

04/06/20

## Press Release

### **European Farmers and agri-cooperatives voice their concerns regarding the introduction of mandatory front-of-pack nutrition labelling**

**Following the publication of the Farm to Fork Strategy, the European farming community welcomes any measure encouraging consumers to adopt a healthy diet. However, the community feels the need to express some serious concerns about the proposal of the mandatory front-of-pack nutrition (FOPNL) labelling outlined in the Strategy. Therefore, Copa and Cogeca have sent a letter to the European Commission underlining that any new type of nutrition labelling should truly help consumers in making healthy food choices and not mislead them, disrupt the market, discriminate against healthy products, or penalise products which are part of our cultural and culinary heritage.**

European farmers and agri-cooperatives believe that a colour-coded nutrition labelling system would end up presenting an over-simplistic classification of food products that stigmatises highly nutritious products which are praised for their nutritional value by nutritionists all over the world, such as olive oil. It also discriminates against many Geographical Indications (GIs) and Traditional Specialties Guaranteed (TSGs) products for which reformulation is not possible. Those products represent an economic value of more than 77,15 billion euros per year, and 7% of the total sales value of EU food and drink products.

“Any front-of-pack nutrition labelling should be science based and take into account the complexity of food products when establishing their overall nutritional contribution, and not be based exclusively on certain nutrients. By focusing solely on a very limited number of nutrients such as sugar, fat and salt or the energy intake, we end up setting aside nutritiously valuable food products such as honey and promoting unhealthy ones such as aspartame based diet soft drinks. Many of the products that could be damaged by such a simplistic approach to nutrition labelling are revered for their health benefits and are at the heart of traditional diets like the Mediterranean one. They contribute to food diversity, which is a cornerstone of any balanced diet. Painting them red won't help the consumers or the producers.” Pekka Pesonen, Copa and Cogeca Secretary General pointed out.

Finally, it is key to stress that FOPNL cannot alone guide consumers towards healthier eating habits. We need major nutritional education and awareness-raising campaigns starting at the earliest possible age. Moreover, a balanced diet should always be coupled with physical activity and a healthy overall life-style. A holistic, harmonised and science based approach is needed on this topic, not a simplistic one.

**-ENDS-**

For more information, you can download here the [full letter](#).

---

For further information, please contact:

**Bruno Menne**

Senior Policy advisor

bruno.menne@copa-cogeca.eu

**Ksenija Simovic**

Communications Officer

Mobile: + 32 2 287 27 07

ksenija.simovic@copa-cogeca.eu

---

**CDP(20)3851:1**

---