism or explicitly resolve the different standards and interpretations used in the market.

Our updated usage guidance explains how our approach applies to use of the Vegan Trademark.

12. I already have certification or another mark — do I still need to change?

If you are licensed to use our trademark, its artwork must be updated in accordance with our guidance and the terms of your licence agreement.

Certification bodies may adopt different approaches to the upcoming legislation.

If your product carries more than one certification mark, you should review the guidance and licence terms for each scheme separately.

Our client relations and marketing teams can explain how the Vegan Trademark design update applies to your account and packaging but cannot advise on the requirements of another certification scheme.

13. Will consumers still recognise the mark?

Maintaining consumer trust and recognition is a key part of the transition. We plan to support the change with clear communications and resources so that consumers and partners understand what the updated trademark means.

Relevant assets and materials will be made available to help explain the change and support consistent messaging.

14. Can I use the new mark in any colour?

The new trademark design will continue to offer brands flexibility to use it in their preferred colour, provided it is applied in accordance with the usage guidance.

The guidance will provide further detail on approved applications, including colour, contrast, sizing, placement, clear space and legibility. It will also include recommendations and highlight potential colour use risks arising from the changing legislative landscape.

The official trademark artwork and updated usage guidance will be provided as part of the rollout.

15. Does the above constitute legal advice?

This information relates to the Vegan Trademark and should not be treated as legal advice or as confirmation of how the EmpCo legislation should be interpreted. Businesses and certification bodies remain responsible for assessing their own compliance, including the claims, language and marks they use.

Licensees are responsible for assessing whether existing packaging and stock comply with the laws and regulatory requirements applied in each territory where their products are supplied. The licence agreement's transition provisions do not provide an assurance of legal or regulatory compliance, and we cannot make that assessment on a business's behalf.

Before changing, replacing or removing a claim, businesses should undertake their own regulatory and legal assessment and obtain independent advice where appropriate. They should also consider any implications for their marketing and consumer understanding.