



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Plenary sitting

27.11.2013

B7-0401/2013

PROPOSAL FOR A UNION ACT

submitted under Rule 42(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on voluntary labelling rules regarding information related to suitability of food for vegetarians or vegans

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B9-0401/2013

Proposal for a Union act on voluntary labelling rules regarding information related to suitability of food for vegetarians or vegans

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 225 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
 - having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers¹,
 - having regard to Rule 42(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas owing to the lack of a legal definition at EU level of the terms ‘vegetarian’ or ‘vegan’, voluntary labelling is currently devoid of any effectiveness in terms of protection against fraud;
- B. whereas current labelling rules do not provide sufficient information to consumers, and in particular to vegans and vegetarians; whereas many seemingly vegetarian food products contain products of animal origin or traces thereof, without these being mentioned on the labelling;
- C. whereas Article 36(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 states that the Commission shall adopt implementing acts on the application of the requirements for food information provided on a voluntary basis to the information related to suitability of a food for vegetarians or vegans;
1. Considers that adequate, harmonised rules on the labelling of vegan and vegetarian products are necessary to allow EU consumers to observe their dietary choices;
 2. Requests the Commission to present, no later than 31 January 2014 and on the basis of Article 36(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011, a draft implementing act on voluntary labelling regarding information related to the suitability of food products for vegetarians or vegans.

¹ OJ L 304, 22.11.2011.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The EU, as the world's largest consumer market, has a significant number of consumers who for moral, religious or health reasons choose a diet without products of animal origin or from certain animals. Despite the entry into force of Regulation 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers in 2011 and Article 36(3)(b) thereof, which empowers the Commission to present implementing acts on rules governing voluntary labelling regarding information related to suitability of a food for vegetarians or vegans, a legal definition of the terms 'vegetarian' and 'vegan' is still lacking at EU level. This Proposal for a Union Act thus calls on the Commission to swiftly submit the aforementioned implementing acts in order to enable European consumers to observe their dietary choices.