

# **Food Standards Agency**

## **Food Labelling Requirements**

### **Qualitative Research**

## **Final Report**

(Define ref: 1544)

August 2006

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# I Executive Summary

## Background

This qualitative research project was conducted with a representative sample of the food buying general public to understand:

- *what information consumers want and need to see on food labelling in the future*
- *within this, what they feel should be provided on food packs and the most effective way of labelling*
- *what information could be taken off pack and delivered through supporting channels instead*

Ten workshop sessions of between 2 and 3 hours were held with 8-10 respondents across a range of locations in the UK in February 2006. The workshop sessions combined general discussion around priorities and issues with a variety of data collection exercises (such as completing questionnaires and creating 'ideal packs') to look for consistent themes and draw conclusions.

## Key Findings

- These consumers felt that labelling is often hard to use:
  - There are often issues around legibility
  - Variations in approach between different retailers and manufacturers also mean it is not always easy to predict where to find information on food packs or the means by which that information will be delivered (e.g. words or icons)
  - Certain information that is currently provided lacks value to consumers because they do not know what it means (e.g. around packaging processes) or are unsure how much credibility/authority can be placed in it (e.g. assurance schemes)
- If it is presented in an understandable way, consumers were keen to retain *most* of the information that is shown on food packaging currently as they claim to use it either in the purchase or the usage moment (both of which mean that packaging is an appropriate and convenient place to find information). Furthermore, even if it is not information they have a current need for, they perceive they may have a potential need in the future. Overall, comprehensive information on packaging allows them to exercise choice.
- Some information was identified, however, as superfluous to requirements and possible to take off the exterior of the packaging (to either be provided off the pack and through another channel, or inside the pack instead)
- Given the overall desire to retain information, the priority of consumers in improving labelling practice was to *simplify* the process of seeking information by *standardising* a range of aspects of pack design, specifically:
  - Placing related information together in groups (to assist intuitive searching)
  - Standardising where groups of information are found (such as on the front, back or inside of packs) and how it is displayed (e.g. consistent use of icons or a 'Contains' box, etc)
  - Using best practice design principles (such as, use of boxes and colour coding for delineating different information, etc)

## Conclusions

Overall, the findings indicate there will be a benefit in encouraging industry to conform to certain principles in grouping and separating information, while retaining their own design styles, and taking some specific information off pack. Developing new ways of displaying some information (e.g. using an icon to denote packaging processes) and providing appropriate supporting information/education so that new and existing icons/marques can be used more effectively will also assist consumers in using information successfully.

## II Introduction

### A Background

EU legislation currently states that a wide range of information must be present on food labels to ensure that the consumer gets all essential information concerning composition, safe handling and nutritional aspects in certain circumstances. Producers and manufacturers are free to provide whatever additional information they wish, provided it is accurate and does not mislead, and much information is provided voluntarily.

As food labelling in general is recognised as complex and unclear, the European Commission is now taking steps to evaluate the current legislation and understand if and where change is required by:

- Establishing how information can best be provided to consumers to facilitate informed choice; while balancing amount of information with clarity of information
- Establishing whether and how alternative means of communication can play a role in meeting consumer requirements, such as taking the information off-label

To explore consumer requirements and potential for change in detail, The Food Standards Agency (the Agency) commissioned a comprehensive research study to specifically focus on consumers' understanding, use and attitudes towards food labelling and on pack information. This report details the findings of this study.

## **B Research Objectives**

Overall, the research needed to explore and gain a deeper understanding of the information consumers want and need to see on food labelling in the future and, within this, what they feel should be provided on food packs or delivered through supporting channels.

To achieve this, the research needed to specifically understand the following:

- What consumers feel are the priorities for labelling information, as well as the information that is less important
- Consumer usage and understanding of information currently shown on labels
- Whether consumers are willing to compromise on the level of information provided, for greater clarity of labelling and, if so, what information they would be willing to compromise on
- The extent to which consumers would support selected information in a standardised format
- What information consumers feel would be acceptable off-pack and, if so, where and how this should be provided

## C Method and Sample

### i) Method

A qualitative approach was identified as the most appropriate methodology for exploring attitudes and perceptions in detail as well as allowing developmental discussion. The project involved a total of 10 workshop sessions split across two phases:

- a) 6 *exploratory workshops* (each with 8-10 respondents for two hours)
- b) 4 *solution focused workshops* (each with 8-10 respondents for three and a half hours)

The *exploratory workshops* involved extensive discussion around awareness, usage and understanding of current labelling (legislated and voluntary), as well as alternative information sources, across different food categories. They also involved a detailed exploration of how consumers prioritise information and any issues these consumers had encountered in relation to labelling.

Discussion were approached through different exercises which were rotated in terms of the order in which they were conducted within the different sessions. For example, respondents sorted cards with different information (but out of the context of actual packaging) to indicate their awareness but also their initial sense of priority. They also looked in detail at a wide range of packaging examples from different food categories and representing a wide range of manufacturers and retailers. Respondents made notes and completed written exercises (individually, in smaller 'break out' groups or as a full group depending on the exercises) and the data was compared with general discussion to reach some initial hypotheses about key issues and priorities for improving information and packaging clarity.

The *solution focused workshops* took a similar approach in the first instance in order to ensure that awareness, usage and understanding of current labelling (legislated and voluntary) across different food categories was drawn from the sample as a whole. This was also important, however, to understand the extent to which the consumers involved in the second phase may have been different from those in the first phase and, as a result of this, whether any particular issues needed to be borne in mind when analysing the additional data generated from the second phase. Indeed, there was a high level of consistency in this part of the discussion which infers that the additional areas covered in the second phase are likely to be representative.

This second phase of workshops included further work with consumers focused on potential solutions, i.e. their perceptions of what changes could potentially be made to packaging, the way information is presented and the extent to which it is presented to assist with clarity of information and how this ideas might be executed. Additional exercises in these groups included:

- break out work (i.e. working in smaller units within the group) to identify principles of clear labelling (by interrogating a wide range of food packaging examples across different categories and different manufacturers and retailers and completing individual data collection sheets)
- group work to understand whether and how information ‘clusters’ naturally on packs and any benefits from considering or presenting information in groups
- break out work (i.e. working in smaller units within the group) to design ‘ideal’ food packs – using current examples to take the ‘best’ execution of different information and position it on pack
- individual consideration of font size through a self-completion questionnaire

The discussion/workshop guides detailing the approach taken in the two different phases can be found in the Appendix.

All respondents across both phases were also asked to undertake a ‘pre-task’ exercise to assist in identifying use of labelling at the point of purchase. On returning from a regular shopping trip they were asked to complete a questionnaire while unpacking their shopping and record which information on the pack of 12 different items (representing a range of categories) they had used during that particular purchase.

The sample size is too small to allow for any robust quantitative analysis or conclusions to be drawn, but the data generated from this exercise was used to supplement overall analysis within the study. For example, information recorded as most consistently used, as well as information that rarely featured in this exercise, was compared with other data (such as discussion within the session and prioritisation exercises) to check for any inconsistencies. Other themes, such as a more frequent mention of information in a particular food category, were also sought with a view to either finding support for other data or a need to question it more closely.

## **ii) Sample**

The sample for this study (i.e. the range of individuals who participated) was required to be comprehensive and to allow representation of a wide range of dimensions within the UK food-buying public. Specifically, the sample as a whole needed to include:

- both men and women
- a wide range of ages and life stages
- a wide range of socio-economic grade or relative deprivation/affluence
- different ethnicities (including the main British ethnic minority groups)
- different regions (i.e. North, Midlands and South of England and Scotland) and different area types (i.e. urban, suburban and semi-rural)
- a range of different attitudes to food and food issues

- individuals with specific dietary requirements

While the sample as a whole represented individuals across this range of criteria, the sessions themselves were set up to separate individuals by some of these criteria. This approach has several purposes:

- To allow for good 'group dynamics' (i.e. respondents are more honest and open with each other as they share a sense of commonality - it is common in widely mixed groups for deference, defensiveness or opting about based on perceptions of differences)
- To allow for any differences across the dimensions (such as age, life-stage or existing attitude to emerge as clearly as possible)

Definitions for the criteria on which the sessions were arranged were set as follows:

a) Age

The sample was split between two broad age groups of 'younger' (18-35) and 'older' (36-70).

b) Life-stage

Life-stage was built into the broad age split to ensure representation of different types of individual. Younger groups included a mix of those with 'younger families' (i.e. at least one child aged between 0 and 10 at home) and 'young independents' (no children at home, either single, married or co-habiting but living independently of their parents).

Older groups included a mix of those with 'older families' (i.e. at least one child aged between 11 and 16 at home) and 'older independents' (no children at home

– either never having had children or ‘empty nest’ - and either single, married or co-habiting).

c) Attitude

Previous research for the Agency on different issues has shown that consumers fall into three broad groups who vary in their behaviour, attitudes towards information and labelling and therefore overall needs as follows:

- *Avoiders* – those who are uninterested in most food issues and have few requirements for information and labelling
- *Mainstream* - including ‘Headline Reactives’ (previously defined as those who are attuned to food issues but tend to change their behaviour on a short term basis only and revert to their original patterns once media focus on the issue has reduced) and ‘Pragmatics’ (those who have a very measured view about their personal requirements, are accepting of a low level of perceived ‘risk’ from foods and do not adhere to strict or specific eating regimes)
- *Discerners* – those for are highly attuned to food issues and have developed an eating regime based on personal beliefs of what is better and worse, and thus for whom information, taking personal control and exercising choice are very important

Individuals with *specific food requirements* (including, for example, allergies, diabetes, weight loss, cultural considerations such as kosher or halal, etc) were included across the sample as a whole to ensure that respondents overall were broadly representative of the food buying population. The number of those with specific food requirements, however, was specifically limited to 2 respondents per session, with a mix of issues represented across those individuals, so that while individual needs could be heard these issues were unlikely to dominate the session and take time from the overall task of thinking about pack information and labelling as a whole.

