



The European Consumers' Organisation

COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE
PRESS RELEASE

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Food Industry 1 – 0 Consumers

MEPs caved into pressure from the food industry today when plans to introduce a colour coding system for food labelling were rejected by almost 400 MEPs.

Independent research has clearly shown that consumers found the colour coding, or traffic light system, the simplest and most informative way to make healthier choices about the products they buy. The traffic light system has been endorsed by consumer organisations, public health organisations, doctors, and is already in use by some of Europe's major supermarkets. Despite this, MEPs, largely along political lines, decided against it and even refused Member States the possibility of introducing or maintaining nationally a colour coding system. Fortunately, MEPs maintained the labelling of nano products as well as the provision on nutrient profiles that regulates the labelling of health and nutrition claims on food packaging.

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

"Despite being presented with a wealth of independent research confirming that the vast majority of consumers wanted the colour coding system, MEPs have mystifyingly voted against it. One wonders how we are to convince lawmakers that the fight against obesity and the battle to improve public health needs to start with action today, not tomorrow. There is no doubt that today's vote is a very, very serious setback."

ENDS

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