

Report examines latest research on authorized product health claims

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Researchers working on the EIT Food funded Health Claims Unpacked project have published a new report which reveals the results of the project's investigations into the communication of health claims on food labels.

For the last three years, researchers have been gathering data on consumer understanding of health claims and their preferences for how these are worded, as well as holding interviews with manufacturers, consumer organizations and a variety of other stakeholders to understand their views and experiences in the use of health claims on packages, which falls under the EU Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation (retained for use in GB).

The Health Claims Unpacked project is funded by EIT Food, the world's largest and most dynamic [food](#) innovation community, supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT). It is being led by linguists at the University of Reading and includes partners from across Europe; the Technical University of Munich, the British Nutrition Foundation, Foodmaestro, Maspex and the Polish Institute of Animal Reproduction and Food Research.

The project is investigating how consumers respond to the way health claims are presented on food packages (particularly the wording) and how food companies deal with regulatory requirements. This research has involved consumer focus groups in the UK, France, Germany and Poland and an online study involving more than 1,500 consumers across these four countries, as well as Hungary and Romania.

The ultimate objective of the project is to create recommendations to inform [policy makers](#), in the hope that more detailed guidance can be produced to accompany the current Regulation, enabling food manufacturers, retailers and marketers to communicate more effectively about the health benefits of foods and drinks, which could help consumers to make more informed choices.

Rodney Jones, professor of sociolinguistics at the University of Reading said, "When it comes to consumer responses to [health](#) claims, we found some really interesting results, including differences between consumers

in the UK, France, Germany and Poland. I hope that the findings from the [project](#) will be used to inform guidance for industry on how the wording of authorized [health claims](#) can be changed in a way that [consumers](#) can understand better and is culturally appropriate, but that is still compliant with the regulation."

More information: Report: www.healthclaimsunpacked.co.uk/links

Provided by University of Reading

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