



The Consumer Voice in Europe

# Taking stock of national COOL trials: the consumer perspective

*Public Hearing on Labelling of Origin for  
Agricultural and Food Products*

European Parliament

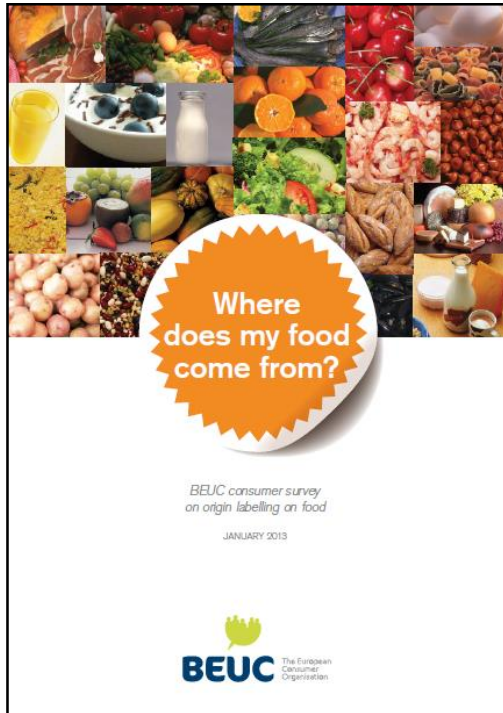
4<sup>th</sup> June 2018

# BEUC in a nutshell ...

- The European Consumer Organisation
- 43 member organisations (EU + EEA)
- Mission = promote consumer interests in EU decision making

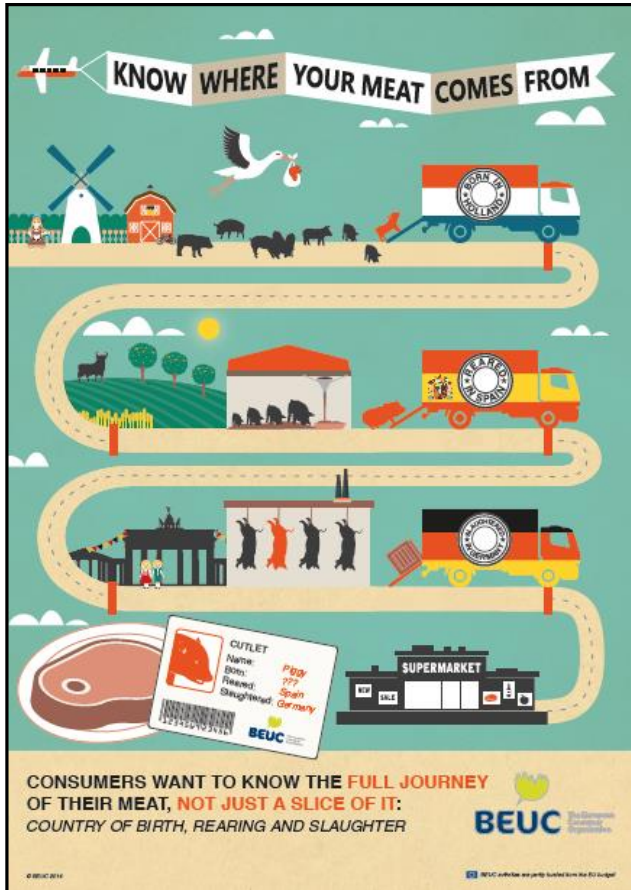


# Key findings from BEUC origin labelling survey (2012)



- **70% of consumers** say origin is important to them when buying food
- Interest in origin is **strongest for meat (90%)**, fish, fresh F&V and **milk & dairy products (80%)**
- Consumers want to know **the country** (if not the region) their food comes from
- Current labels are confusing to some consumers ... and do not necessarily tell them what they want to know (i.e. **country of farming + processing**)

