

Monday, 15 July 2019 (07:16 AM)

By SIMON MARKS

## NUTRITION

**EU'S DIET PLATFORM SLATED BY NGOS:** Safe Food Advocacy Europe has become the latest NGO to publicly slam an EU food platform designed to improve diets and reduce obesity. SAFE, which has campaigned heavily to make large conglomerates abide by laws to reduce the presence of toxic chemicals like acrylamide, told Morning Agri it had been “denied the right to represent consumers’ interests and to share its best practices to meet the goals set by the platform itself.”

Such targets on the [Platform on Diet, Physical Activity & Health](#) include increasing regular physical activity, reducing the intake of salt, saturated fat, trans fat and added sugars and increasing the consumption of fruit and vegetables. Floriana Cimmarusti, secretary general of SAFE, said she had applied over two years ago to join the platform but had been denied despite the European Commission having endorsed a SAFE project on the overconsumption of sugar in the EU. “I just find it such a big injustice,” she said, adding that the Commission had told her organization that a reason for not being provided access was that several of its members had not filed information with the EU’s Transparency Register — an online database of information about lobbying activity to which individuals and organizations must sign up if they want access to officials in the Commission and Parliament.

A Commission official confirmed that there was an issue with SAFE’s position on the Transparency Register.

**Abandon ship:** SAFE’s complaint comes shortly after a group of other health NGOs decided to ditch the platform all together earlier this month. The groups, including the European Consumer Organisation, the European Heart Network and the European Public Health Alliance, said they could no longer consider “that the continued participation of our civil society organizations in the platform is a productive use of our resources.” Cimmarusti said despite her complaint of not having access to the platform that she agreed with the decision of other groups to leave. “If I was in, I would have left with them,” she said.