

Farm to Fork: EPHA submission on nutrient profiles

Brussels, 2 February 2021

The European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) has for long supported¹ the need to establish nutrient profiles under the Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation (Claims Regulation)² to remove the risk of consumers being misled by claims placed on products with poor nutritional quality.³

Nutrient profiles are key to fulfilling the purpose of the Claims Regulation and the European Commission was under a legal obligation to establish them already by 2009. Despite this obligation, ten years have now passed without them. After a REFIT evaluation of the Claims Regulation, the Commission concluded that: *“the setting of nutrient profiles is still pertinent and necessary to meet the objective of the Claims Regulation, which is a high level of consumer protection”*.⁴

In light of the parallel development of a front-of-pack (FOP) nutrition labelling scheme, it may indeed be worthwhile to consider streamlining the two processes in terms of the nutrient profile used. At the same time, **setting nutrient profiles for claims should not be made dependent on the political processes surrounding FOP labelling.**

Considering that nutrient profiles are crucial for the functioning of the Claims Regulation, EPHA believes that unless nutrient profiles are implemented within a reasonable time-frame to pass regulatory procedures, the ability to make health claims on food should be suspended until nutrient profiles reflecting a high level of health and consumer protection are adopted and implemented.

An EU wide nutrient profile should be proposed by an independent team of international health and nutrition experts based on existing work.⁵ This group should function in a similar way as suggested in EPHA’s submission on FOP labelling.⁶

¹ Joint Open Letter (2017) Call for EU-wide nutrient profiles for nutrition and health claims

² Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods

³ European Heart Network (2015) Good for you? Nutrient profiles and nutrition and health claims – a European Heart Network paper

⁴ European Commission (2020) Executive summary of the evaluation of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods with regard to nutrient profiles and health claims made on plants and their preparations and of the general regulatory framework for their use in foods. SWD(2020) 96 final

⁵ Rayner (2017) Nutrient profiling for regulatory purposes. *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*

⁶ EPHA (2021) Farm to Fork: EPHA submission on front-of-pack nutrition labelling