# BEUC campaign 'Where is my meat from?'



# The French COOL decree

- **Meat** used (**>8%**) in processed foods, **milk**, and **milk** used (**>50%**) in dairy products (incl. yoghurt, butter, cheese, cream ...)
- **For meat**: country(ies) of birth, rearing and slaughter **OR** 'EU', 'non EU' or 'EU/non EU'
- **For milk**: country(ies) of milking and packaging/processing **OR** 'EU', 'non EU' or 'EU/non EU'
- Mutual recognition clause
- Temporary measure (1 January 2017 - 31 December 2018) followed by evaluation report to be submitted to European Commission

# UFC – Que Choisir COOL surveys



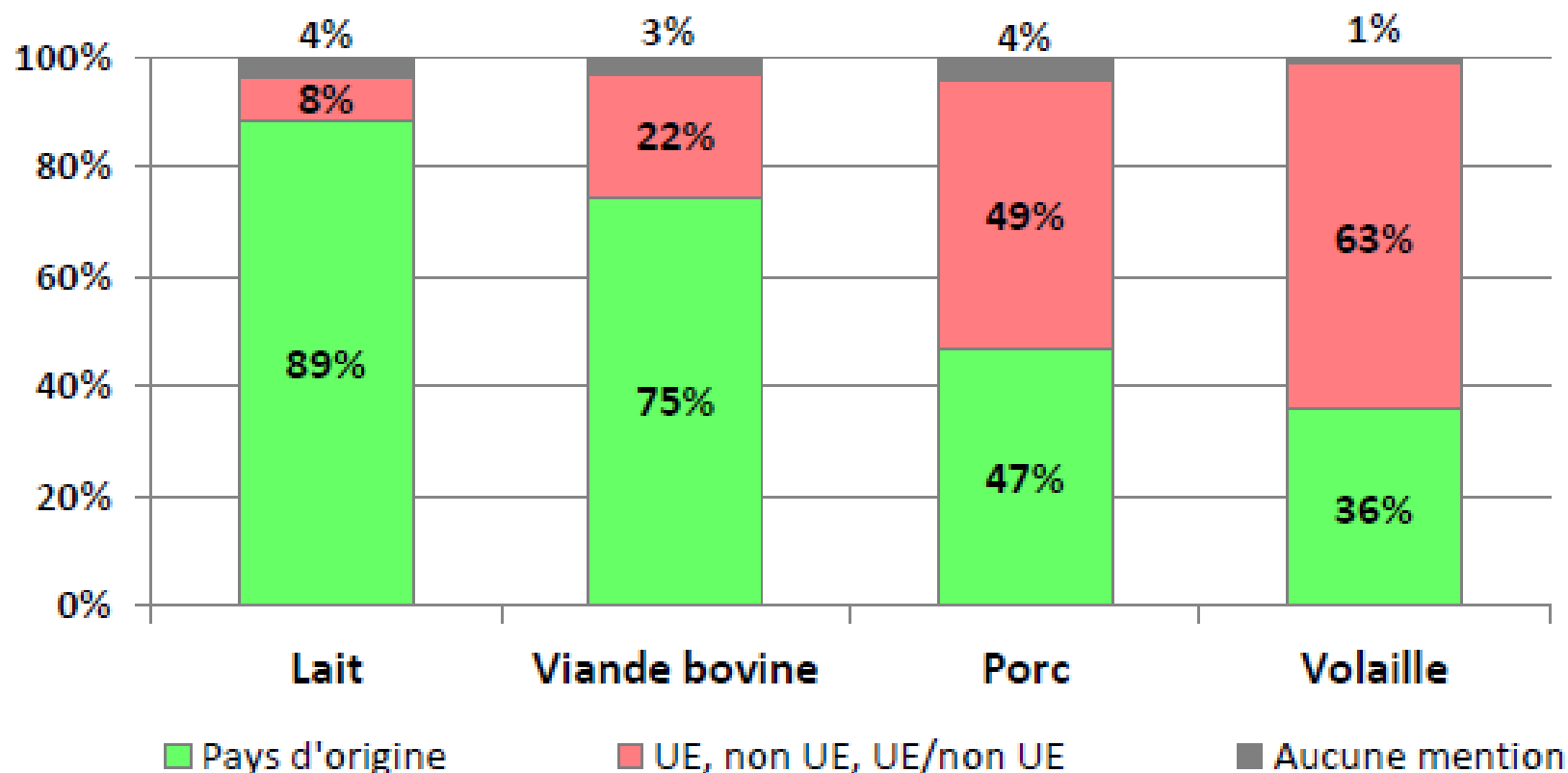
- First market check in 2016
  - ✓ Before adoption of French COOL measures
  - ✓ 244 processed foods containing meat
  - ✓ Meat products, sandwiches, nuggets, ready-meals (fresh and frozen), sauces, etc.
- Second market check in 2018
  - ✓ Mid-term of French COOL experiment
  - ✓ 269 products (53 dairy products, 216 processed foods containing meat)
  - ✓ as much as possible, tried to select products (containing meat) already surveyed in 2016 to allow comparison