During the recruitment process, respondents were asked which of three different attitude statements they agreed with (i.e. example statements reflecting the three different views) in order to ascertain which attitude category they belonged to.

Tables 1 and 2 below illustrate how the 10 sessions were constructed to take account of the different factors detailed above.

Table 1: Phase 1 Workshops (Exploratory) Session Breakdown<sup>1</sup>

<b>Session</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6
Age	Younger	Older	Younger	Older	Younger	Older
SEG	ABC1	C2DE	C1C2(D)	(A)BC1	(B)C1C2	(C2)DE
Attitude	Mainstream	Mainstream	Discerners	Discerners	Avoiders	Avoiders
Location	London	Coventry	Leeds	London	Coventry	Leeds

Table 2: Phase 2 Workshops (Solution Focused) Session Breakdown

<b>Session</b>	7	8	9	10
Age	Younger	Older	Younger	Older
SEG	ABC1	ABC1	C2DE	C2DE
Attitude	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed
Location	Hemel Hempstead	Edinburgh	Warwick	Tewkesbury

The following additional criteria were represented across the sessions in both phases:

- All participants were solely or jointly responsible for at least half of the household grocery shopping (i.e. choosing products)

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<sup>1</sup> Where a bracket is shown around a socio-economic grade this means this grade was in the minority if included at all, therefore the socio-economic emphasis in these sessions is on those grades which are unbracketed

- At least half within each session were responsible for at least 50% of cooking for themselves/ partner/family
- Each session included 6-7 women and 3-4 men
- Each session included at least 5 respondents who were working either full or part-time. The Older sessions each included some retired individuals
- Each session included two respondents with specific food issues, i.e. a particular health requirement, cultural requirement, current dietary focus, etc.

Copies of the Recruitment Questionnaire used for sourcing interviewing respondents can be found in the Appendix.

The fieldwork took place between 17th January and 16th February 2006 across the following locations: London, Coventry, Leeds, Hemel Hempstead, Edinburgh, Warwick and Tewkesbury.

# III Detailed Findings

## 1. Current Issues with Food Labelling

### 1.1 Spontaneous criticisms about pack labelling

Overall, across the sample there was widespread spontaneous criticism about the labelling of food packaging currently and a common perception that current labelling approaches can do better in meeting consumer needs. Spontaneously raised criticisms were endorsed by the exploration of a range of food packaging examples within the workshops and focused on the following issues:

- **Amount of detail**

Criticisms around detail varied, depending on the product. Sometimes it was felt there was too much detail which can be overwhelming; in other cases there was not enough information; or, at times, information was felt to be included that was felt to be ‘irrelevant’ to consumers.

- **Complexity**

The information provided on food packs was sometimes felt to be too challenging or time-consuming for consumers. Respondents sometimes had difficulty in both locating and understanding the information on food packs which suggests that there is a need for a simpler approach and the use of ‘plain English’.

- **No common approach**

Consumers felt, particularly after exploring packaging within the sessions, that there was a great variation in the approach to labelling across different food categories and brands. While the approach of some brands had an implicit logic

in the layout of information that made it easier to follow, or other design devices (such as boxes or headings) that made the information easier to read, others brands lacked logic in their approach or were more difficult to read. The packaging of the main supermarkets was felt to be leading the way and tended to be highlighted as having the best overall approach.

- **Legibility**

Poor legibility was felt to be the result of fonts being too small or the contrast in colour between the text and the background being insufficient. It was felt that negative information could easily be hidden if information was difficult to read.

*Sometimes it's so small you can't read it  
[C2DE, Older, Tewkesbury]*

*The writing on some of these is so small you really can't read it ...  
[ABC1, Younger, London]*

*It's impossible to read anything on the back without a magnifying glass – it needs  
to have more space and be bigger  
[C2DE, Older, Leeds]*

- **Hiding information**

Indeed, there was a widespread belief that information displayed on food packaging tends to be 'selective with the truth', focusing on the positives and sometimes guilty of hiding negatives.

*I want to believe what they say is really true  
[C2DE, Younger, Warwick]*

## 1.2 Benefits of good information delivery

There was widespread recognition that when information is delivered clearly it has significant benefits, as it allows consumers to *use the knowledge* that they have gathered from elsewhere and exercise choice. For example, many respondents were keen to pursue healthy eating (although the extent varied by individual), others wished to distinguish between what they believed to be 'better' and

‘worse’ quality food, others had preferences in relation to production methods, etc.

Furthermore, however, clear information was felt to allow less knowledgeable consumers to *learn* about both food and cooking from the pack itself.

### 1.3 Overview of expectations for improvement

Consumers had some difficulty in rationalising taking information off food packaging (even if it could be supplied elsewhere). Where information was not being used currently, it was perceived that it may be needed in the future, e.g. for use in new purchase situations or in changing health or lifestyle circumstances. Once aware that some information was provided as statutory, there was also a sense that the need for legislation must mean there were strong reasons for inclusion of this information (even if these were not currently known).

That said, the findings do show, that there is *potential to reduce pack information slightly*, by removing some information items of very low/no importance to consumers. Indeed, some information points exist, both legislative and voluntary, which consumers believe can be dropped in the interests of making pack information easier to use.

In light of the overall requirement to retain the majority of information currently provided, ‘simplification’ and ‘standardisation’ were suggested as the likely solutions to the difficulties at present. For the consumers within this study, the key issue was *improving usability of information* provided with *as little compromise on quantity as possible*.

In achieving this, *standardising how information is displayed* in terms of the content of what is shown, how it is shown and its position on pack was considered the best way forward.

*You could always put certain icons in the same place where possible... it'd be really helpful to have warnings in the same place...my husband is diabetic so always looking for sugar content makes shopping a big task  
[ABC1, Older, Edinburgh]*

Additional and more radical developments involved suggestions to *develop some new icons* for minority interest groups (e.g. those interested in production methods) which would reduce the need for words on pack or increase the value of currently unused or under-used communication devices (such as Assurance Scheme marques).

Easier to use packs were also felt to reflect a set of *positive design principles* which, if adhered to more widely, could also improve usability of information.

Detailed description of these changes and developments are covered in the following sections.

## 2 Moving Forward: Requirements for Labelling

### 2.1 Overview

As mentioned in the section above, two key aspects of development desired by consumers are *standardisation in the way food labelling is displayed* and some *minor reductions in pack information*. These developments are supported by two factors:

- a) **Intuitive information categories exist** for consumers, which allows for intuitive organisation of information on pack. This can assist ease of use as

consumers are able to more easily identify information that is relevant (or not relevant) to their individual needs.

*You don't bother looking at all that stuff – you just want to find it and go*  
[C2DE, Older, Leeds]

*I'm not interested in all the cautions this and that... I'm not allergic to anything,  
so I'd rather they were separate sections*  
[C2DE, Older, Tewkesbury]

*These days I look out for all the rubbish they put in food now*  
[C1C2, Younger, Leeds]

*How to cook it – I've got to know if it's do-able*  
[ABC, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]

- b)** In addition, **information priorities are largely consistent** for consumers, in terms of both the information categories themselves and the information within those categories. Priorities were largely determined by when the information was felt to be important, i.e. the *moment of use or reference*, and the *frequency of usage* (i.e. how often these moments tend to occur). Given these priorities reflect usage behaviour, it follows that they also drive preferences for what information should be placed on the front, back or interior of the pack (or if it is required at all). This is so that the information is at the most appropriate access point at the moment it is most likely to be used.

If food packaging designs can account for these consistencies in consumer thinking then information needs will be more closely met: indeed, consumers will find it easier to predict how to navigate packs and which information they will find in different places.

Importantly, while these aspects of development focus on both content and position they still leave room for some flexibility in exact design which will allow for differentiation between manufacturers and retailers.

Both the information categories and consumer priorities are described in detail in the remainder of this section.

## 2.2 Information categories

For most respondents, pack information falls into *eight intuitive categories*, each one based on either a purpose or a specific consumer need:

- i Basic Product Recognition
- ii Cooking Instructions
- iii Storage Instructions
- iv Health Sensitivity Information (warnings of ingredients causing allergic or intolerance reactions)
- v Nutrition Information
- vi Product Composition Information (quality confirmation)
- vii Production Information
- viii Corporate Information

The following section addresses each of these information categories in turn and details requirements for information within that category – in terms of both content and display.

## 2.3 Core Information Categories

### 2.3.1 Basic Product Recognition

The information of *highest priority overall* emerged as that which is used to identify a product on a shelf/within a cabinet and are still essential to *repeat purchase situations*. Consumers recognised that comparatively little of the total amount of the information on pack is made use of in repeat purchase situations.

Unsurprisingly, the desire for quick and easy recognition at the point of sale means that this information is expected to *dominate the front of the pack*.

