

# **Future Food Symposium on Food Labels**

**7 December 2017- 1.30 PM-6.00PM**

**Venue** [Museum Speelklok](#), Transeptzaal, Steenweg 6 - Utrecht

Food label information is important to make a healthy food choice. Consumers should always be able to see how many calories, fat, sugar and salt there is in a food product. In addition, allergy information should be easy to understand and be clearly visible and legible in labels and packaging in general. But is this always the case? Does information listed on food labels comply with the established rules?

During this mini- symposium the latest research and practices on Food Labels will be in de spotlight. The symposium speakers will tackle different issues in the food chain: What do EU and Dutch laws stipulate, how do producers apply those regulations and how do consumers look at labels to make food choices?

Food authorities and policy makers, food producers, consumers, researchers and students are cordially invited. **Please [register](#) to attend**, as there are only 50 places available!

**Language of Communication:** English.

**Program:**

1.30 PM – 2.00PM - Arrival - Coffee & Tea

2.00 PM - 2.05 PM - Welcome and Introduction by Future Food Board

2.05 PM - 2.35 PM – 'Labels on food products: Are they noticed, are they understood?' by Professor Klaus Grunert, Aarhus University



Labels on food products can have the desired effects on consumer choice only to the extent that consumers indeed notice them when shopping and to the extent that the meaning they attach to them is reasonably close to the intended meaning. We discuss factors that have an influence on whether labels are noticed while shopping, leading to some guidelines for attention-getting properties of labels. We then discuss consumer understanding on labels, drawing on examples from nutrition labelling, eco labelling, and health claims. Consumer understanding is in many cases less of a bottleneck for label effectiveness than policy makers may believe, although technical

language in health claims can be a barrier and attempts to improve understandability do not always have the desired effect.

2.35 PM - 3.05 PM – 'Enhancing consumer and industry impact of labels on food products' by Professor Monique Raats, University of Surrey



Nutrition labelling can be viewed as a way of reducing the information asymmetry between producers and consumers, where producers provide consumers with information they would not otherwise have about a product. Evidence shows that companies are manufacturing products in an attempt to display more favourable front of pack labels through reformulation and new product development. However, more evidence from a wider variety of countries is needed before any strong conclusions may be reached. A more comprehensive monitoring system is needed in order to establish the impact labelling is having on the supply chain in terms of reformulation and new product development. With regard to consumer impact, research shows that simply providing nutrition information on the back of pack and highlighting it on the front of pack is not effectively resulting in more healthful food purchasing behaviour as in real life settings, personal and contextual factors interfere and some of these take precedence over health consideration in driving choice. Findings from a UK pilot randomised controlled trial of an intervention to increase the use of traffic light food labelling in UK shoppers (the FLICC trial) will be presented.

3.05 PM - 3.20 PM - Coffee & Tea break

3.20PM - 3.50 PM – 'The effect of labeling on food purchases and intake in natural settings: A critical view' by Professor Ingrid [Steenhuis](#), Free University Amsterdam



Front of package labeling is often seen as a promising tool to influence consumer's food purchases and intake. However, studies that have been conducted in natural settings show mixed results, varying from no effects to small effects on food purchases and intake. Ingrid Steenhuis was involved in studying the effects of labeling on consumer behavior for the past 20 years.

She will present some studies into the effects of front of package labeling in different natural settings, i.e. supermarkets, company cafeterias and cinemas.

4.00 PM - 4.30 PM – ‘Labels and warnings: could sugar be the next tobacco?’ by Dr. Louise Vytopil, Attorney at Rutgers & Posch, Amsterdam.



Louise Vytopil will introduce you to the subject of food labels and their regulation, in respect of legal but unhealthy foods. She has written extensively about corporate social responsibility policies and contracts used by multinational corporations in the Netherlands, England and the United States. Her latest research concerns unhealthy foods: who determines what should be on the labels and packaging of these types of foods? How are food labels regulated in the Netherlands? Is sugar the next tobacco or should it be?

What factors play a role in determining whether we should have or want warnings in respect of unhealthy foods.

4.30 PM - 5.15 PM – Panel discussion

With all the speakers...

5.15 PM - 6.00 PM - Networking Drinks