

EU adopts bill to reduce acrylamide in popular foods

-- By Simon Marks

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EU member countries today adopted legislation aimed at reducing the amount of acrylamide in popular foods such as bread, cereal and chips.

Acrylamide is a carcinogenic contaminant that is produced when starchy ingredients are cooked above 120°C.

Big food companies such as Nestlé and Kellogg's have disagreed with health activists over whether Brussels should impose binding limits on the amount of acrylamide allowed in food products.

The [bill adopted by member countries](#) imposes "indicative values" rather than binding limits on acrylamide in food, but does promise to start work immediately on making those limits mandatory at a future date. The text will come into force in spring 2019.

Twenty two member countries voted in favor of the text. Germany, Spain, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands and Slovakia abstained.

"The new regulation will not only help to reduce the presence of this carcinogenic substance but also will help raise awareness on how to avoid the exposure to it that oftentimes comes from home-cooking," European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Vytenis Andriukaitis said in a statement.

The bill also obliges large scale businesses to apply additional mitigation measures such as the implementation of a management system that controls biological and chemical hazards at all points in the manufacturing process.