*You want to see what it is and just get the important information  
[C2DE, Younger, Warwick]*

Specifically, this high priority information includes:

- **Brand name** or other **identifier of the brand**, such as logos and character branding

*Characters and logos help you recognise what you're looking for, like the Quaker character or Lloyd Grossman  
[C2DE, Older, Tewkesbury]*

- **Range name** or **product differentiators** (e.g. organic, free range, freshly squeezed, 'Healthy Living', 'Taste the difference')

*I use that for juice [Pure] because I don't like the ones that are from concentrated... I always look for the ones that are 100% juice, natural  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]*

*It has to say organic or whatever as most people want to know what they're buying  
[C2DE, Younger, Warwick]*

- **Name of food** which may include a product description (e.g. 'juice drink' versus 'juice', 'pork with honey and mustard') and flavour differentiators (e.g. raspberry and orange flavour)

*The description really helps otherwise you don't know what it will taste like – you can't always tell from the picture  
[DE, Older, Leeds]*

- **Net quantity**, particularly for dairy products, tinned food, fresh fruit and vegetables, fresh meat, cereals and dry goods. In some cases, however, the size of pack is used instead (e.g. number of units contained in a breakfast cereal or multipack of crisps) or a simple visual appraisal of the quantity

- A **picture, illustration** or a **view of product**

*Pictures help you understand what the product will be like... what's in it  
[C2DE, Older, Tewkesbury]*

- Established **signposts** (e.g. calorie content, low fat indicator)

In addition, specifically for many fresh and chilled goods:

- **Use by** or **best before end date**

*I'm fanatical about expiry dates  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]*

- **Place of origin**, particularly for fresh meat and other meat products such as sausages (rather than composite goods) and, to a lesser extent, fresh fruit and vegetables

Interest in place of origin was driven by a range of reasons. For some, this was prompted by health and food safety scares; whilst others preferred to 'buy British' or from elsewhere on the basis of either taste or personal ethics (such as supporting or avoiding a specific economy).

*Where it is from is really important – especially with fresh meat – I always try to buy British  
[C1C2, Younger, Leeds]*

*Tomatoes have got to be Spanish or something – British ones taste horrid. Same with strawberries  
[C2DE, Older, Tewkesbury]*

### 2.3.2 Marketing Offers

Consumers in this study were aware that all of the above elements may be overridden during the decision making process by tempting marketing offers - such as '3 for the price of 2', '33% free' and 'Buy X and get Y at half price', etc.

Marketing offers were found to be very important in the product labelling mix as they have the power to override normal purchasing decision criteria and are very effective in enabling 'new' or non-regular options to stand out at the point of sale.

*If it has extra free, 100% extra free or 50%, that's really important – a good offer  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]*

It was recognised that positioning marketing offers on pack can add greatly to on pack clutter which can be even more overwhelming as a result. However, this was considered to be broadly acceptable given that other information may reduce in significance as a consequence of a clear and motivating offer.

*You get swayed to buy things if it's on offer.. things you might not normally buy  
[ABC1, Younger London]*

Importantly, there was also spontaneous criticism of marketing offers information being placed off pack as this increases the chance of consumer error and, for the more cynical, the opportunities for retailers to benefit by misleading consumers. This was because many consumers had made a purchasing error where a marketing offer was placed on the shelf and not on the pack. For example, an offer for 'bacon' could be assumed to be related to the nearest item of shelf; and without attention to specifics like size of pack (which some felt could be presented in a recessive way on the offer information) they had mistakenly bought the wrong item. This situation was more irritating if it was a product they did not ordinarily buy and were only purchasing to take advantage of the offer.

*You can see an offer and you don't realise it's for the 16 rasher pack and not the 8 until you get home... and you only bought it because of the promotion  
[C2DE, Younger, Warwick]*

*If it's on the product you know which one to buy  
[C2DE, Younger, Warwick]*

*You need to know you're picking up the right thing  
[C2DE, Older, Tewkesbury]*

Furthermore, some felt that without offers being firmly attached to the pack, they may not filter through to smaller stores which were unable to accommodate extra point of sale information.

*You have to remember that not all purchases are made in supermarkets... I use a corner shop for bits and pieces and I can't imagine they would be able to put information up in their shops so would I have to miss out on offers?  
[ABC1, Older, Edinburgh]*

Hence, there was a strong preference for marketing offer information to be on the front of pack. The impact of this as reducing accessibility of other labelling information was recognised and accepted.

### 2.3.3 Low Priority Information

Several items currently often found with this information category, were widely recognised as very low to nil value *number of servings* and *sell by date*. It was felt largely felt that these were worth removing from pack in the interests of reducing ‘clutter’ and improving pack clarity (unless, in the case of *number of servings*, the information could be developed or changed to be of more use).

- **Number of Servings**

The number of servings given on packs, such as ‘serves 2’, was widely perceived to be frequently wrong (or grossly misleading) and, as such, of little value. This information was used by a small minority to make broad judgements on the suitability of a pack size but, overall, it was felt that few would miss this information. If retained, consumers felt a more ‘realistic’ and approximation approach to the number of servings would be of more value and help reduce criticism, such as serves 1-2, 3–4, etc.

*On the pack of spinach it says serves 5-6 but I could eat it all in one sitting...  
once it's steamed it reduces to nothing!  
[C2DE, Older, Tewkesbury]*

*I just guess... whatever looks the right size  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]*

It is important to note that number of servings does not include the number of ‘product units’ contained in a pack, e.g. 5 bars. This type of information was seen as an integral part of the basic product description, net quantity and /or pack size and an important product differentiator.

- **Sell by and display until**

These dates were recognised by many respondents to be more relevant to retail staff than to themselves as consumers. While they could see the benefit to the store of having this information on pack, this information was felt to add clutter

to the pack and be irritating if it made the more important ‘use by’ date more difficult to identify.

*What matters is what we have to do as consumers  
[C2DE, Younger, Warwick]*

*What’s ‘display by’ date? Is that just for the supermarket? We don’t need it  
[ABC1, Older, Edinburgh]*

*‘Sell by dates’ [are important] so you now when you’ve got to eat it by  
[ABC, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]*

## 2.4 Additional Information categories

### 2.4.1 Overview

As might be expected, information needs in new purchase situations were significantly more extensive than in repeat purchase situations. The basic product information described in the previous section was still fundamental but different consumers also drew from a wide range of other information categories to make a decision to buy something new, e.g:

- **Cooking and usage instructions**, including options and timing
- **Storage information**, including freezable and cannot be refrozen
- **Health sensitivity information**, such as allergens, sweeteners, may contain, contains, age recommendations or exclusions
- **Nutrition information**, such as fat, salt, sugar content, calories, GI, points
- **Product composition considerations** including quality issues, QUID, ingredients list and vegetarian
- **Production considerations**, such as organic animal welfare and slaughter method

Which information was used in any given situation depending on a range of variables – the food category, consumer attitude or specific interests (e.g. preference for organic, free range, no artificial additives, etc), knowledge of

cooking/food preparation or a personal issue (such as religious requirements or health sensitivity), when the food was likely to be consumed, and so on.

Understandably, there was a preference for ‘signposting’, or a topline text approach, for any *personally relevant key purchase criteria* to be on the front of the pack (such as freezability, cooking method, or key content/production information such as vegetarian, etc). However, consumers did recognise that for all needs to be met, a very extensive range of information would need to be presented which would reduce the clarity of the core information (see previous section) that they wanted to dominate in repeat purchase situations.

It was also clear that if the information is not clearly visible on the front of the pack, its importance to the purchase situation means that the full pack is likely to be investigated.

This more extensive and detailed information used for new purchases was also sometimes used for repeat purchases but away from the purchase situation. A need or desire to refer to this information arose, for example:

- When used in home by someone other than the purchaser of the product
- For post hoc rationalisations and questioning of choices, such as in response to disliking or liking the taste of the product, or when considering dietary issues such as not wanting to eat ‘too much fat’ in a day
- Product appraisal and choice in relation to whether the product is appropriate for ‘now’ (for example how long it will take to cook)
- When needing to accommodate ‘new’ people (e.g. visitors), such as those with allergies, health sensitivities or particular dietary requirements

Importantly, this highlights the requirement for most of this information to be available on pack (versus elsewhere) for ease of both access and use. Being available on pack also reduces any chance for error, as the information clearly relates to the product in hand and requires no translation.

Each of the additional information areas are described in the following section.

#### 2.4.2 Cooking and usage instructions

The importance of cooking and usage instructions varied between different consumers – depending on their level of current knowledge about cooking and preparation. Where knowledge levels were higher, there was often a belief that instructions were unnecessary. However, most conceded that this information would be useful for the many people who were not already aware of what to do. In light of this, some details were considered important for inclusion on pack.

The following information was felt to be *high priority* and felt to be acceptable on the back of packs:

- **Cooking method /oven type**  
*I do need to know how easy it is to cook*  
*[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]*
- **Oven temperatures/ settings**
- **Instructions** such as ‘remove sleeve/pierce film’
- **Cooking times** to allow for planning and reducing chance of error or adverse effect on health  
*If you don't cook it properly you can get ill*  
*[C2DE, Younger, Warwick]*
- **Essential use instructions**, such as mix with ‘x’ ml water, wash before use, etc  
*It could be shake well... or wash before use. They're important to know*  
*[C2DE, Younger, Warwick]*

- **Unintuitive information**, such as serve at room temperature for chilled goods

Cooking instructions overall were felt to be particularly important for ready meals and fresh meat, given a greater chance for error in cooking or a possibly negative health impact from making mistakes.

