

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Commission Publishes Roadmap on the Upcoming Revision of Food Labeling Requirements

Country: European Union

Post: Brussels USEU

Report Category: Agriculture in the News

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Report Highlights:

On December 23, 2020, the European Commission published a roadmap outlining its intention to revise the Food Information to Consumers Regulation as part of its Farm to Fork Strategy. The revision will tackle front of pack nutrition labeling, nutrient profiles, origin labeling and date marking. Stakeholders can comment on the roadmap until February 3, 2021.

General Information:

On December 23, 2020, the European Commission published [a roadmap](#) laying down its intention to put forward a legislative proposal for a revision of [Regulation \(EU\) 1169/2011](#) on the provision of food information to consumers (FIC Regulation).

As part of the Farm to Fork Strategy (F2F), the Commission announced that it would take a number of actions to reduce the environmental and climate footprint of the EU food system and facilitate the shift to healthy and sustainable diets. This will be done through the revision of the FIC Regulation. These actions include:


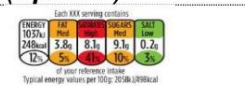


- An harmonized mandatory front-of-pack nutrition labelling;
- The setting of ‘nutrient profiles’ restricting the promotion (via nutrition and health claims) of foods that are high in fats, sugars and/or salt;
- The extension of mandatory origin or provenance indications to certain products;
- A revision of the EU rules on date marking (‘use by’ and ‘best before’).

With this roadmap, the Commission said that it will prepare an impact assessment in 2021. The impact assessment will assess and compare the potential impacts of the different policy options described in the roadmap. A legislative proposal is foreseen for the fourth quarter of 2022

A harmonized mandatory front-of-pack nutrition labelling and nutrient profiles

For the Commission, the objective of establishing harmonized mandatory front-of-pack nutrition labelling is to “improve consumers’ understanding of the nutritional value of foods when purchasing them”. Similarly, the setting of nutrient profiles aims to “avoid a situation where nutrition and health claims would mask the overall nutritional status of a food, which could mislead consumers when trying to make healthy choices.” Considering the interplay between the two initiatives, the Commission plans to develop “in a coherent manner” harmonized front-of-pack nutrition labelling and the setting of nutrient profiles.

In its impact assessment, the Commission will look at the four types of front-of-pack labels currently in use or development in the EU. The options will cover pre-packed foods that are required to bear a nutrition declaration under the FIC Regulation¹. The possibility to apply specific conditions to certain categories of food, such as products bearing geographical indications for example, will also be explored.

<i>Nutrient-specific labels - examples</i>		<i>Summary labels - examples</i>	
Numerical (Option 1)	Colour-coded (Option 2)	Endorsement logos (Option 3)	Graded indicators (Option 4)
			

Source: European Commission

¹ For more information about the current nutrition declaration requirements, please see the [2020 EU FAIRS Report](#).

The extension of mandatory origin or provenance indications to certain products

In the roadmap, the Commission acknowledged that there is a growing demand from consumers to know the origin of their foods and to extend this mandatory origin indication to new categories of food². For the Commission, the extension of mandatory indication of origin labelling could have positive environmental effects as long as regional/local shopping by consumers would be substituting less efficient longer supply chains.

The Commission has identified foods for which consumers have particular interest to know where they are coming from:

- milk and milk used as an ingredient
- meat used as an ingredient
- rabbit and game meat
- rice
- durum wheat used in pasta
- potatoes
- tomato used in certain tomato products.

The impact of the extension of mandatory origin labelling to the aforementioned foods will be assessed individually when justified based on the specificities of the sector in the impact assessment. The impact assessment will also look at the modalities for determining the country of origin or place of provenance of foods/food ingredients in question (e.g. for milk: place of milking/packaging/processing).

A revision of the EU rules on date marking

In the roadmap, the Commission also noted that consumers often misunderstand and misuse date marking. This contributes to the 20 percent of food that Europeans waste annually. A [Commission study](#) on date marking published in 2018 concluded that up to 10 percent of all food waste generated in the EU could be linked to date marking. With the revision of the EU rules on date marking, the Commission wants to prevent consumers from unnecessarily discarding foods past their ‘best before’ date by tackling the misunderstanding and misuse of date marking (the ‘use by’ and ‘best before’ dates).

In its impact assessment, the Commission will look at different options such as a revision of the rules of application of the ‘best before’ date, the abolishment of the concept of ‘best before’ date and an improvement of the expression and presentation of date marking through a new layout, format or wording.

² Currently, origin labeling is already mandatory in the EU for honey, fruits and vegetables, olive oil, fishery and aquaculture products as well as fresh, chilled and frozen beef, pork, sheep and goat meat and poultry.

Feedback period

On December 23, 2020, the European Commission launched a feedback period on the roadmap. Even though the roadmap concerns all three initiatives, there are two separate feedback forms:

1. One on the revision of rules on information provided to consumers: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12749-Revision-of-food-information-to-consumers->
2. Another on the establishment of nutrient profiles: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12748-Setting-of-nutrient-profiles->

Feedback will be taken into account while the Commission is finalizing this initiative.

Deadline for input is 12:00 am Brussels Time (Universal Time Coordinated + 01:00) on February 3, 2021.

Please note that all comments made in the framework of the consultation may be published.

More Information:

- GAIN Report: [Food Labeling Initiatives in the EU Farm to Fork Strategy](#)

Attachments:

No Attachments.