

Procedure file

Basic information		
CNS - Consultation procedure Regulation	1991/1031(CNS)	Procedure completed
Milk and non-milk fats with plant and animal products: marketing standards		
Subject 3.10.05.02 Milk and dairy products		

Key players			
European Parliament			
Council of the European Union			
Council configuration	Meeting	Date	
Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN	1812	05/12/1994	

Key events			
21/01/1992	Legislative proposal published	COM(1991)0462	Summary
09/03/1992	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
01/10/1992	Vote in committee		
30/09/1992	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A3-0290/1992	
16/11/1992	Debate in Parliament		
19/11/1992	Decision by Parliament	T3-0677/1992	Summary
15/02/1993	Modified legislative proposal published	COM(1993)0060	Summary
05/12/1994	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		
05/12/1994	End of procedure in Parliament		
09/12/1994	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1991/1031(CNS)
Procedure type	CNS - Consultation procedure
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Regulation
Legal basis	EC before Amsterdam E 043
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed

Documentation gateway

Legislative proposal	COM(1991)0462 OJ C 036 14.02.1992, p. 0012	22/01/1992	EC	Summary
Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES0646/1992 OJ C 223 31.08.1992, p. 0064	27/05/1992	ESC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A3-0290/1992 OJ C 305 23.11.1992, p. 0007	01/10/1992	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading	T3-0677/1992 OJ C 337 21.12.1992, p. 0193-0236	19/11/1992	EP	Summary
Modified legislative proposal	COM(1993)0060 OJ C 062 04.03.1993, p. 0010	16/02/1993	EC	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(2002)0411	19/07/2002	EC	Summary

Additional information

European Commission

[EUR-Lex](#)

Final act

[Regulation 1994/2991](#)[OJ L 316 09.12.1994, p. 0002](#) Summary

Milk and non-milk fats with plant and animal products: marketing standards

\$summary.text

Milk and non-milk fats with plant and animal products: marketing standards

\$summary.text

Milk and non-milk fats with plant and animal products: marketing standards

(MARCK report - Doc. A3-290/92) In adopting the report by Mr Pol MARCK (EPP, B), the European Parliament broadly approved the Commission's proposal for a regulation aimed at better informing consumers of the characteristics of new milk products that had recently appeared on the market and differentiating between them, both by their composition (animal or vegetable fat or a mixture of both) and by their fat content (so-called reduced-fat products). The objective was to resolve the problem of names that confused consumers, a situation that was aggravated by the disparity of national labelling rules or even the fact that such rules did not exist for the most innovative products. With a view to ensuring better information for consumers regarding the characteristics of these products, the regulation was based on three principles: - a distinction between three major categories depending on the types of fat used: milk (butter), vegetable or other animal fats (margarine), and a mixture of the two previous categories; - the definition of seven classes of fat content ranging from 20% to 95%, defined in parallel for the three categories; - the possibility of marketing products of any fat content but with priority in the area of 80% (traditional products), 60% (three quarters) and 40% (half), alone authorised to use names such as 'butter' or 'margarine'. Butter was thus defined as a milk product whose components were exclusively derived from milk, consisting of an emulsion of the water-in-oil type. The fat content of butter was 80%. The water content of butter could not exceed 16%. The non-fat content could not exceed 2%. Parliament also retained the names 'concentrated butter' and 'concentrated margarine' for products with a fat content of between 90% and 95% (amendments by the Committee on Agriculture proposed doing away with them). ?

Milk and non-milk fats with plant and animal products: marketing standards

The Commission incorporated most of the EP's amendments in its amended proposal. ?

Milk and non-milk fats with plant and animal products: marketing standards

The Council regulation established the rules concerning the definition, classification into categories, designation and marketing of spreadable fats intended for the ultimate consumer. - The new Community provisions had two aims: . to help achieve the objectives of the common agricultural policy by guaranteeing the stability of the markets together with fair incomes for farmers; . to protect consumers more successfully by providing them with a choice based on more complete information. - The regulation applied to milk fats (butter) and non-milk fats (margarine) as well as to fats composed of vegetable and/or animal products with a fat content of at least 10% but less than 90% by weight, intended for human consumption. - These products could not be supplied or transferred without processing to the ultimate consumer, either directly or through restaurants, hospitals, canteens or similar establishments, unless they met the requirements laid down in the regulation; - The labelling and presentation of the products should indicate: . the sales description as defined in the annex to the regulation; . the percentage fat content by weight at the time of production; . the percentage salt content, which should be indicated in the list of ingredients; - The sales description could be used together with one or more terms to define the plant and/or animal species from which the products originated, together with the terms concerning the production methods; - Indications of geographical origin could also be used with the sales descriptions; - All the indications should be easy to understand, clearly legible and indelible; - The term "traditional" could be used together with the name "butter" where the product was obtained directly from milk or cream; - It was permitted to add: . the term "reduced-fat" for products with a fat content of more than 41% but not more than 62%; . the terms "low-fat" or "light" for products with a fat content of 41% or less; - Within five years, the Council would review the application of certain elements of this regulation and, in particular, the use of the terms "light", "low-fat" and others; The regulation would enter into force on 1 January 1996. Products on the market of a Member State on 31 December 1995 which did not meet the requirements laid down by the regulation could be supplied or transferred until 31 December 1997. ?

Milk and non-milk fats with plant and animal products: marketing standards

This document consists of the report from the Commission on the application of Article 5 of Council Regulation 2991/94/EC laying down standards for spreadable fats. Article 5 of Regulation 2991/94/EC states that the terms for products referred to in the Annex which state, imply or suggest fat content other than those referred to in that Annex shall be prohibited. By way of derogation and in addition: - the term 'reduced-fat' may be used for products referred to in the Annex with a fat content of more than 41% but not more than 62%; - the terms 'low-fat' or 'light' may be used for products referred to in the Annex with a fat content of 41% or less. The report concludes that not only has the application of Article 5(2) of Regulation 2991/94/EC given rise to no problems, but it has proven to be effective in contributing, together with the general descriptions, towards creating a framework of Community rules which incorporates and clarifies the range of sales descriptions and terms used throughout the European Union. Since no problems have arisen in applying them and their effectiveness has been proven, it is inconceivable that the terms should be abolished, which would only confuse consumers and traders alike. The application of terms implying a reduced or low fat content may, of course, be reviewed in the light of developments at Community level in legislation on the standardisation of claims for food products. ?