# Origin declarations per ingredient types

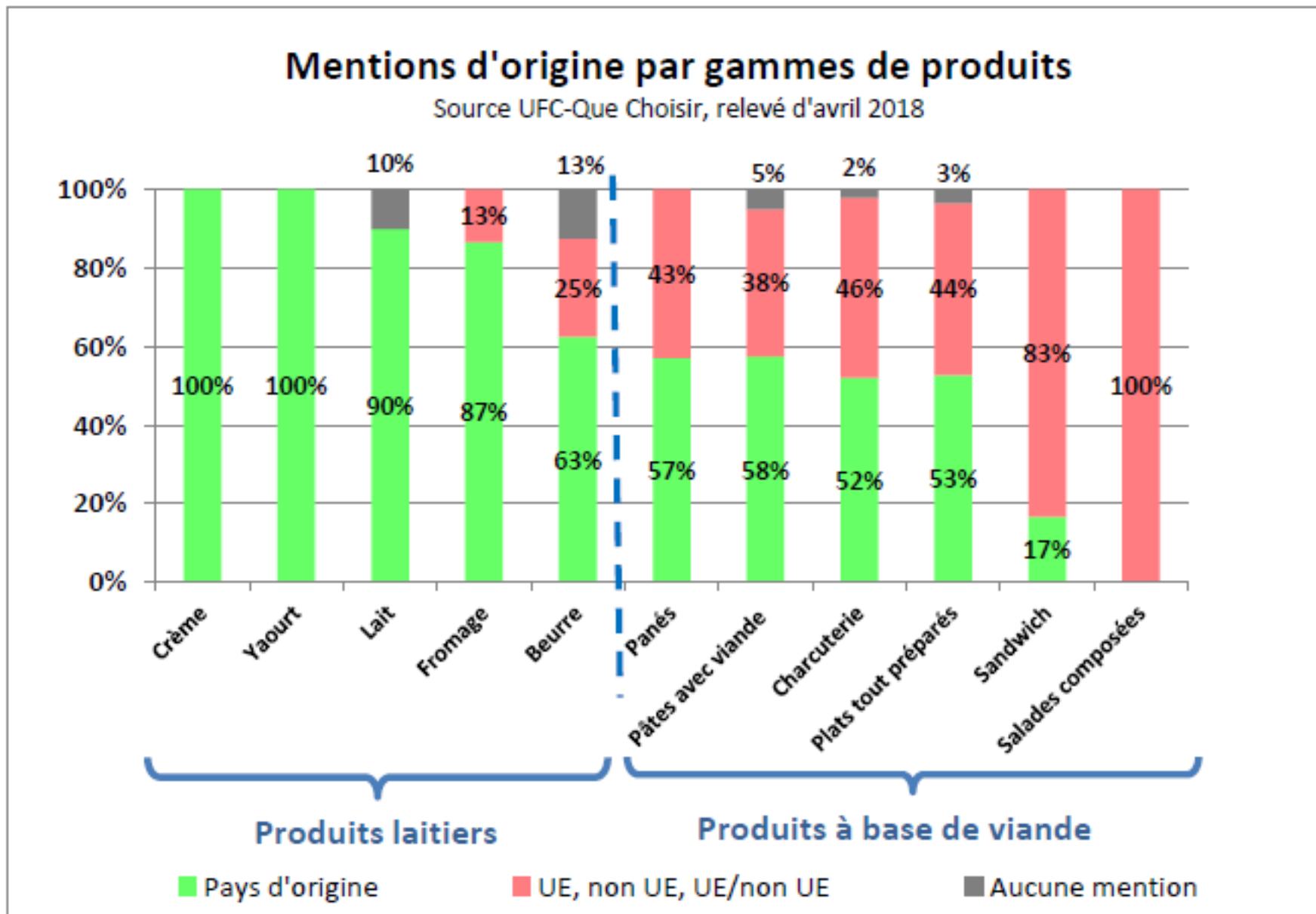
## Mentions d'origine selon le type d'ingrédient