The cooking instruction icons that are currently used by retailers and manufacturers on a voluntary basis, were found to be clearly understood by most consumers and likely to be relevant to all food categories requiring cooking of any kind. As such icons were easily recognised they would clearly be useful to consider in any move towards standardisation and simplification of packs. Combining a visual representation of the cooking method with times and/or temperatures means these icons can often stand alone (and significantly reduce text on pack) although it is worth noting qualification will sometimes be required, such as per lb/kg/quantity/item.

*Detailed cooking instructions are important... you want to cook it properly... simple step-by-step ones are best... times and temperatures... it may not be suitable for microwaving*  
[C2DE, Older, Tewkesbury]

Some consumers were found to like and use cooking information icons or symbols on the front of packs, but it was evident that this area is sufficiently top of mind and important to consider for consumers to turn the pack over. The back of the pack is thus recommended as the optimum position for this information - in the interests of consistency, keeping related information together as much as possible and reducing duplication of information (which often occurs when information is split between the front and back of the pack).

*Lower priority* information areas within this category were felt to be:

- **Detailed cooking and usage instructions**
- **Serving suggestions and recipe ideas**

While detailed cooking and usage instructions sometimes had value to consumers, it was felt that inside the pack or a peel-off label was more appropriate to house this information. This was due to the fact that it tended to be quite lengthy and thus:

- added clutter to the outside of the pack
- or was difficult to read as a result of being fitted into a cramped space

For serving suggestions and recipe ideas, product illustrations were sometimes used for reference. If other specific suggestions were given, again this was felt to be more appropriate for the inside of the pack, on in back of a label or even in leaflets/inserts within the inside of a box. This is because, while the information might occasionally be interesting, it was rarely relevant to the purchase decision and more likely to be used in home.

*Why don't they take all that cooking instructions for oven and microwave and from chilled and from frozen and put in it inside the pack. You don't need it til you get home as long as it says cooks in 20 minutes*  
 [(C2)DE, Older, Leeds]

*Any recipe ideas should be on the inside*  
 [ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]

*Unnecessary information* in this category, which respondents felt could be taken off pack, emerged as:

- **'Should be cooked until piping hot'** which was seen as common knowledge, learned from elsewhere rather than the pack; and unnecessary as cooking times given should automatically account for this recommendation
- **'All appliances vary'** was felt to be a fact which was both well known and taken for granted and was implicit in the cooking instructions

*We all know cooking appliances vary!*  
 [C2DE, Younger, Warwick]

*I will cook until it's cooked... and all the ovens vary, don't they?*  
 [ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]

### 2.4.3 Storage Instructions

In discussion, many claimed that storage instructions were not necessary on pack because many were ‘common sense’ or inferred from elsewhere. However, it was evident that, while these instructions were ‘low consciousness’, they were actually used quite widely at home, and also sometimes in store, to check assumptions and ensure food is stored safely.

*High priority* storage instructions were considered to be acceptable for the back of the pack and included:

- **Freezable or Can be Frozen**
- **Cannot/Do not refreeze** – assumed to relate to food safety / health issues rather than quality issues
- **Refrigerate after opening**
- **Once open, use within x** – assumed to be a health or major quality issue

*You learn where things should be stored from your parents... and you know from where you buy them  
[C2DE, Younger, Warwick]*

*If you're not using all of it then I'd look to see how many days you can leave it in the fridge or whatever [when I'm] at home  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]*

*If you buy a jar of apple sauce that's on a shelf... same with pickles, once it's open at home I put it in the fridge, I feel more confident about that  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]*

In this information category it was clear little change to current practice is required. There is an opportunity to make better use, through standardisation, of existing **‘Can/Cannot be Frozen’** snowflake icons, which are widely understood. Again, although liked on the front of pack for those who are used to them located here, freezability issues are sufficiently important where relevant to warrant referring to the back of the pack.

A storage instruction felt to be unnecessary was:

- **Keep chilled** for dairy products bought from the chiller cabinet – as this was perceived to be obvious from both the point of purchase and existing knowledge. However, if there was any danger that a product might be mistaken for ‘long life’ product, such as some ambient Ready Meals or UHT milk, particularly after opening, the instruction was felt important to retain on these products.

*I think it would be quite obvious, if you bought it in the chiller then to keep it in the fridge or something*  
 [ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]

No storage information was perceived to be necessary for tinned and dry goods, such as cereals, breads, etc.

#### 2.4.4 Health Sensitivity Information

A range of different issues relating to health sensitivity form a natural information cluster: *allergens, intolerance ingredients* and *alcoholic content*. Given the potential impact on health, consumers tended to see this category as ‘warning information’ which warranted clear identification and separation for easy recognition or dismissal, depending on individual needs.

Indeed, across the sample, there was a wide variation in both awareness and salience of **allergy information** – and as such, while this was very high priority to some, it was low priority to others. However, given the perceived high risk factor for those affected, there was widespread agreement that this information should be treated as priority in terms of positioning and display.

*Allergies are more common now and people need to know what might cause a reaction*  
 [DE, Older, Leeds]

*I know it's important to have allergy information on there but for me I don't really care it's not something I'd ever look at*  
 [(A)BC1 Older, London]

There was a strong feeling, especially amongst those with allergies or those shopping on their behalf, that the current variation in approach (or lack of standardisation) of how allergen information is treated, makes pack navigation, shopping and food choice more difficult and laborious as one has to search very carefully for such information.

This can lead to increasing loyalty and reliance on key stores or brands which label this area of information well. While this is good for the retailers in question, by contrast, consumers sometimes felt at a disadvantage as their perceived choices were further diminished.

Anxiety and irritation is further exacerbated by widespread disclaimers, such as 'Made in a Factory which' ... or 'May Contain Traces of' .... These were both felt to not only limit choice, but to make product selection almost impossible at times as the level of warning is unclear.

*The problem is it says it [may contain traces of nut] on nearly everything.  
[C1C2, Younger, Leeds]*

*I would check allergies when buying for children like having a party or something  
and that 'made in factory' stuff is worrying...just trying to cover their backs  
[ABC1, Older, London]*

In developing a solution, in response to its importance/potential impact on the health of some individuals, many suggested that allergen information should be on the front of pack. However, as with other additional information, it was felt to be salient enough for those with a need to turn to the back of the pack to find this information in a predictable location.

The current requirement for allergens to be listed in the **ingredients list** was not felt to be adequate for such important information. Even if shown in bold text it was felt to lack the impact which such information warrants. As such, it was felt that allergy information needed to be highlighted elsewhere – such as in a 'contains' box or through the use of icons.

*Allergy Advice is usually slightly small but it should be more prominent*

*[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]*

A series of easily understood icons was suggested as appropriate, in light of the good examples used by some retailers and the examples of Dutch ‘designs in progress’. However, while it was felt that icons can allow for quick recognition there was concern that the number of icons in some instances could be potentially overwhelming. It was also recognised that this approach would necessitate some form of education campaign in order that consumers were not confused with new or unknown icons.

*[Re Dutch Examples] Those are good, clear and easy to read, nice and simple  
[ABC1, Younger, London]*

As a result, it was felt that the simplest solution would be to list allergens in text as this would result in less room for error (particularly for occasional shoppers) and little space would be required. However, this would need to appear in a clearly designated area, such as a ‘Contains’ box, with possible colour coding, a strong visual link or cue of ‘warning’, or an explicit mention of allergy. This endorses the practice of separating out allergen information such as under a ‘contains’ label but signals a need for a stronger inference of ‘warning’.

*Wording is actually really important because allergies – you can destroy  
someone’s life over that  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]*

Other health sensitivity information was found to have relatively *low salience* amongst respondents, including:

- **Non-allergen ‘sensitive’ or intolerance ingredients**, such as quinine, polyols, phenylalanine, high caffeine, raw milk, sugar and sweeteners, and sweeteners alone. E numbers were of particular concern to some parents whose children were sensitive to them and, in these cases, felt to belong in this group of sensitive ingredients.

Apart from E numbers and some connection between raw milk and pregnancy for women, these ingredients were rarely known. As a result,

most did not understand the implications of the ingredients or saw them as not relevant to themselves and, unsurprisingly, the information was considered very low value. However, it was assumed that for the information to exist, so must individuals who have negative health response to these ingredients.

*I recognise that [phenylalanine] but I don't know why  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]*

*I know it doesn't apply to me but I imagine that would drive someone mad if they  
kept having to go to the customer service desk to find out if something had milk in  
it  
[ABC1, Older, Edinburgh]*

Words (as opposed to icons) were considered the most appropriate means of detailing this information since this would make it easier for those for whom these ingredients were not important to dissociate. Icons, by contrast, could confuse, raise anxiety and increase effort unnecessarily.

The level of warning required for these ingredients was also felt to be lower than that of allergens. Intolerances were believed to have a less marked or negative impact on health. To attach a warning could also mean that those without intolerances could become unduly concerned about the ingredients to the extent that it affected their purchasing behaviour, but unnecessarily.

*It's only like if you eat 10 packs though [polyols in mints] so it's not going to be a  
problem for most people  
[C1C2, Younger, Leeds]*

- **Alcoholic strength by volume**

Alcoholic strength was not a recognised or admitted differentiator for choosing food products. There was also a tendency to make the assumption that the alcoholic strength in food (as opposed to drinks) was low. Consequently, alcoholic content in food was of little real concern except where a product might be consumed by children. As overall concern was low, an overt 'warning' was not felt necessary. However, many felt it was still important to flag up alcoholic content in unexpected products as this could

help avoid or understand a negative health reaction if this were to occur unexpectedly.

