

## Universal Product Code (UPC) Bar Coding

You may wish to include a UPC bar code as part of your label. UPC labeling is not a regulatory requirement. However, if you wish to sell your products through a retail outlet such as a grocery store, they may require your product to have a UPC code.

UPC labeling looks like a series of black and white, vertical lines with various spacing in-between each line. A series of numbers is also associated with the bar code. The bar code is designed so that it may be scanned (at a grocery store, for example) and the product code is identified. Each product has its own, unique bar code. By scanning a bar code, a computer can display the information about the item scanned such as the manufacturer, the product name, the product size, and the product price.

If you choose to use a barcode, you will need a different barcode for each product type you have, as well as for each container size. For example: if you are selling salted almonds and unsalted almonds, and packaging each in 6 oz., 12 oz., and 24 oz. containers, you would need to purchase 6 barcodes (6 oz. salted almonds, 12 oz. salted almonds, 24 oz. salted almonds, 6 oz. unsalted almonds, 12 oz. unsalted almonds, 24 oz. unsalted almonds).

If you wish to obtain UPC codes for your products, you must purchase them. You must contact the organization GS1 US (formally known as the Uniform Code Council, Inc.). You will need to sign up for membership with the organization, and the fill out an application to get a UPC for your product. Information on obtaining a barcode can be found on GS1's website, found here:

<http://www.gs1us.org/get-started/i-need-a-barcode>



*Close-up of a UPC bar code*