



## Position statement



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### *nutrition claims and functional claims*

#### Discussion paper

The International Butchers' Confederation (IBC) is a federation of national associations of small and medium-sized meat trading and catering concerns.

The IBC today represents 14 associations from the countries of the European Union, the EFTA and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe with a total of more than 150 000 butcher and meat-cutting plants, which together employ nearly 1 million people. The total turnover of this sector is around € 50 billion a year

The IBC welcomes the European Commission's plan to harmonise throughout the Community the voluntary use of nutrition and functional claims on the labels of pre-packaged foodstuffs.

The use of clear, precise and useful information in a form which is standardised over the entire EU takes account of consumers' increasing interest in nutritional matters.

Only standardised, simple information on the nutritional value and nutrient function of a foodstuff can actually help consumers when deciding what product to buy.

EU-wide rules on the use of nutrition and functional claims will also enhance the free movement of foodstuffs within the Single Market. The more these are also brought into line with the definitions in the Codex Alimentarius, the greater the chance of world trade in foodstuffs also proceeding smoothly.

Since butchers normally operate on local markets and generate their turnover from the sale of fresh, non-packaged products, this latter aspect will have only a marginally beneficial effect on the butchery trade in Europe.

Because they have direct contact with their customers, butchers have the advantage that they can give interested consumers detailed information first-hand on the nutritional value and nutrient function of their products.

The IBC strongly supports the retention of current EU legislation (Directives 2000/13/EC and 90/496/EEC) on the basis of which it must continue to be possible to also include nutritional information (and, in future, information on a foodstuff's nutrient function too) on the label of a pre-packaged product on a voluntary basis.