



Slow Food®

The Slow Food approach to food labelling

Slow Food's position
on food labelling in Europe



Slow Food has always emphasized the importance of transparency in food labelling so consumers can be properly informed on the quality, wholesomeness and traceability of the foods they consume. This enables them to make informed choices.

Slow Food welcomes Regulation (EU) n. 1169/2011, which simplifies the law regarding the labelling of food products, requiring clear, comprehensible and legible labelling (subparagraph 9 of the Preamble). Translated into the 23 languages of the EU, it will apply to all member states from 13 December 2014, except for the law on nutrition labelling which will come into force from 13 December 2016. The regulation will apply to all products intended for the final consumer, including those supplied by mass caterers (restaurants, canteens, catering) and those intended for supply to mass caterers (Articles 1.3, 8.7). Laws in individual states will therefore have to be modified to take account of the new provisions.

The Regulation is based on some general objectives. It aims to ensure a high level of protection for the health and interests of consumers and to promote the free movement of food which has been produced and marketed in accordance with the law. It firstly specifies a list of mandatory particulars to be included on the label (Article 9).

In addition to the information required in the **previous regulations**:

- the name of the food, the list of ingredients, net quantity
- the date of minimum durability or the “use by” date
- any special storage conditions
- the name or business name and address of the food business operator responsible for the information given on the label
- the alcoholic strength of beverages containing more than 1.2 % by volume of alcohol
- instructions for use where it would be difficult to make appropriate use of the food in the absence of such instructions

Regulation 1169 introduces some new requirements. We feel the following are particularly significant:

- **The requirement to provide a nutrition declaration.** This information gives consumers particulars of energy value and nutritional value of a food. The label will contain a specified table containing seven items (energy value, amounts of fat, saturated fatty acid, carbohydrate, protein, sugars and salt). The mandatory nutrition declaration may be supplemented with an indication of the amounts of one or more of the following: monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fatty acids, starch, fibre, minerals or vitamins, as defined in Annex XIII of the Regulation.

- The Regulation also addresses the issue of **label legibility**, noting that this is determined by various elements including font size, spacing between letters and lines, stroke width, type colour, width-height ratio of the letters, the surface of the material, and the contrast between the print and the background.

- Article 26 introduces the **requirement to indicate the country of origin or place of provenance where failure to indicate this might mislead the consumer.** This requirement is extended to all meat, not only beef as was required in the previous law, but also sheep, goat, pig and poultry meat (unless the European Commission decides against this before the deadline for application of the Regulation). The regulation allows for subsequent evaluation regarding the mandatory indication of the country of origin or place of provenance for other foods such as milk and its derivatives, and meats used as ingredients in other foods (Article 26).

- Another significant new element in achieving greater transparency is the requirement to specify the **type of vegetable oil** used in the list of ingredients (palm oil, peanut oil etc).

- There is a **mandatory requirement to indicate potential allergens** also in non-prepacked foods such as those sold at restaurants or in canteens.



The date of minimum durability and the “use by” date

The new regulation has not introduced any changes to the previous law regarding indication of the date of minimum durability (DMD) or the “Use by” date on food labels.

The provisions of Directive 2000/13/CE therefore remain in force, requiring that, apart from a few exceptions, the DMD indications for prepacked food labels shall include the wording “Best before”. The date of minimum durability is to be replaced by the “Use by” date in the case of prepacked foods which, from a microbiological point of view, are highly perishable and after a short period may constitute a danger to human health. The expiry date must be indicated using the wording “Use by”.

However there are some new elements as part of European Commission efforts to reduce food waste. The Commission has launched a series of initiatives to raise consumer awareness about not throwing away food which could still be consumed.

It is worth noting the recent publication of a report for consumers on the correct interpretation of the wording “Best before” (indicates the date until which the food retains its specific qualities) and “Use by” (indicates the date until which the product can be safely consumed).

Slow Food welcomes consumer education initiatives and greater transparency in the food sector. It hopes that these issues will have significant coverage in the Communication on Sustainable Food scheduled for 2013.

The Regulation allows **individual member states** to supplement EU law by adopting national measures for specific types or categories of food (Article 39). **They may adopt additional measures that are intended to protect public health and consumers, prevent fraud and prevent unfair competition, protect industrial and commercial property rights, indications of provenance, registered designations of origin.** Any member state wishing to introduce a national measure must notify the measure to the Commission and wait for three months before implementing it, provided that the Commission's opinion is not negative.

While welcoming the general spirit of the Regulation (EU) n. 1169/2011 and recognizing the significant new provisions introduced, Slow Food regrets the lack of more detailed information that can indicate a food's real quality, enabling consumers to make more informed choices.

In order to offer consumers more complete and transparent information, Slow Food launched its narrative label project. A **narrative label** does not replace the mandatory label, but supplements it by providing additional information regarding varieties and breeds, cultivation and processing methods, areas of origin, animal welfare, and advice on storage and use.



