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### **Future of food labelling at stake**

MEPs still have a chance to give consumers the means to make informed choices about which food products they buy during a crucial vote next week (16<sup>th</sup> June) in the plenary session of the European Parliament on a new regulation on food information to consumers.

Independent research shows that a system of colour-coding on the front of packs of processed food packaging which concisely displays whether the key nutrients of fat, saturated fats, sugars and salt - are high, medium or low with red, amber and green 'traffic lights', is best understood by consumers. For a more complete picture, the back of packs would detail a comprehensive list of 8 nutrient levels.

In contrast to just the %GDA system (Guideline Daily Amount) favoured by a large parts of the food industry, colour-coding offers quick, efficient and accurate information on what the food contains without having to make complex calculations of percentages.

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

"Independent research tells us that the colour-code labelling scheme, already used by some major supermarkets, is the system of labelling that shoppers find the most useful and easiest to understand. European consumers have a right to clear and easy to understand information on packaging as to what their food contains; this is a matter of transparency.

"Europeans want the tools to make healthy choices for a balanced diet, but few of us have time to analyse the details of contents when shopping, this is why we ask for a labelling system which allows us to make at-a-glance comparisons between various foods. At a time when 1 in 5 Europeans are obese, there should be no reason not to empower individuals to improve their diets if they so wish."

ENDS

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