

## Consultation Information Note

**Topic:** Proposal for a new regulation on the provision of food information to consumers.

**Start date of consultation:** Thursday, 3rd July 2008

**Closing date of consultation:** Friday, 19th September 2008

### Consultation details:

At the end of January, the European Commission adopted a proposal for a draft regulation on the provision of food information to consumers. This proposal marks the first step in a process to negotiate new regulations to replace the current rules on the labelling of food. The proposal provides for simplification of the existing legislation. It applies to all stages of the food chain, where the activities of food businesses concern the provision of food information to consumers.

At present, the general labelling requirements of prepackaged food on sale in the EU are set down in Directive 2000/13/EC. The majority of the provisions laid down in that Directive date back to 1978 and the Directive has been amended a number of times in recent years and therefore needs to be updated. While the original introduction of this piece of legislation was to provide rules for the labelling of foods as a tool to free circulation of food in the Community, over time the protection of consumers' rights has emerged as a specific objective of European Community law.

There is now great public interest in the relationship between diet and health in the choice of an appropriate diet to suit individual needs and labelling contributes to consumers' ability to choose between food products. Nutrition labelling of foodstuffs is currently regulated by a different piece of legislation – Directive 90/496/EEC. Nutrition information on a food label is not a legal requirement at present except in the case of a nutrition claim being made on a food label. However, where nutrition information is provided voluntarily or as a result of a claim, the legislation and format in which to declare the information must be complied with.

The new proposed Regulation aims to consolidate and update both the general labelling and nutrition labelling legislation. It aims to simplify the existing rules and to protect consumers' interests by providing accurate, necessary information required to enable them to make informed choices about the food they purchase.

The FSAI invites you to submit your comments on any aspect of the proposed Regulation.

Responses should be submitted by 5pm on Friday 19th September 2008 to:

[consultation@fsai.ie](mailto:consultation@fsai.ie)

### Or via post to:

Consultations, Food Safety Authority, Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1

**Or fax to:** +353 (0)1 817 1301