



# EU Food Policy



A consumer group is devising a new label it wants the food and drink industry to use to indicate products containing no, low or reduced sugar.

SAFE (Safe Food Advocacy Europe) is to present the proposal at the Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health in June.

Its secretary general, Floriana Cimmarusti, told *EU Food Policy* the idea was to use four colours to signify products with "no sugar", those with "low sugar", those with "no added sugar" and those with "reduced sugar".

The definitions would be taken from the Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation. The scheme would be certified by SAFE and companies would pay a fee to use it.

Ms Cimmarusti said the fees, yet undecided, would pay for work by a Belgian-based research laboratory which would check products met the conditions for each of the respective claims.

In addition, the label would not be awarded if there were other unhealthy ingredients in the product, such as significant levels of trans fat.

The initiative was about marketing and the use of positive labels enabling food and drink firms inform consumers about their products. As such, it could act as an incentive to companies to take sugar out of their products.

Furthermore, the initiative could be turned into a commitment in the context of the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, she added.

Under the nutrition annex of the health claims law, a product must contain no more than 5g of sugars per 100g (or 2.5g of sugar per 100ml of liquid) in order to make a "low sugar" claim.

To say a product is "sugar-free" there must be no more than 0.5g sugars per 100g or 100ml.

For a product to be labelled "no added sugar" there must be no added mono or disaccharides or any other food used for sweetening properties.

To make a "reduced sugar" claim, there must be a reduction of at least 30% compared to a similar product and there must be no increase in energy.

SAFE will be holding a meeting in the European Parliament at the end of June hosted by the MEP, Nessa Childers, to further discuss its ideas on sugar and present the label.

One of its member is the campaign group Action on Sugar.

The EU Food Information to Consumers has strict rules on what can be put on a food label which will need to be borne in mind.