

NL3 On-pack storage and consumption guidance (Refresh)

Intervention design

Goal: To stimulate better storage decisions by consumers by providing two types of on-pack information – date labelling and storage advice.

Implementation: The two types of on-pack information were tested through online surveys.

Participants were shown either three or four labels for each product type and asked about how they would act (their intended behaviour) in response to the guidance shown. They were also asked to rate the helpfulness of the guidance.

Effectiveness:

Date labelling

- Effects of adding a sticker to the date-label were mixed. The sticker-effect label on yoghurt resulted in more appropriate behaviour (77% compared with 70%); no effect was found for orange juice, pre-packaged carrots or bagged oranges;
- No evidence was found that adding day of the week to a Best Before label increased effectiveness. Storage guidance;
- Providing guidance about optimal storage location is likely to significantly change behaviour in a positive direction (Intention to store optimally tripled on average).
- Directive tone sticker-effect guidance was rated as the most helpful. This is information such as “Keep me in the fridge”. The study concerns self-reported behavioural intentions, so more evidence in real life would be insightful.

Transferability and scalability:

Guidance on storage and expiration dates could be placed on product packaging by manufacturers. No action plan.

Key features for replicability:

- The artificiality of the test environment may have contributed to this result so despite the lack of evidence from this study the approach might be worth testing in a real-world setting.
- Recommendations: To capitalise on the potential for on-pack labelling to help reduce food waste, manufacturers and retailers should consider removing Use By dates for products where they are not required, removing or codifying Display Until dates since these can cause consumer confusion, replacing ‘freeze on day of purchase’ with ‘freeze by [date]’ and including guidance on where and how to store fresh produce.
- See latest DG Sante recommendation on date labelling : https://food.ec.europa.eu/safety/food-waste/eu-actions-against-food-waste/date-marking-andfood-waste-prevention_en

COUNTRY

Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Spain

IMPLEMENTED BY

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July 11, 2017 – July 31, 2017

Information sourced from:

Swannell, R., Bruns, H., Brüggemann, N., Candéal, T., Casonato, C., Diercxsens, C., Garcia Herrero, L., Gil Roig, J.M., Haglund, Y., Van Herpen, E., Kaptan, G., Kasza, G., Mikkelsen, B.E., Miranda Pires, I.M., Obersteiner, G., Vainioranta, J., Vittuari, M., Watanabe, K. and Sala, S., Evaluation of consumer food waste prevention interventions, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2023, doi:10.2760/224541, JRC133003