



Les
Producteurs
de lait
du Québec



TO KEEP CANADIANS HEALTHY

Dairy products should figure prominently in dietary guidance!

On August 14, Health Canada completed its second online consultation on *Canada's Food Guide*. Unfortunately, according to the guiding principles published in connection with this consultation, and despite the fact that **there has been no change in the scientific evidence supporting the benefits of dairy products**, Health Canada plans to:

- completely eliminate the “dairy products” category from the *Food Guide*;
- classify a number of dairy products as “unhealthy”;
- actively encourage Canadians to consume more plant-based foods and beverages rather than animal-based products.

In its revision process for Canada's food guide, **Health Canada recognizes the importance of using scientific evidence as the basis for supporting its dietary guidance**. Yet, in its own review of the evidence¹, Health Canada notes that:

- Canadians do not consume enough dairy products;

- dairy products can contribute to the reduced risk of cardiovascular diseases, CVA, high blood pressure, colorectal cancer and type 2 diabetes;
- Canadians in all age groups do not consume enough calcium, and dairy products are the largest dietary source of this essential element;
- Canadians do not consume enough vitamin D, magnesium, zinc, potassium and vitamin A, and dairy products are a major source of these essential vitamins and minerals.

It should be added that recent scientific evidence shows that there is no link between saturated fat in food and the incidence of cardiovascular diseases. Moreover, dairy products, regardless of their saturated fat content, are even associated with a reduced risk of these diseases. Science acknowledges the quality of milk proteins. They contain all essential amino acids and are of higher quality than plant-based proteins, such as those from soy or wheat.

¹ Health Canada, *Evidence Review for Dietary Guidance*, technical report, 2015.



Dairy products are an unmatched source of high-quality, readily accessible nutrients. They help keep Canadians of all ages healthy.



FRONT-OF-PACKAGE NUTRITION LABELLING

Health Canada plans to change the regulations so that it can introduce a new “front-of-package label” for food products that are high in sodium, sugar and saturated fat.

A warning symbol will be displayed on foods with high nutrient content in their currently marketed form, such as cheese (even the low-fat versions), flavoured yogurt and whole milk, and this could discourage their consumption, despite the scientific evidence showing their overall health benefits.

Products with low nutrient content, such as chips or diet soft drinks, would not display these “warning” labels and may therefore be perceived as “healthier” than foods with high nutrient content, such as cheese, milk and yogurt.

Health Canada’s plan to eliminate the dairy products category from the next Food Guide and require labelling that dissuades Canadians from consuming cheese, yogurt and milk is not supported by science and would harm the health of the population.

We are asking for our MPs’ support in:



making sure that dairy products continue to figure prominently in the dietary guidance provided to Canadians;



exempting all dairy products with high nutrient content from having warning labels placed on the front of their packaging.