

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2300/09
by Dorette Corbey (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Nutrient profiles

Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006¹ on nutrition and health claims on foods is supposed to apply to any food or drink product on sale in the EU. Its aim is to prevent consumers from being misled by unsubstantiated, exaggerated or untruthful claims about foods. When the Regulation came into force, the Commission said that the legislation would allow consumers to rely on clearer, more accurate information on food labels and would also enable them to be properly informed on the food they choose.

The use of these health and nutrition claims is dependent on nutrient profiles. Foods that do not fit the set nutrient profile, that is, foods that are unhealthy, are not allowed to bear a claim. On the basis of Regulation 1924/2006 these nutrient profiles are currently being developed by the Commission. The initial draft proposal is being drastically watered down with a number of exemptions, mainly concerning traditional and single-ingredient products.

The aim of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 is to prevent the use of misleading or false claims on foods. Yet exempting food products which are high in fat, salt or sugar from nutrient profiling (or setting higher thresholds for specific products) would defeat the whole purpose of the Regulation.

1. Can the Commission explain why it intends to exempt certain foods and certain food categories from nutrient profiling?
2. Traditional foods may be unhealthy, but nutrient profiling does not prevent traditional products being put on the market. Why does the Commission see the need to exempt traditional and/or unprocessed foods and why should these products be allowed to bear a claim that misleads consumers about the health impact of the product?
3. Is it still possible to achieve the aim of the Regulation if exemptions are created to nutrient profiling?

¹ OJ L 404, 30.12.2006, p. 9.