

Cannabis GTIN Management Standard Rules Clarification Guide

Version 1



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1.0 Prerequisite

This document has been developed based on the [GS1 GTIN Management Standard](#) and its purpose is to provide information regarding the two [GTIN Management Rules](#) that the Cannabis community is implementing differently.

Readers need to understand what a Global Trade Item Number (GTIN) is and how it is constructed. Additionally having a general understanding of GS1 GTIN Management Standard helps the users with reviewing this document. Therefore, it is recommended that before reviewing this document, familiarize yourself with [GS1 Canada GTIN page](#) and [GS1 GTIN Management Standard](#) to learn about GTINs and how they are managed.

2.0 GTIN Management - Introduction

The GS1 GTIN Management Standard is designed to help industries make consistent decisions about the unique identification of trade items in the global supply chain. This standard has been developed in accordance with the GS1 Global Standards Management Process (GSMP) and is considered a part of the GS1 system of standards. For additional information review [GS1 GTIN Management Standard](#).

This Cannabis guide is built based on the GS1 GTIN Management Standard and is created to support the Canadian cannabis community with identification of Cannabis products using GS1 Standards.

2.1 Guiding principles/Business objectives of changing a GTIN

The GTIN Management Standard provides a global industry standard to create practical business and consumer value, specifically when pre-defined information *changes* on an existing product or when a *new* product is introduced to the supply chain for the first time.

The following guiding principles should be considered by any brand owner when introducing changes to an existing product and when developing a GTIN assignment strategy for a new product.



Is a consumer and/or trading partner expected to distinguish the changed or new product from previous/current products?



Is there a regulatory/liability disclosure requirement to the consumer and/or trading partner?



Is there a substantial impact to the supply chain (e.g., how the product is shipped, stored, received)?

At least one of the guiding principles must apply for a GTIN change to be required.

2.2 GS1 standards and legal/regulatory compliance

The GTIN Management Standard represents minimum requirements. Please be advised that all Canadian legal and regulatory requirements supersede the GTIN Management Standard.

2.3 GTIN Management Standard and brand owner discretion

The GTIN Management Standard shares minimum requirements to change a GTIN. Brand owners may change the GTIN as often as they think is appropriate based on their needs, their customers and/or their trading partner needs.

3.0 GS1 GTIN Management Rules List

This is a list of the 10 GTIN Management Rules currently used globally and nationally:

1. [New product introduction](#)
2. [Declared formulation or functionality](#)
3. [Declared net content](#)
4. [Dimensional or gross weight change](#)
5. [Add or remove certification mark](#)
6. [Primary brand](#)
7. [Time critical or promotional product](#)
8. [Pack/case quantity](#)
9. [Predefined assortment](#)
10. [Price on pack](#)

Rules 2 & 4 are implemented differently in the cannabis sector and currently they are under cannabis community discussion. The following sections contain information about these two rules.

3.1 GTIN Management Rules 2 & 4

This document provides specific information regarding rules 2 and 4 of the GTIN Management Standards as the Canadian Cannabis community is implementing differently. To review the full list of 10 GS1 GTIN Management Rules see the [GS1 GTIN Management Standard](#).

3.2 Rule #2: Declared formulation or functionality

3.2.1 GS1 GTIN Management Standard Rule Definition

“**Functionality**” is defined as the particular use or set of uses for which something is designed.

“**Formulation**” is defined as a list of the ingredients or components used to create a trade item.

A change to the formulation **or** functionality that affects the legally required declaration (printed on the product package); **and** where the brand owner expects the consumer or trading partner to distinguish the difference, requires a new GTIN. Both conditions (the “formulation or functionality” and the “brand owner expectation”) must be met to require the assignment of a new GTIN.

Example:

Current Formulation



New Formulation



3.2.2 Canadian Cannabis community position

Applicable Categories

The Canadian Cannabis community will follow the **Declared formulation or functionality** rule for the following cannabis product categories:

- Extracts (ingestible & inhalable)
- Topicals,
- Edibles,

- Beverages and
- Accessories

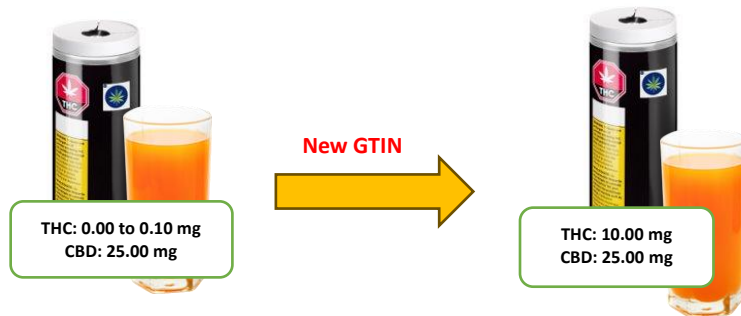
Not Applicable

Declared Formulation or Functionality Rule will not apply to the two categories below:

- Seeds
- Dried Cannabis

Examples:






The change in THC amount in a beverage as shown below requires a new GTIN.



3.2.2.1 Hierarchy level of GTIN change

For the product categories that you are assigning a new GTIN

- The GTIN change must occur at the retail consumer trade item or base unit level.
- A unique GTIN is assigned at every existing level of the packaging hierarchy above the retail consumer trade item or base unit level.

Guiding Principles			Impact Level	
 Consumer	 Regulatory	 Supply Chain	 Item Level	 Higher Packaging Levels
✓	✓	✓	New GTIN	New GTIN

3.2.2.2 Additional information

- Functionality references the changes to content (e.g., concentrated, added features), not changes to the packaging.

- Minor changes to functionality are those which are not perceptible to the consumer.
- New GTIN assignment is NOT required when declaring existing functionality that was previously present, but not declared on the package, and is now being marketed on new packaging.
- Local, national, or regional regulations may require more frequent GTIN changes. These regulations have precedence over the rules provided within the GTIN Management Standard.

3.3 Rule #4: Dimensional or gross weight change

3.3.1 GS1 GTIN Management Standard Rule Definition

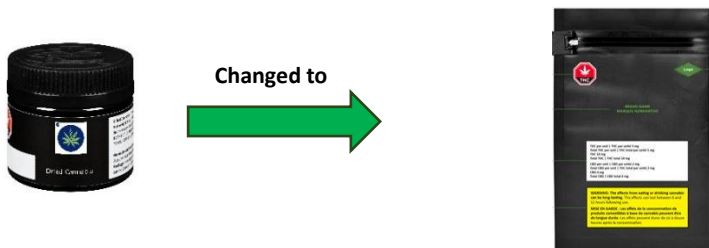
A change to a physical dimension, on any axis, or gross weight over 20%, requires assignment of a new GTIN.



3.3.2 Canadian Cannabis community position

Canadian Cannabis community does not follow this rule currently as this sector is relatively new and the product packaging is changing constantly due to the nature of the products and the impact of the 2020-2022 pandemic that resulted in loss of business for some packaging suppliers resulting in extensive changes in the cannabis product packaging.






Example of packaging changes:



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Guiding Principles			Impact Level	
 Consumer	 Regulatory	 Supply Chain	 Item Level	 Higher Packaging Levels
✓	✗	✓	New GTIN	New GTIN

Note:

The Cannabis Community will review these rules every year as part of the GS1 Canada Cannabis Work Group *Agenda* to plan following these rules in the future.

4.0 Questions?

For additional information relating to the GTIN Management Standard contact info@gs1ca.org.