*I wouldn't think of looking for alcoholic strength.. if it's alcohol it's alcohol but you might look when you feel it going to your head!*  
[ABC1, Younger, London]

While salience between the different 'sensitive' ingredient types varied, as detailed above it was widely believed that **any ingredients that might prompt a negative health response** should be clearly signalled in some way on food packs. It made sense for consumers to place all 'health sensitivity' information together in the same area of the pack, but ideally separated from the ingredients list, to make it clear that the information warrants special attention, e.g. in a Contains box. This would benefit from being in very close proximity to the ingredients to ensure that it is not overlooked. Indeed, if too recessive, then this would leave too much room for error and make it more difficult for consumers to take responsibility.

Given the current statutory requirement is to specify all ingredients in the ingredients list, this means that to specify such ingredients in a 'Contains' box as well will result in duplication of information. While in general, duplication was felt to be inappropriate, the importance of allergy (and intolerance information for those concerned) was felt to warrant this approach.

While all 'sensitive ingredient' information was felt to sit naturally alongside each other, however, an issue arises in that (as detailed above) the different types of sensitive ingredients require a different level of 'warning'. These consumers did not generate a solution for this themselves but it was clear that the ideal 'Contains' box would allow for some differentiation on warning level. Analysis of other elements of good practice (such as use of icons like exclamation marks to signal warning, colour coding or use of sub-boxes) indicates there may be potential to develop a better solution than that currently available. The current practice of some of placing any sensitive ingredients into a contains box,

however, does go some way to meeting requirements as consumers will infer that caution may need to be taken.

#### 2.4.5. Nutrition Information

Nutrition information emerged as a *high priority* information area with all three existing ‘levels’ of nutrition information being used by different individuals (with varying degrees of an interest in nutrition). *Range titles* were used mostly in isolation by Avoiders, whilst others tended to use them just for product recognition or as a first ‘filter’.

*I want it to be as quick and easy as possible... you don't want to stand in the aisle forever checking the nutrition tables... a quick look at the icons will be enough*  
[C2DE, Older, Tewkesbury]

*Nutrition signposting icons* were popular across all three attitude types as shorthand to key information, whilst the *nutrition table* was used by a mix of Mainstream and Discerners for the specific detail they required.

*I go for the Healthy Living or the Be Good to Yourself – their logos are easy to spot*  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]

*I like the way Tescos are putting the nutritional information on the front in little boxes – it's useful*  
[C1C2, Younger, Leeds]

Despite being acknowledged as repetitious, different levels of depth were required which means that a common denominator consensus was not possible to reach. Indeed, it was evident that all but Avoiders require *either* signposting *or* a nutrition table to qualify range titles and certain product claims. Furthermore, even though the level of use varied greatly across the attitude types and product categories, there was a very high level of consistency in wanting to retain the nutrition table.

Signposting icons were found to add most value when *colour* was used to specifically decode *high, medium and low levels* rather than having to cross-reference

to GDA tables or a nutrition table. This helped build trust that the information provided was transparent.

*I think the Sainsbury's one shows what's good in green and not so good in orange, whereas Tesco tells you the amounts but not whether it's good or bad, so you have to know what so many grams is or if 10% is alright  
[C2DE, Younger, Warwick]*

However, the actual inclusion of percentage **GDA's** was less helpful and often devalued the signposting - by 'overcomplicating' for those who required 'topline' information only, or being unnecessarily repetitious of the nutrition table for others.

*It's very confusing... all the percentages I don't really understand  
[C2DE, Younger, Warwick]*

*If you can trust what they say then this is alright but you don't know what everything is  
[C2DE, Younger, Warwick]*

The breadth and depth of information within the nutrition tables, such as saturated and unsaturated fats and GDA, generally met most needs for more detailed information. Locating GDA within or alongside the nutrition table was felt more appropriate for this type of information and increased the likelihood of its use.

The nutrition tables of some product categories were felt to be more confusing overall, such as breakfast cereals. Multiple tables were often available and sometimes the GDA's provided were not relevant to the product's target group. For example, some 'children's' breakfast cereals were highlighted as having GDA's based on an adults guideline daily amounts.

*They give percentage guidelines for adults when it's a product for children  
[C2DE, Younger, Warwick]*

In meeting requirements for nutrition information, the research suggests that in general there is a requirement to retain both range names and signposting **icons** on the front of packs and nutrition tables on the back. Efforts should be taken, however, to achieve consistency and keep repetition to a minimum.

Detailed nutrition labelling (i.e. in the form of a nutrition table), emerged as very *low priority* for specific products which were widely known *not* to be *healthy choices*, such as soft drinks, sweets and crisps. There was no real need perceived for detailed information if the product was known to be ‘bad for you’, indeed the term ‘nutrition’ seemed somewhat incongruous in this context as it can imply benefits.

In such cases, signposting icons alone, and possibly a range name, can act as useful ‘warnings’ or indications of ‘not so bad for you’ to enable sufficient comparison between similar products and identification of the more healthy versions, such as low fat or reduced salt crisps. As some consumers acknowledged, it is clearly of no real benefit for manufacturers and retailers to include such information across all products.

*I hardly look when I know I'm buying something that's bad ... it would put me off if I read the ingredients!*  
[C1C2, Younger, Leeds]

A few other forms of ‘signposting icons’ or key information pointers were identified and perceived to be very useful and nice to have, so worth retaining. These included simple information on ‘*how to achieve*’ RDA, such as 100 ml or one item = X % RDA and how many portions of ‘*5a day*’ were contained in a single specified serving. Ideally, such information should appear near or within the nutrition table on the back of the pack, but with some form of stand out.

*If you've got a vitamin thing like on fruit juices – sometimes I look at that*  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]

#### **2.4.6 Product Composition Information**

All information within the product composition category was considered *high priority* and was used extensively by many respondents to make personal

assessments of quality and to check on product claims (e.g. 75% pork sausages). This category specifically includes the following:

- **Ingredients list** with highest proportions listed first, then in descending order
- **QUID**
- **Vegetarian** icon or description
- **Genetically modified ingredients**

The way most of the above are currently approached was felt to work well for most consumers, although there was some preference amongst Discerners for the way Marks and Spencer break down meal components for greater transparency. There was also often strong criticism of the font size used for **ingredients lists**, which was often felt to be far too small and difficult (even impossible) to read.

The inclusion of **QUID** within ingredients list was seen as ideal as this was felt to be the intuitive place to seek such information.

*That [QUID] is really important ...makes sure you can check how much is actually used...so you can decide on the quality  
[ABC1, Older, London]*

*The percentage of meat in something is important ... I look at that  
[(C2)DE, Older, Coventry]*

As mentioned earlier, only including **allergy ingredients** in the ingredients list (versus separating them out to draw specific attention to them) was not seen as good practice (see Section 2.4.4). Even if in bold text, this information was felt to be harder to find than when it was clearly labelled (e.g. in a Contains box).

The use of a 'V' icon to symbolise '**vegetarian**' was widely understood and considered valuable for many people (both vegetarians and those shopping on their behalf or looking to reduce meat consumption). However, it was recognised that this symbol would also benefit from standardisation, as well as

some development to differentiate between what is ‘vegetarian’ and what is ‘vegan’ (for the benefit primarily of vegans).

While near to the ingredients list was felt to be the most appropriate location (as it was intuitively part of the same information category) vegetarian signposting was often liked or accepted on the front of packs. This stemmed from the recognition that this was often a primary purchase criterion.

Overall, therefore, there was a high level of tolerance amongst non-vegetarians for front of pack labelling for relevant items; although in the interests of consistency and predictability, back of packs is also likely to suffice given salience is sufficient for consumers to explore the whole pack.

*Vegetarian people shopping... it's not very fair for them to have to pick up every single thing and look for that particular symbol, for the amount of space it takes up*  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]

**‘Genetically modified’** or ‘GM’ was known by some respondents, particularly Discerners but also some Mainstream, to be a legal labelling requirement. It was also, however, recognised as being rarely seen on current packaging.

Within this sample GM was widely perceived to be an undesirable product attribute, which some more sceptical respondents felt may be hidden. The meaning and significance of GM, however, was not clearly understood: key concerns tended to relate to the possible, unspecified health implications of people eating GM products rather than any impact on the environment. Almost all respondents claimed that they would choose to avoid it GM given the choice.

*That worries me – I'd stay away from that*  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]

*I've never seen it (GM) on a packet but I would certainly avoid it if I saw it*  
[ABC1, Older Discerners London]

Whilst for some consumers, GM also qualifies as a *production variable*, most felt that this sat most comfortably with *product composition* as a ‘quality’ issue (as in

‘what it contains and how that might affect you’). Whilst the GM issue currently has low salience, there is evidence of a widespread need for very clear labelling in order to facilitate both consumer awareness and choice. An **icon** was felt to be a very appropriate device to communicate GM as it would allow this information to stand out and thus help prevent consumers overlooking this information inadvertently, in line with current concern. As a minimum, this could be identified in brackets in the ingredients list.

Overall, few changes were suggested for this category of information, although it was anticipated that standardisation would ensure that it would all be found together in a similar position on the back of packs, along with an agreed minimum font size for ingredients list information.

#### 2.4.7 Production Information

This category of information embraces different factors affecting production.