Slow Food hopes that:

- the **European Commission** will adopt implementing acts by 13 December 2013 for applying Article 26, regarding the country of origin or the place of provenance of sheep, goat, pig and poultry meat and that it supports the mandatory indication of the country of origin or the place of provenance of other products such as milk, other types of meat and meat used as ingredients.
- **member states**, as part of their legislative power (Article 39), will strengthen the spirit of the Regulation and adopt measures to highlight product quality. For this purpose, Slow Food proposes its narrative label project, in the hope that member states may find it a useful example.

At the same time Slow Food will widely publicize its project to European producers, offering practical examples of how their food products can recover competitive value based on a real authentic difference compared to products which do not have comprehensive labelling.

What is Slow Food's concept of quality?

The communication materials that accompany food products are frequently misleading. They make associations with bucolic settings and traditional methods, with vague references to old flavours. These evocative portrayals are a long way from the actual quality of the products being publicized. It is often the small artisan products which suffer. Their labels are perfectly legal but lack detail: they do not do justice to high quality cheese, biscuits or cured meat and do not give enough detail about the producer's background.

Although associations and institutions frequently urge the public to carefully read labels before purchasing, many consumers are either inattentive when they buy, or if they do seek further information on the label, cannot find sufficient detail to make an informed choice.

In Slow Food's definition, the **quality** of a food product is first of all a **narrative** that always starts from its place of origin. This may be the place where a species was domesticated or diversified; the place where a variety or a breed adapted or evolved naturally or the place where a cultivation or processing method was developed. It is therefore necessary to provide information about the characteristics of the environment and local area, processing techniques, storage methods, marketing, environmental sustainability and, of course, sensory and nutritional properties.

This concept of quality, developed by Slow Food in the course of twenty years of experience in the field working directly with thousands of small producers, is one of the aspects that most distinguishes the association from other organizations working with food and agriculture.



Slow Food's narrative label

A narrative label consists of a part which appears on all types of product, with information describing the “local area” which endows products with specific characteristics. Production localities and their specific soil/climate make a product distinctive by conferring a particular identity and sensory properties. The label concludes with “Consumer advice” which gives details about storage and serving suggestions.

A narrative label also contains various other information depending on the food category. For example:

- Labels for vegetable products describe the characteristics of the variety, cultivation methods, types of treatment, methods of weed control and irrigation. If the products are processed, details are given of the raw materials used and the production chain.
- Labels for wine highlight aspects which no other form of labelling mentions, such as processing aids, details of vineyard cultivation and winemaking.
- Labels for cheese describe the animal breeds, types of farming and feed (if forage and feed are produced by the producer or certified GM free), area of pasture, actual animal welfare due to farming method, processing and ageing methods.

The Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity launched its narrative label project in 2011 and trialled it on a sample of about 70 Presidia products from various countries around the world in 2012. In 2013 it will work with Presidia producers to create a similar number and will publicize the project among European producers.

Melone cartucciaru di Paceco

Caratteristiche della varietà

Di forma ovoidale che termina con una punta, ha buccia gialla e polpa bianca, non eccessivamente dolce. È un melone d'inverno: si raccoglie da settembre all'inizio di ottobre e si può conservare appeso per un paio di mesi.

Territorio

Comuni di Trapani e Paceco.

Seme

Locale, conservato e riprodotto dai coltivatori del Presidio. Si semina da fine marzo ad aprile.

Coltivazione

Una volta preparato il terreno si semina direttamente in pieno campo in postarelle con 15 semi in ciascuna. Dopo la semina, quando le piante hanno raggiunto

dimensioni adeguate, vengono diradate, per evitare competizione per lo spazio, l'acqua, gli elementi nutritivi. Si pratica la rotazione con grano, aglio o legumi ogni 4 anni.

I produttori ricorrono alla fertilizzazione (con concime organico: letame di allevatori locali e minerale: azoto e fosforo, prima della semina) tenendo conto della tipologia del terreno e integrando le sostanze nutritive prelevate dalla pianta. Tale pratica avviene nel periodo più idoneo, in modo da mantenere o integrare la fertilità del suolo, evitando inutili concentrazioni nel terreno e il rilascio di sostanze inquinanti nelle falde acquifere.

Superficie coltivata

I 4 produttori del Presidio coltivano il melone cartucciaru su circa 2 ettari e mezzo

Gestione del suolo

Si pratica una lavorazione (aratura) subito dopo la raccolta di luglio e delle lavorazioni superficiali per contenere lo sviluppo di erbe infestanti.

Diserbo

Non praticato.

Trattamenti

Quelli previsti dai regolamenti regionali dell'agricoltura integrata.

Irrigazione

Non praticata.

Raccolta e post raccolta

Si raccoglie a mano, da settembre a inizio ottobre, a maturazione non ancora completa. I meloni sono quindi appesi a maturare in apposite strutture ben areate per almeno 20 giorni prima della commercializzazione.

Consigli d'uso

Il melone può essere conservato fino a dicembre-gennaio, appeso in un ambiente areato. È un ottimo frutto da tavola, e anche un ingrediente ideale per il gelato e per le tradizionali granite siciliane.



Presidio Slow Food

I Presidi sono progetti di Slow Food che tutelano piccole produzioni di qualità da salvaguardare, realizzate secondo pratiche tradizionali.



