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EU food law

Draft EU baby food rules sunk by MEPs due to provisions on sugar

The European Parliament today voted to reject draft EU rules on baby food, which would have allowed baby foods to contain far higher levels of sugar than those recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (1). Commenting after the vote, UK Green MEP **Keith Taylor**, who was behind the motion to reject the rules, said:

"The European Parliament has today voted to put the health of babies and children first. The health risks associated with excessive sugar consumption are now widely accepted. The role of regulation should be to try and address this risk, particularly for infants and children, who are the most vulnerable consumers.

"The rules proposed by the European Commission would have permitted an unacceptably high sugar content in baby food, far higher than WHO recommendations. The introduction of such high levels of sugar to foods – especially so early – is likely to contribute to the rising levels of childhood obesity and may affect the developing taste preferences of children. For infants and young children in particular, added sugar levels should be kept to a minimum. We welcome the support of a majority of MEPs in sinking this irresponsible proposal."

(1) The delegated regulation proposed by the European Commission would have allowed baby foods to provide 30% of their energy from sugar (7.5g sugar/100kcal, which is equivalent to 30kcal from sugar in 100kcal energy). The WHO recommends 5% as a health level http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs394/en/. The European Parliament's vote means the regulation is rejected and includes a recommendation to the Commission to review the available evidence before making a new proposal.

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Responsible MEPs



Keith Taylor

Member

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