



The European Consumers' Organisation

COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE
PRESS RELEASE

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Food labelling: another missed opportunity for healthier choices

European consumers and public health in general were dealt a severe blow today when MEPs voted not to proceed with establishing a European wide colour coding system for food labelling. European consumer groups, based on extensive research, had sought to amend the European Commission's proposals on Food & Indication of Ingredients in Foodstuffs, to establish as mandatory a system whereby 4 key nutrients (fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt) would be colour coded on the front of pack according to their levels, and on the back of pack a more comprehensive label where 8 nutrients would be listed, according to their levels. MEPs did at least vote to include mandatory country of origin labelling.

Monique Goyens, Director General of BEUC, the European Consumers' Organisation, commented:

"Research from across Europe has told us that consumers find colour coding the easiest and simplest way to make informed and healthy choices. When we clearly have an obesity epidemic spreading across Europe, and when consumers clearly want to make healthier choices about their diet, we really should give them the tools that work best and which they want.

"Today's vote in the European Parliament is hugely disappointing. MEPs have missed the opportunity to make healthy food more accessible. We fear that the fight against childhood obesity, in particular, has taken a serious blow today. Parents more than anyone are the people who don't have the time to check detailed and complex information currently found on many food products. All we ask is that we have a clear, transparent system in place where all shoppers can make at a glance comparisons between various foods."

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