Irrigation Not practiced.

Harvest The garlic is harvested manually in June and then dried in the shade for 15 days. Following the ancient local techniques, the stems are braided into long strings with 12 to 25 heads.

Recommendation for use Keep the garlic in a cool, dry place, away from direct light. It can be eaten until the following spring.

The Presidium involves 12 producers gathered in the Ljubitovica Šarac Garlic Producer Association

Aglio šarac di Ljubitovica

Prodotto e confezionato da:
Associazione dei produttori di aglio "Sarac" di Ljubitovica
Ljubitovica 21201 Prgomet
Croazia
Importato per conto di Slow Food
Promozione srl da:
Scambi Sostenibili soc. coop.
Via Sammartino 72
90141 Palermo – Italia

Consumare preferibilmente entro:
04/2013

Lotto: 08/2012

Conservare in luogo fresco e asciutto.

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Aglio šarac di Ljubitovica

Ljubitovica
Šarac Garlic

Caratteristiche della varietà Questo *Allium sativum*, luk in croato e češnjak in dalmatino, è una varietà serbevole, sapida, profumata. Le teste sono di dimensione media, gli spicchi sono bianchi, con sfumature che vanno dal rosa al viola.

Territorio Zona di Ljubitovica, nella regione Spalato-Dalmazia (Croazia), a 18 km dalla costa croata.

Propagazione I bulbilli sono selezionati e moltiplicati dai coltivatori del Presidio. L'impianto avviene manualmente dai primi di ottobre a fine novembre.

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Superficie coltivata I produttori del Presidio coltivano l'aglio su circa 50 ettari.

Gestione del suolo Lavorazioni superficiali per contenere lo sviluppo di erbe infestanti.

Diserbo Manuale e meccanico.

Trattamenti Quelli previsti dall'agricoltura integrata.

Irrigazione Non praticata.

Raccolta Si raccoglie a mano nel mese di giugno e si fa asciugare all'ombra per circa 15 giorni. I gambi sono intrecciati, secondo l'antica tecnica locale, in lunghe trecce da 12 o 25 bulbi.

Consigli d'uso Conservare l'aglio in ambiente fresco e asciutto, lontano dalla luce. Può essere consumato fino a primavera.

Il Presidio coinvolge 12 produttori riuniti nell'Associazione Produttori di Aglio Šarac di Ljubitovica.

Varietal characteristics This variety of *Allium sativum* - luk in Croatian and češnjak in Dalmatian - is tasty and aromatic with a long shelf life. The heads are medium-sized and the cloves are white with hues from pink to purple.

Production area The area of Ljubitovica in Split-Dalmatia county (Croatia), 18 km from the Croatian coastline.

Propagation The bulbils are selected and multiplied by the Presidium farmers. They are manually planted from the beginning of October until the end of November.

Cultivation Producers use fertilization (sheep, goat and chicken manure and mineral fertilizers) depending on the type of soil, integrating the nutrients taken from the plant. Fertilization is carried out at the optimal time (spring, before sowing the bulbils), so as to preserve or integrate the soil fertility and avoid unnecessary concentrations in the soil or the release of pollutants in groundwater.

Acreage The Presidium producers grow their garlic on about 50 hectares.

Soil management The surface is manually hoed to prevent weeds.

Weeding Manual and mechanical.

Treatments Those allowed by integrated farming.



Irrigation

Localized drip-irrigation is placed under the covering. The strawberry has a large water requirement, and therefore irrigation occurs during all stages of cultivation, at varying rates.

Harvest

The strawberries are harvested between mid-May and June, by hand, only after they have reached full maturity. The job is carried out with great care, to avoid harming the fragile fruit.

Recommended Uses

Excellent eaten fresh or used to prepare sweets and jams.



Presidio Slow Food®

Tortona Strawberry

Presidia are Slow Food projects that work to protect small-scale producers and to safeguard quality, traditional products



Presidio Slow Food®

www.slowfoodfoundation.com

Varietal Characteristics

The Tortona strawberry is small to medium in size, with an intense perfume and sweet flavor. It is very delicate and is harvested in the morning and consumed within 48 hours.

Production area

Municipality of Tortona, at around 200 meters above sea level.

Seeds

Local seeds are reproduced and saved by Presidium producers. Each year the growers propagate the runners for planting between August and September.

Cultivation

The strawberry plants are grown directly in the earth, with the correct proportion of female and male plants in each plot. Shortly before maturity, the strawberries are covered in straw to protect them from the weather. Producers use fertilizer (chemical fertilizer applied according to regional regulations for integrated agriculture before sowing and during plant growth) taking into account the soil type and nutrients used by the plant. This practice takes place during the most suitable periods, in order to maintain or build soil fertility and avoid unnecessary concentrations of fertilizer in the soil and the release of pollutants into groundwater.

Acreage

Around 1,000 square meters.

Diseases

Manuale.

Soil Management

Surface treatments and covering with plastic sheeting to contain weed growth.

Weeding

Manual

Treatments

Those required by regional regulations for integrated agriculture.



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