Some of the information in this category is highly salient and important to a minority of consumers, including:

- **Farming and fishing methods/variables** such as **organic, Farm Assured, free range, dolphin friendly**
- **Slaughter method**

Most respondents considered this information to be important to a minority audience only. However, a *wider range* of consumers were found to use such information themselves as key purchase criteria on selected food categories (such as eggs, meat and fresh vegetables).

*I really don't care about these things but I expect some ethically minded people do*  
 [ABCI, Younger Avoider, Coventry]

**Farming and slaughter information** was considered to be readily available nowadays, but there was spontaneous criticism for the lack of consistency in the

way it is delivered (an issue confirmed by the packaging explored in the groups). In most examples, this information was communicated in the *range name*, but it was also known to be communicated in store through retailer marketing (such as position in a relevant section in store relevant or on a ‘specialist’ shelf).

While the information strategies currently provided are adequate – they are used quite successfully for product identification and selection - concern was evident over the possible regulation of claims. Amongst those for whom this issue is important, official *icons* which endorse such production claims were felt likely to add value and reassurance.

*I'd be happy to have different icons for production methods... I'd like to know for sure that that's what I'm buying  
[ABC1, Older, Edinburgh]*

However, the development and introduction of new icons creates a dilemma for simplifying pack information as it will potentially increase on pack information.

Importantly, current *assurance schemes and marques*, such as the Red Tractor, were rarely understood or used by these respondents. The Soil Association was an exception and was used by some to verify organic claims. Other retailer communication devices, such as a Union Jack and ‘Farm Assured’, were assumed to be a sort of a quality reassurance, but their value was unspecific and did not meet requirements for claim validation/endorsement.

The mismatch between current assurances and requirements for claim endorsement indicates that this information area could benefit from some development or rationalisation. Adding information to packs to verify marques/schemes, while going some way to meet needs, is likely to be unsatisfactory for consumers as it will add ‘clutter’ to packs. The key issue appears to lie beyond packaging: education is required so that existing marques can be used to greater effect.

If and when resolved, this information will be acceptable on the back of packs as it is sufficiently high salience (to those for whom the information is important) to turn the pack over. Range information mentioning production aspects, however, should still be retained on the front of packs as this delivers headline key purchase information.

Other production factors, broadly relating to ‘modification’, were much lower salience. Within this sample they were known about and a concern for a minority of Discerners only:

- **Packaging treatment** and considerations, such as **protective atmosphere** detail, **irradiated** and **packaging gases**

*You need to know what the modification is... I mean you might be someone who avoids all but doesn't mind your food being packaged in a protective atmosphere or whatever*  
[ABC1, Older, Edinburgh]

The majority of consumers, who had little awareness of the presence of this information, were unable to attach any real meaning (either benefits or drawbacks) to the information provided which confirmed its low value.

*Why should we care about packaging gases?*  
[DE, Older Avoider, Leeds]

Drawing attention to this information within the research situation often *raised concern* for those who were currently unaware of these processes, due to the fact that both positives and negatives could be assumed.

*Packaging gases, I don't know anything about, so we should be made more aware of these – if they are a danger*  
[C2DE, Older Mainstream, Coventry]

Indeed, **protective atmosphere** was sometimes understood as ‘well protected’ – for example, vacuum packaging for better storage or packaged in nut or meat free factory environment.

*[Packaged in a protective atmosphere] Shouldn't all food be handled carefully? I don't think people care much about how it's packed*  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]

Conversely, it was sometimes understood to mean an altered environment which, while not fully understood, left some consumers feeling uncomfortable. Examples which Discerners consciously avoided included foods packed in **packing gas** (which they believed was equivalent to artificial preservative, as in leaf salads); or fish given a nitrogen flush.

*I stopped buying bagged salad when I found out it's sprayed with preservative to keep its life. Information about that should stand out more clearly on the label  
[ABC1, Older Discerners, London]*

Respondents were similarly unclear about **irradiation** as, whilst they associated it with prolonging life and killing potentially harmful 'bugs' in food, it also raised concern about food being possibly carcinogenic.

*[irradiated] I've never noticed it. It doesn't sound like you'd want it... I'd stay well clear  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]*

*It sounds scary but it might be nothing to worry about ...  
[(A)BC1, Younger Avoider, Coventry]*

Lack of current knowledge, and uncertainty over these aspects being potentially harmful, resulted in many respondents concluding that they would 'rather not know' (and that such information should be removed from pack). However, a minority of more discerning respondents felt this information was important to retain at some level to allow them to continue making 'informed' choices.

For this information to be used effectively, however, more explanation is required as to what the different processes entail, any benefits and drawbacks, etc. Expanding the information given on pack is one solution but this would need to be extensive to meet requirements. As the information is unnecessary for the majority of consumers (for whom it is low interest) this approach will be seen by many as using up an inappropriate level of space and adding to the clutter they are wishing to reduce.

To keep text requirements to a minimum and potentially improve cut-through, icons specifying different processes were sometimes felt to be the best solution; but it was recognised that development will require careful consideration to avoid overloading. Furthermore, a significant amount of educational activity would be required for the icons to bring real value (which is out of line with overall levels of interest).

*You want to know what's been done when you pick it up – like road signs you'll get used to them*  
[C2DE, Older, Tewkesbury]

As such, while not an overt suggestion of many consumers, a single icon on the back of the pack to indicate additional processes or 'modification' of some sort, (without raising 'warning' alarm signals), is likely to be sufficient to meet minority needs. Indeed Discerners, for whom this is an issue, tend to learn about food processes and issues from elsewhere (such as through the general media or information leaflets). As such, they tend to shop already equipped with the necessary information or are willing to look for explanations themselves should the need arise.

*Just a warning... symbol on the back by the ingredients*  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]

Appropriate places for such information to be sourced included store leaflets, customer services and the internet/websites.

#### 2.4.8 Corporate Information

This information area includes:

- **name and address of manufacturer/ packer/seller**
- **guarantees/statutory rights**
- **recycled/recyclability of pack materials**
- **industry information**

Across the sample, the whole category of corporate information was found to be of very low priority. Indeed, it was almost never mentioned spontaneously as important information. Aspects of this category, however, were considered necessary to retain in a limited form (with very little on the pack itself).

The **name and address** was known by most to be currently on pack, but it was felt to be of no relevance to the purchase decision, only for follow-up in the event of information queries or complaints. The likelihood of this being needed, however, was felt to be very remote. The retailer was almost always the first port of call in such situations and, as a consequence, the need for this information was perceived to be limited to situations where the retailer cannot satisfy a complaint.

*You don't need information about the company and their address, you just take it back to the shop*  
[C2DE, Older, Tewkesbury]

*If you need to complain or change it you'll probably take it back to the supermarket where you got it from*  
[C2DE, Younger, Warwick]

In these instances, however, it was felt that appropriate contact information could be passed on by the retailer.

**Statutory rights** references also lacked value to consumers. Respondents already knew they had rights (even if not entirely sure what they were). This information therefore only had value if it helped inform them what their rights were.

*It's only if you've got a complaint*  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]

For both these information strands, while one or two respondents felt they were important to retain, most felt it would be *easy to access elsewhere* in the event that the information was required (such as in store, on the Internet or via Directory Enquiries) and, as such, could be taken off pack.

*I don't mind looking for information online as long as it's not stuff you need to know when you're deciding whether or not to buy it.*

*[C1C2, Younger Discerner, Leeds]*

In the case of smaller brands/independent manufacturers, however, it was felt to be essential that a single source of information is made available (via stores or published on a central website) to which smaller and independent retailers can direct consumers and give them the information they need if required.

**‘Recyclable’** and **‘Made from Recycled Materials’** were also found to be valuable or important to a minority of respondents. As such, they were considered acceptable for a low key back of pack position. While this information was perceived as a ‘green’ message by many and relevant in part to production factors, neither were purchase drivers and were felt to be more of a corporate message. Some acknowledged, however, that ‘recyclable’ was essential information to assist the process of recycling by identifying appropriate packs.

It was suggested that **‘Made from recycled materials’** could be represented very appropriately by an icon similar to ‘recyclable’. Ideally it should also be positioned alongside this information as this would not only reduce text, but make it more noticeable for those who are interested.

Lastly in this category, **industry information**, such as those below, were of no or very low interest or value to the consumer and as such were perceived to be unnecessary for inclusion on the pack (certainly the exterior of the pack):

- **packaging patents**
- **industry awards**

*All that awards stuff is a total waste of space – I can see why they want to blow their own trumpet but it’s not telling me anything*

*[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]*

### 3. Moving Forward: Good Practice in Pack Design

#### 3.1 Best Practice Pack Executional Factors

A variety of elements (detailed below) were consistently identified as generally helpful in assisting in the accessibility of pack information and, as such, were felt to offer a useful aspect for standardisation. Marks and Spencer, Tesco and Sainsbury were all identified as including many of these aspects in their house styles already.

*If it's the same with all their products you get familiar with it and then it's easy to find the information that you want  
[C1C2, Younger Discerner, Leeds]*

##### 3.1.1 Use of boxes

Boxes allow for very clear separation of information areas especially when titles are integral. As such, these were felt to be a high impact device for improving usability. From the wide range of packaging used as stimulus within the sessions, Marks and Spencer was frequently noted to have a good use of boxes across different food categories.

