

OPEN LETTER

„Meat” is meat. „Milk” is milk.

The Hungarian Animal Breeders Association, the Hungarian Chamber of Agriculture, the Hungarian Livestock and Meat Product Board, the Hungarian Meat Industry Federation, the Hungarian Milk Interprofessional Organization and Product Board and the Hungarian Poultry Product Board urge the European Union not to allow the use of misleading names for foodstuffs.

„Meat” is meat. „Milk” is milk.

We ask the decision-makers of the EU not to allow tricking with product names!

The undersigned Hungarian organizations representing animal breeders, meat- and milk processors firmly support the recommended amendments submitted recently in proposal No. 171 to the trialogue discussing the draft of the new joint EU-legislation on marketing rules. The proposal wishes to limit in the European Union the use of such terms and expressions as „yoghurt (or cottage cheese) style”, „imitation cheese”, „... of cream flavour”, „lactose free milk supplement”, „cheese-like”, and prohibit the use of the names „milk” or „dairy product” in connection with products which in fact do not contain milk. In addition to what have been summarized in the proposal we continue to fight for not allowing the consumers to be misled in the future in any way in this context.

Only products of animal origin should be allowed to be termed as „meat”, „sausage”, or „steak”. Milk producers are also atrocious about plant-based imitations of dairy products being called e.g., „Cheddar/ Parmezan/Gouda cheese-flavoured plant product in block form”, „mylk”, „margarin of buttery flavour” or „soyagurt”.

There are ongoing experiments at many places in the world to create meat imitations from plants that look like and can be flavoured as meat, as well as to develop lab-grown assemblies, called „synthetic meat”, created quickly in laboratories even using the technology of gene manipulation. We strongly oppose to using the word „meat” or any word associated therewith in connection with these fabricated materials.



Although Annex No.1 to Regulation 853/2004/EC laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin unambiguously defines the terms meat, milk, meat products and dairy products, the situation is not so clear in connection with the specific names and descriptions of products of animal origin and their plant-based imitations.

Copa-Cogeca and its partner organizations published an open letter in autumn 2020 under the title „Lets’ call a spade a spade”. Similarly to the aforementioned organizations, we fully respect the demand of – an albeit small – segment of European consumers, vegetarians and vegans needing an increased share of plant-based, meat and milk-free products aiming to substitute meat and milk in the selection of food products but we expect a fair and consistent marketing activity Europe-wide; one, that respects both meat and milk consumers and vegetarian/vegan customers as well as the work and efforts of agricultural meat- and dairy industrial producers.

In advertisements, meat and/or milk substitutes distributed under misleading names, are many times claimed –without science-based evidence – to be more healthy, to be more environmentally friendly than meat and/or milk and also to be allegedly of the same nutritional value. Under the title “This is not steak” Copa-Cogeca has launched a campaign drawing the attention of MEPs to considering the unfavourable impact of using words „steak”, „burger” or „sausages” in relation to plant-based products, and their intentionally potentially misleading effects on food markets on both consumers and livestock industry.

**We ask the EU decision-makers not to allow misleading of the consumers.
“Meat” is meat and „milk” is milk.**

Budapest, 26 March 2021

Signatories:

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