



The Global Language of Business

Information Package

# New EU Regulation on Food Primary Ingredient



This information package has been developed to inform GS1 stakeholders on a new European regulation with potential impact on the GS1 community. For more information please contact our Public Policy Director for Europe, [Francesca Poggiali](#) .

## EU Regulation on the country of origin of the primary ingredient of food

The Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/775 of 28 May 2018 **on the rules for indicating the country of origin or place of provenance of the primary ingredient of a food** relates to the implementation of art 26.3 of the **Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers**.

Article 26.3 of **Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011** deals with primary ingredient labelling and called on the European Commission to come up with implementing measures under the so-called examination procedure used for implementing acts.

The new regulation seeks to provide EU citizens and consumers with information about the origin of food sold on the EU market and to ensure a high level of transparency. Basically, where the country of origin or the place of provenance of a food is given and where it is not the same as that of its primary ingredient, the country of origin or place of provenance of the primary ingredient in question shall also be given or indicated as being different to that of the food. For example, when a pasta producer indicates that pasta is 'Italian pasta', it will be mandatory to indicate the origin of the primary ingredient - in this case wheat - if that crop has not been grown in Italy.

The new rule also describes how the information should be displayed.

The regulation will be binding from 1st April 2020 and does not apply to geographical indications nor registered trademarks. Foods placed on the market or labelled prior to the date of application of this Regulation can remain on the market until the stocks are exhausted.

The European Commission has adopted new rules on labelling the origin of the primary ingredient in food which were endorsed by the Member States. The new regulation will ensure a high level of transparency, providing EU citizens with clear information about the origin of food sold on the EU market. Under the Regulation on food information to consumers, the origin of primary ingredient must be indicated if different from the origin of the food in order to not deceive consumers and to harmonise the presentation of such information. There will be a certain level of flexibility for food business operators in order to take into account the various methods of food processing. The legislation will apply from 1 April 2020.

More information: [Food Information to consumers - legislation](#)



## EurActiv article

“Food business operators can still choose whether to label the origin of the food or not. In case they choose to specify the country of the food it will become mandatory to write/label/specify the origin of the primary/main ingredient in case it is different from the country of the food,” the Commission official emphasised.

## Country of origin food labelling to be voluntary, but not always

By Saraana Mahalingam / EURACTV.com

FEB 12, 2014



## Stakeholders Comments and Reactions

**Eurocommerce** commented: “The new rules will imply important packaging changes in thousands of product references. For most retailers, who have thousands of private label products, the revision of packaging takes place according to a rigid scheme in which products’ packaging are revised on a regular basis. The introduction of new provisions affecting a large number of products will oblige retailers to significantly modify their schemes which is very time and resources consuming.

To read the full contribution submitted by [Eurocommerce](#)

**FoodDrinkEurope** submitted a five-pages [contribution](#).

**Primary Food Processors of the EU** commented:

PFP is very much supportive of having a Q&A/guidance document developed by the European Commission in parallel to the publication of the Implementing Regulation in order to solve the remaining interpretative issues. This will guarantee more certainties for the producers of primary ingredients as well as for National Authorities in each EU Member State. This Q&A/guidance document will also be helpful in the B2B discussion, which will take place between the second-processing industry (provider of voluntary origin on the final food) and the primary ingredient producers (obliged in that case to provide origin information on the primary ingredient).”

For more information: [PFP](#)

**BEUC - The European Consumer Organisation**

commented “The draft regulation, although well-intentioned, falls short of meeting EU consumers’ expectations for food origin information. We wish to recall that 70% of Europeans have said they want to know where their food comes from (BEUC, 2013). Demand is even stronger for meat and milk – both sold fresh and used as an ingredient – for which over eight in ten EU consumers want to know the origin (European Commission, 2013 and 2015).

Moreover, and as recognised by the European Parliament, origin labelling – although not per se a tool for combating food fraud – can help increase transparency along the food supply chain and foster more stable relationships between food manufacturers and their suppliers.

This, in our view, calls for mandatory country-of-origin labelling (COOL) requirements, at least for those foods/ingredients for which consumers’ interest is the strongest. For that reason, we have welcomed the temporary national measures introducing mandatory COOL of processed meat and/or milk in several EU countries including France, Italy, Portugal, Lithuania, Greece, Finland and Spain. We strongly support resuming an EU-level discussion on mandatory COOL of meat and milk (incl. when used as ingredients in processed foods) when the national trials currently taking place come to an end, based on the first-hand data and information these experiments will have generated”.

For more information: [BEUC](#)

## GS1

Avenue Louise 326, 1050 Brussels, Belgium  
T +32 2 788 78 00 | E [francesca.poggiali@gs1.org](mailto:francesca.poggiali@gs1.org)  
[www.gs1.org](http://www.gs1.org)

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