

Feedback from: Anonymous

Feedback reference

F1574225

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User type

Non-governmental organisation (NGO)

Organisation

Institute of Food Science and Technology

Organisation size

Small (10 to 49 employees)

Country of origin

United Kingdom

Initiative

[Food labelling - revision of rules on information provided to consumers \(/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12749-Food-labelling-revision-of-rules-on-information-provided-to-consumers\)](/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12749-Food-labelling-revision-of-rules-on-information-provided-to-consumers)

The Institute of Food Science & Technology (IFST) is the leading qualifying body for food professionals in Europe and the only professional body in the UK concerned with all aspects of food science and technology. Our membership comprises individuals from a wide range of backgrounds, from students to experts, working across all aspects of food science and technology, and from academia through to enforcement.

Effective provision of food information is key to support wise consumer food choices supporting public and planetary health.

Front of pack nutrition labelling - The provision of clear and easy to understand food nutrition labelling on pack or at point of sale can positively assist wise food choices by making the nutritional composition of food products transparent for consumers. We would strongly support consistency in presentation and format across all products and across the food system markets to aid understanding and facilitate implementation. Nutrition labelling aims to reflect metabolically relevant levels of various macro and micro nutrients to support healthy diet choices by consumers. It can be particularly useful when comparing similar types of products with each other or selecting a products for the first time. Front of pack nutrition labelling systems only flag up individual macro nutrients. Although summary front of pack nutrition labels can be helpful in highlighting high sugar, salt and fat levels it does not give an indication of the overall nutritional value of a food. However, front of pack nutrition labelling can assist consumers to make choices more easily and quickly at point of sale. The principle of colours appears to be well understood by the consumer and is similar to that used in other consumer good schemes such as energy efficiency ratings. Endorsement logos applied only to foods that comply with nutritional criteria and summary labels are likely to further confuse and again do not give an indication of the overall nutritional value of the food in a healthy balanced diet. Nutrition labelling using negative warnings which identify 'unhealthy foods' standalone without details on the breakdown of nutrient specific information or display reference intakes is not considered helpful in advising balanced diet decision making. This approach could weaken the principal message that it is overall diet that impacts health, rather than individual foods. This approach also doesn't take into account that there are appropriate ways/times to be eating high fat, high sugar foods as part as a balanced diet.

Date marking - Proper understanding of durability date labels and following recommended storage conditions help consumers ensure that food products do not present a safety hazard and are enjoyed at their best quality. This information also allows consumers make better decisions to reduce food waste. Clear unambiguous terms applied consistently across food products, coupled with consumer education to look for and properly understand their meaning is needed to support the correct interpretation and use of durability date labels. Use of a range of additional terms may confuse consumers. Consideration of the expression of durability dates and their application by consumers should also consider the accompanying storage instruction information provided for food products to consumers. Even though date labels provide key information to consumers, storage conditions must also be followed because failure to do so may shorten the shelf life of food products and lead to increased food waste.

Consumer food education - Providing education on diet and healthy eating patterns, as well as on food hygiene, safe food preparation and storage in the home, and on food labels as a source of guidance on food safety and nutrition are all important to support full and appropriate application of food information provided to consumers.

We would appreciate being informed of the consultation outcomes.

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All feedback

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