Press release | 14.06.2012

Baby food rules

EP votes to end misleading labels but MEPs lack appetite to ban toxic substances from baby food production

The European Parliament today voted on EU rules on food for young children and infants and food for special medical purposes. The Greens gave a mixed response to the vote, welcoming improvements on labelling but regretting the failure to back a Green proposal to ensure the most toxic pesticides cannot be used in the production of baby food. After the vote, Green public health and food safety spokesperson **Carl Schlyter** said:

"While we welcome today's vote to end misleading labels and claims on baby foods, we regret that a majority of MEPs lacked the appetite for banning the most toxic substances from the production of baby food.

"The EP voted for stricter labelling rules than originally proposed and this improvement is welcome. Strict rules on labelling will now apply to all foods intended for children up to 12 months. Producers will not be allowed to use manipulative images, like smiling babies, to plug their products. Breast milk is the healthiest option for infants and babies, and formula producers should not use glossy marketing to try and convince parents otherwise.

"The Greens wanted to ensure that the baby food production process excludes the most toxic substances, like toxic pesticides. Regrettably, a majority of MEPs failed to support this measure, which would have provided vital protection to children, who are most vulnerable to exposure to toxic substances.

"It is also welcome that the problem of 'children's milk' will finally be tackled. There is a variety of milk-based products for children up to 3 years that are marketed with terms like 'growth milks', yet which do not have any added-benefit and may even be harmful to children. The EP has today voted for the Commission to examine the problem, with strict EU health claims rules applying in the meantime."

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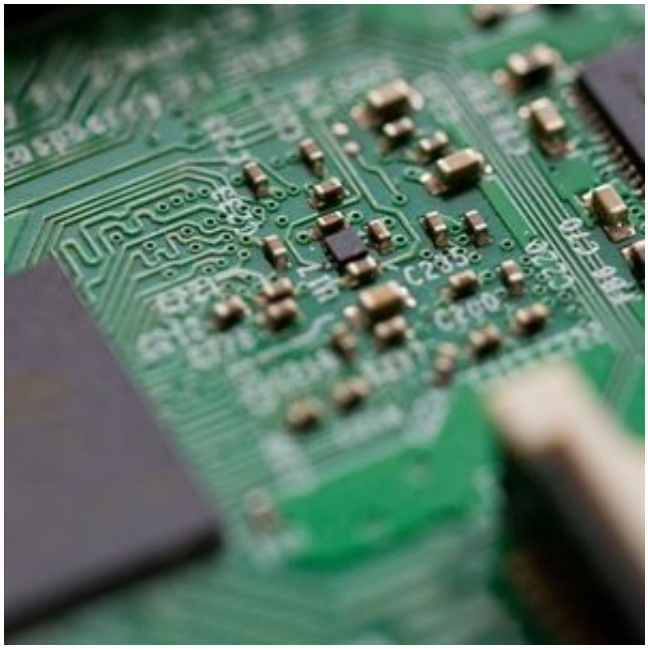


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