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EU moves to ban dodgy health claims in Europe's food

EU Member States have given their support to the European Commission's draft Regulation on Article 13.1 health claims by adopting the positive list¹ of claims which can be used by the food industry in the EU². BEUC, the European Consumers' Organisation welcomes the agreement on the list of 222 claims as an important step towards consumers no longer being misled by claims used by manufacturers to market their foods.

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

"80% of the claims assessed were rejected as they were not scientifically proven. It's high time for misleading and unsubstantiated claims to be taken off the market and we look forward to this list coming into force in 2012. We now need to ensure that these claims do not appear on foods high in fat, salt and sugar."

ENDS

¹ Claims which could not be substantiated include:

- Green tea helps maintain normal blood pressure
- Royal jelly benefits the immune system and/or vitality
- Taurine (found in energy drinks), when combined with vitamins and minerals, boosts mental performance
- Glucosamine helps maintain joints

Approved claims include:

- Calcium is needed for the maintenance health of normal bones
- Reduced consumption of saturated fat contributes to the maintenance of normal cholesterol levels
- Reduced consumption of sodium contributes to the maintenance of normal blood pressure
- Melatonin helps reduce the time it takes to fall asleep
- Plant sterols and plant stanols (used in margarines and yoghurts) contribute to the maintenance of normal cholesterol levels

² The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) examined over 4,600 health claims in helping to prepare this list.

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 **EC register for interest representatives: identification number 9505781573-45** 