

Consumer information

As responsible businesses ESA members support the accurate labelling of all foods to help provide consumers with information on a wide variety of issues including ingredient composition, nutritional value, portion sizes and storage conditions.

Regulation (EU) 1169/2011, which came into effect on 13 December 2014, consolidated and updated the existing European food labelling legislation into a single text and also introduced a number of new requirements. These new requirements include:

- a minimum font size for mandatory information
- mandatory back-of-pack nutrition labelling(*)
- a clearer indication of allergens in the ingredient list
- indication of the vegetable origin for vegetable oil

*For those businesses, who have yet to introduce nutrition labelling on their products, the obligation to provide mandatory back-of-pack nutrition labelling will apply from **13 December 2016**.

Allergen labelling

The new regulation includes a list of allergens which have been transferred over from the previous European Directive. However, the new law also introduced a change in terms of how to label allergens in food products.

From 13 December 2014 there is a requirement to highlight each allergenic ingredient or processing aid in the ingredients list.

The Regulation also commits the European Commission to establish rules on voluntary precautionary allergen labelling, however it does not specify any legal deadline for this work.

Anticipating the Commission's work on the rules with regard to voluntary precautionary allergen labelling, ESA has prepared a position paper which can be found at <http://www.esasnacks.eu/food-labelling.php>

Origin labelling

The new labelling Regulation also extends the provisions for mandatory country of origin labelling (MCOOL) for fresh meats. Mandated to further investigate opportunities to extend MCOOL for "meat used as an ingredient in processed foods" and "unprocessed, single ingredient products & ingredients representing more than 50% of a food", the European Commission concluded in 2015 that **voluntary origin labelling** appears as the most **suitable option**.

As a sector ESA fully supports the principle that misleading statements of origin must not be made by manufacturers. However, the sector was concerned that MCOOL could cover products such as crisps, nuts and savoury snacks as it would have been highly burdensome for industry and would

have led to greatly increased costs with little benefit to improving consumer information and absolutely no impact upon food safety.

The possibility to voluntarily label the origin is the preferred approach in comparison to mandatory information on-pack, since this would allow food business operators to analyse consumers' interests and expectations concerning different sectors and different products .