*[They] use boxes on their packs that makes the information look much clearer and easy to read especially with this black and white contrast  
[(A)BC1 Older Discerners London]*

*[They] put things in sections so you can see clearly and easily  
[(A)BC1, Younger Avoider, Coventry]*

##### 3.1.2 Colour contrast

Black type and a white background were often identified as the most clear for display of words, but other strong contrasts were considered to be quite acceptable too. These included text which is 'reversed out' (i.e. light type on a dark background) if the contrast is strong enough. Some fonts were felt to work better than others in delivering to readability and good contrast. <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Within the data collected it is not possible to isolate examples of specific fonts

*You can't read it if the colour of the writing and the background are too similar  
[C2DE, Younger, Warwick]*

### 3.1.3 Font

An exercise looking at font preference showed that 8 pt was the minimum size acceptable for general information (whether in bold, italics, normal, serif or non-serif fonts), whilst 10 pt was preferred for 'important' information, such as ingredients and allergy advice. The fonts evaluated within the exercise, however, were not on real packaging examples.

When separately asked to identify acceptable and unacceptable font sizes on existing packaging examples, **6 pt** was often seen to be appropriate when the other factors mentioned above (such as colour contrast), worked with the font to make it easy enough to read. A solid type rather than dots, was also much preferred and felt to aid readability.

*Marks and Spencer's use by dates are really clear  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]*

*Sometimes the use by date... you really have to look, especially on meat  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]*

### 3.1.4 Colour differentiation

The use of colour to assist in 'sectioning' and breaking up groups of information was often noted as useful. In some cases, consistent colour coding of information sections across different products strengthened this further.

*If you shop in a certain place, if they've got the same or different colour labels, you know what you are looking for... you know that sign is going to be on this product  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]*

### 3.1.5 Signposting

The use of icons and/or symbols on the front of the pack (rather than the back of the pack) to communicate 'top line' factors affecting product choice (such as nutrition, freezability and vegetarian) were well liked and often widely used.

These signposts were felt to make a significant difference in improving accessibility.

### 3.1.6 Icons and words

Icons were widely recognised as having tremendous value in simplifying communication on pack as they:

- ★ can condense more wordy information
- ★ as visual symbols are more easily ‘recognisable’/identifiable on pack than words
- ★ if well designed, communicate to the ‘lowest common denominator’
- ★ enable standardisation of wide range of information areas

Washing instructions were mentioned as an example of a good range of universally understood symbols within another sector.

*I think it would be a good idea if all the icons were the same... a standard for all products*  
[C2DE, Older, Tewkesbury]

*Icons are just easy for people to read*  
[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]

*The Tesco symbols are easy to understand*  
[ABC1, Younger Avoider, Coventry]

It was widely agreed that some good icons are already used on some food packs, e.g. freezability, cooking instructions and vegetarian symbols. Icons reflecting cooking instructions in particular were felt to go a long way to reduce quite lengthy information into multi-dimensional, yet very simple to understand, diagrams.

However, while icons were recognised as highly useful in many circumstances, it was felt that for health-related information, words were likely to be safer (especially for those concerned that they might inadvertently put others at risk.).

*I think icons are the easiest way to recognise information... although you need to know what icons mean.. must be obvious*  
[ABC1, Older, Edinburgh]

*Generally they are really useful but you might make a mistake – at least with the words you know you can’t miss it ... words are actually more idiot proof really*

[ABC1, Younger, Hemel Hempstead]

In considering the development of new icons for different information areas several issues arose. Respondents were aware that it can take time to establish meaning and support was likely to be necessary (through retailer or other communications) for consumers to be able to use them effectively. It was also acknowledge that too many icons on a food pack could be potentially overwhelming and present new ‘clutter’ – the very aspect they wanted reduced.

As such, for balance, and in the interests of ease of use, a mix of words and icons across different areas of information was felt likely to be most appropriate.

*I feel a bit ‘iconed out’... I think it’s good to have a balance*  
[ABC1, Older, Edinburgh]

(Detail on the use of icons in specific information areas can be found in Section 2.4.)

### **3.2 Relationships between different information categories**

Overall, it can be seen that some of the information categories described in Section 2 have a relationship with other categories, in that their purpose or content is broadly similar. For example: cooking and storage instructions are both about *use*; health sensitivity information (e.g. allergens) and nutritional information are often about *health management*; and product composition information (e.g. ingredients) and production information (e.g. free range) are often about *quality*. Product composition information (e.g. ingredients), however, can also be related to health for those with allergies or specific dietary requirements.

These loose relationships mean that, intuitively, the information within the groups can be expected to be found near to each other. While this cannot be set in stone (size and shape of packaging will always present constraints), it is still

possible that bearing these relationships in mind can assist in ideal information display on food packaging.

## IV Conclusions and Recommendations

### Overall

1. Overall, there was broad agreement across this sample that **food labelling needs to improve** to allow consumers to be able to use the information they want or need and, to a lesser extent, protect them from being misled.
2. These consumers felt that **most information currently delivered on pack should be retained** to meet their varying needs in terms of the depth and breadth of information required, but there is **scope for a wide range of changes** that will improve usability of this information for consumers.

### Removing Information

3. Some information detail was identified in the study as having *no or very low value to either the purchase decision or usage situation* and, as such, consumers felt this can be removed from packs to reduce clutter. This information includes:
  - Sell by/display until (not 'Best Before' or 'Use By' which is important)
  - Number of servings (unless developed into approximations e.g. 1-2 or 3-4)
  - Should be cooked until piping hot
  - The warning 'All appliances vary'
  - Storage information on ambient goods (unless unusual/unexpected)
  - Industry information (e.g. packaging patents or industry awards)
4. It was also felt that 'company information' (e.g. complaint contact information), could '*easily*' be provided elsewhere since current consumer behaviour in dealing with queries and complaints is to approach the retailer rather than refer to the packaging.

## Standardising Information Display

5. Changes in the way pack information is presented, through *standardising elements of retailer and manufacturer approach*, were also felt likely to go a long way to improving access to information and ease of use.
6. The purpose of standardisation, which should underpin development and enforcement of guidelines, is to enable consumers to find pack information quickly and easily across all food categories and brands by allowing them to predict what to look for and where to find it.
7. In addition, of course, the information contained therein needs to be transparent and not at all confusing or misleading.
8. Therefore standardisation relates to the *principles of display*, such as position, general content and ‘key indicators’ (such as icons or commonly used terms of reference) rather than specific design approach. Indeed, consumers are keen for different manufacturers and retailers to retain some ‘differences’ in design approach, since this allows for ‘choice’ which is a fundamental benefit.
9. Standardisation will inevitably be challenging for retailers and manufacturers given the different product categories and range of packaging types. The benefits go beyond greater convenience, however, as improved clarity will also allow consumers to make more informed choices. In addition, it should also reduce the extent to which consumers are mistaken or misled about what they are buying.
10. In developing standardisation, there are some core principles that should underpin design approaches:
  - ★ clustering of information into categories
  - ★ positioning of information categories (relative to each other and in terms of what is placed on the front or back of pack)

- ★ use of ‘best practice’ design elements to aid readability and pack navigation  
e.g. colour and logos

11. In terms of **categories**, information falls into natural ‘clusters’ which broadly reflect different consumers’ interests/needs. The fact that these clusters exist is highly useful as this provides an intuitive basis for grouping information on pack. The different information clusters are as follows:

- Cooking Instructions
- Storage Instructions
- Health Sensitivity Information (warnings of ingredients causing allergic or intolerance reactions)
- Nutrition Information
- Product Composition Information (quality confirmation)
- Production Information
- Corporate Information
- Basic Product Recognition

[The content of these different categories is detailed in the body of this report.]

12. While the clusters naturally separate from each other, and should be distinguished through design devices, some are more closely related which drives an expectation of where they will be placed relative to each other on the pack. Specifically:

- *cooking* and *storage*, both being ‘usage’ instructions should be positioned close to each other
- *health sensitivity information* and *product composition information* relate to ‘ingredients’ and should thus be found near to each other

13. In terms of **location of information**, i.e. what is included on front, back and inside of pack, there is consistency in requirements which indicates these should be standardised, where possible, across different food categories.

14. On the front of packs, *basic product recognition* information is expected: brand, range details (which embraces headline nutrition e.g. 'healthy eating' or production information), food name (which includes flavour descriptions/differentiators), net quantity or size, and nutrition signposting. In addition, on fresh goods: use by date/best before end date and place of origin are also expected.

Overall, where front of pack signposting is used, it is important to avoid repetition by not covering the same information on the back of the pack.

15. The back of packs is felt to be the most appropriate location for the following information categories:

- Cooking/usage instructions
- Storage information
- Product composition information, including ingredients list and suitable for vegetarian/vegan indicators
- Health sensitivity information (warnings of ingredients causing allergic or intolerance reactions)
- Detailed nutrition information
- Minority interest production information which has not been adequately covered by the range title

16. Information for inside the pack includes:

- Detailed cooking instructions
- Serving suggestions

17. **Best practice design elements** for standardisation include the following:

- Use of boxes to separate categories of information
- Minimum font sizes (8pt) for important information such as ingredients

- Strong contrasts between text and its background
- Colour coding
- Signposting icons
- Wider use of best practice icons than used currently, e.g. freezer/suitable for freezing, cooking method and time and vegetarian

18. Finally, two areas also stand out as worthy of specific further development as to how information is standardised and displayed.

19. *Health sensitivity information* embraces both allergenic ingredients and those which are 'intolerances'. Words rather than icons are recommended for both as they should reduce the margin for error and visual clutter (given the potential range of ingredients to be represented).

