

UK Front of Pack Nutritional Labelling: The Journey So Far

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Introduction

This note seeks to share with you something of the UK's experience of front of pack nutritional signpost labelling. It briefly outlines:

1. the basis of the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) front of pack nutritional signpost labelling recommendations,
2. what has happened in the marketplace since then and;
3. what is happening to independently evaluate the impact of signpost labelling in the UK.

The purpose of front of pack nutritional labelling

Our research has found that many consumers find current nutrition labelling provided on the back of product packaging too confusing to use, even though they want to eat a healthy balanced diet. This is particularly important where people lead busy lives and have found convenience foods an attractive alternative to cooking from scratch. Shoppers do not want to be confronted with complicated information which takes time to analyse and use. Instead they want simplified nutritional information which they can find easily and use quickly.

The role of clear labelling was recognised by the UK Government in the “Choosing Health” White Paper in 2004 and the FSA was charged with developing a front-of-pack food labelling approach that would meet two key objectives:

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