Source UFC-Que Choisir, relevé d'avril 2018





# Origin declarations per food category types

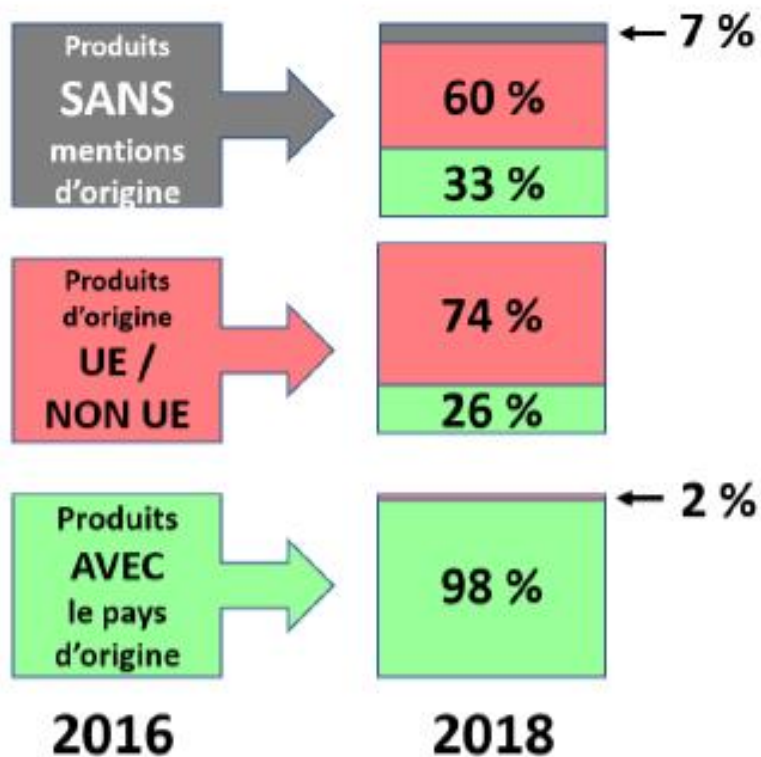




# Evolution in origin labelling for meat-based foods between 2016-2018

## Evolution des mention d'origine pour 127 références de produits à base de viande suivis entre 2016 et 2018

Source UFC-Que Choisir relevés de février 2016 et avril 2018



Mentions du pays d'origine



Origines UE, non UE, UE/non UE



Aucune mention d'origine

## Key learnings from French experiment

- **Significant and positive impact** of French origin labelling rules for **consumer information** and **transparency**:
  - ✓ **+25%** foods containing meat labelled with specific **country** of origin (compared to 2016)
- Level of transparency on origin seems **influenced more by company/retailer policy** than product category or genuine technical constraints.
- Origin information much more prominently displayed where it can serve a marketing purpose.

# BEUC recommendations

- Consumer demand for origin labelling of meat and milk **remains high** across the EU
- Art. 26(3) of Food Information to Consumers Regulation (primary ingredient) does not compensate for absence of **mandatory COOL**
- The time is ripe for **EU-wide measures on mandatory COOL for drinking milk, milk in dairy products and meat in processed foods**

*Thank you for your attention!*

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