20. For both it is helpful to be highlighted under a 'contains' label, however, these consumers felt that allergenic ingredients should be flagged up alongside a more explicit reference to 'warning' (e.g. using a standard warning icon or colour) to assist them in avoiding products that could cause problems for themselves or others they might be purchasing for. It was important, however, for this inference of warning not to be attached to those ingredients that cause intolerance as this could potentially raise alarm where they are unknown. While consumers did not generate a labelling solution themselves (there is likely to be some complexity in its execution), analysis of other useful aspects for labelling (e.g. icons, colour coding, 'sub' boxing) indicates it is possible that these requirements could be combined in a single contains box. [See section 2.4.4, Health Sensitivity Information, p.30 for more detail.]

21. For *production information* consideration needs to be given to development and education in respect of current marques and assurance scheme logos, or new

icons/symbols if necessary, to give the marques value and provide reassurance/validation of retailer/manufacturer claims.

\* \* \* \* \*

## APPENDICES

## Appendix 1 - Pre-task exercise

[Questionnaire extract.]

## Questionnaire

**Session** (date/time).....  
.....

**Are you?** Male / Female (please circle)

### Classification OFFICE TO COMPLETE

Group SEG	.....
Group Att	Av / Ma / Di / Mixed
Group Age	Yo / Ol
Group Region	No / Mi / So / Wa / Sc

Thank you for taking part in this research project. Now you have completed your shopping, please complete this form.

As you take each item out of the bag please complete the following pages – use one page for each different item. We have provided a couple of examples to get you going. **It is very important** for this research that you mark down **only** what was relevant for **you** on each item. There are no right or wrong answers and we know that people vary enormously in how much information they use when buying food. It may look lengthy but it's really very quick to do – you just need to circle the relevant numbers for each product!

You do not have to do this for *every item* you purchased, just 12 of the ones you have bought today taken from **different** food categories if possible. The different food categories you can choose to represent include:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fresh meat and fish,</li> <li>- Cooked meats inc. tinned meats</li> <li>- Burger, sausages, nuggets and fish fingers</li> <li>- Pies</li> <li>- Pizzas</li> <li>- Chilled and frozen ready meals</li> <li>- Sandwiches</li> <li>- Milk &amp; cream</li> <li>- Cheese</li> <li>- Butter and spreads</li> <li>- Fats and oils</li> <li>- Bread including rolls</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tinned products</li> <li>- Pasta, rice and dried foods</li> <li>- Fresh fruit and vegetables</li> <li>- Breakfast cereals</li> <li>- Crisps</li> <li>- Cakes and biscuits</li> <li>- Ice cream and desserts</li> <li>- Yoghurts</li> <li>- Chocolate and sweets</li> <li>- Soft drinks</li> <li>- Fruit juices</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

a) Food (write in product and brand name)	b) Which food category does the product belong to? (Circle the number – if unsure, please leave blank)	c) On this occasion, what information, if any, did you look at or use in order to <u>choose</u> this product? (Circle the number of any which you used)	d) Where did you find this information? (Circle the number of those which are relevant)
1 Waitrose Tea bags .....	Pies 1	Brand name 1	Information on the pack 1
	Pizzas 2		
	Chilled and frozen ready meals 3	Product description 2	Information on the store shelf 2
	Sandwiches 4		
	Milk & cream 5	Product claim (e.g. low fat, reduced sugar, etc) 3	
	Cheese 6		In-store leaflet 3
	Butter and spreads 7	Ingredients list 4	
	Fats and oils 8		Advertising 4
	Bread including rolls 9	Sell by / use by date 5	(magazine/newspaper/TV)
	Tinned products 10		
	Pasta, rice and dried foods 11	Price 6	Shop assistant 5
	Fresh fruit and vegetables 12		
	Breakfast cereals 13	Nutritional panel (the box which says how much fat, carbohydrates, fibre, etc are found per 100g) 7	Other (write in) 6
	Crisps 14		.....
	Cakes and biscuits 15		.....
	Ice cream and desserts 16	Loyalty card schemes/vouchers/machines 8	
	Yoghurts 17		
	Chocolate and sweets 18	I just always buy this product / I already know what I need to about this product 9	
	Soft drinks 19		
	Fruit juices 20	Other (write in) 10	
	Fresh meat and fish 21		
	Cooked meats (inc. tinned meat and fish) 22	.....	
	Prepared meat and fish products (e.g. burger, sausages, nuggets and fish fingers) 23	.....	
	Tea and Coffee 24	.....	



(EXAMPLE)

This page is an example only to show you how to fill in the form – we have circled the answers for this particular product.

You don't need to put in a photograph of the products you have bought! We have put one in just so that you can see what we are referring to in the example.

You need to start filling in the questionnaire on page 4.

a) Food (write in product and brand name)	b) Which food category does the product belong to? (Circle the number – if unsure, please leave blank)	c) On this occasion, what information, if any, did you look at or use in order to <u>choose</u> this product? (Circle the number of any which you used)	d) Where did you find this information? (Circle the number of those which are relevant)
2 <b>Chicken burgers</b> .....	Pies 1	<b>Brand name</b> 1	<b>Information on the pack</b> 1
	Pizzas 2		
	Chilled and frozen ready meals 3	<b>Product description</b> 2	<b>Information on the store shelf</b> 2
	Sandwiches 4		
	Milk & cream 5	<b>Product claim</b> (e.g. low fat, reduced sugar, etc) 3	
	Cheese 6		<b>In-store leaflet</b> 3
	Butter and spreads 7	<b>Ingredients list</b> 4	
	Fats and oils 8		<b>Advertising</b> 4 (magazine/newspaper/TV)
	Bread including rolls 9	<b>Sell by / use by date</b> 5	
	Tinned products 10		<b>Shop assistant</b> 5
	Pasta, rice and dried foods 11	<b>Price</b> 6	<b>Other</b> (write in) 6
	Fresh fruit and vegetables 12	<b>Nutritional panel</b> (the box which says how much fat, carbohydrates, fibre, etc are found per 100g) 7	.....
	Breakfast cereals 13		.....
	Crisps 14	<b>Loyalty card schemes/vouchers/machines</b> 8	
	Cakes and biscuits 15	<b>I just always buy this product / I already know what I need to about this product</b> 9	
	Ice cream and desserts 16	<b>Other</b> (write in) 10	
	Yoghurts 17	<b>special offer</b>	
	Chocolate and sweets 18		
	Soft drinks 19		
	Fruit juices 20		
	Fresh meat and fish 21		
	Cooked meats (inc. tinned meat and fish) 22		
	Prepared meat and fish products (e.g. burger, sausages, nuggets and fish fingers) 23		
	Tea and Coffee 24		



(EXAMPLE)

This page is an example only to show you how to fill in the form – we have circled the answers for this particular product.

You don't need to put in a photograph of the products you have bought! We have put one in just so that you can see what we are referring to in the example.

You need to start filling in the questionnaire on page 4.

<b>a) Food</b> (write in product and brand name) <b>START HERE!</b>  .....  .....	<b>b) Which food category does the product belong to?</b> (Circle the number – if unsure, please leave blank)	<b>c) On this occasion, what information, if any, did you look at or use in order to <u>choose</u> this product?</b> (Circle the number of any which you used)	<b>d) Where did you find this information?</b> (Circle the number of those which are relevant)
	Pies 1	<b>Brand name</b> 1	<b>Information on the pack</b> 1
	Pizzas 2		
	Chilled and frozen ready meals 3	<b>Product description</b> 2	<b>Information on the store shelf</b> 2
	Sandwiches 4		
	Milk & cream 5	<b>Product claim</b> (e.g. low fat, reduced sugar, etc) 3	
	Cheese 6		<b>In-store leaflet</b> 3
	Butter and spreads 7	<b>Ingredients list</b> 4	
	Fats and oils 8		<b>Advertising</b> 4 (magazine/newspaper/TV)
	Bread including rolls 9	<b>Sell by / use by date</b> 5	
	Tinned products 10		
	Pasta, rice and dried foods 11	<b>Price</b> 6	<b>Shop assistant</b> 5
	Fresh fruit and vegetables 12		
	Breakfast cereals 13	<b>Nutritional panel</b> (the box which says how much fat, carbohydrates, fibre, etc are found per 100g ) 7	<b>Other</b> (write in) 6
	Crisps 14		.....
	Cakes and biscuits 15		.....
	Ice cream and desserts 16	<b>Loyalty card schemes/vouchers/machines</b> 8	
	Yoghurts 17		
	Chocolate and sweets 18	<b>I just always buy this product / I already know what I need to about this product</b> 9	
	Soft drinks 19		
	Fruit juices 20	<b>Other</b> (write in) 10	
	Fresh meat and fish 21		
	Cooked meats (inc. tinned meat and fish) 22	.....	
	Prepared meat and fish products (e.g. burger, sausages, nuggets and fish fingers) 23	.....	
	Tea and Coffee 24	.....	

## Appendix 2 - Recruitment Questionnaire

**FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY 1544  
RECRUITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE: V5  
LABELLING**

**INTRODUCTION**

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is (...) from **Define Solutions Ltd** an independent market research company. We are looking for specific people to participate in an informal market research discussion on the subject of food.

Would you be available on **[REFER TO FIELD SPEC]** to take part in a group discussion ?

The group discussion will last for 2 hours, and light refreshments will be provided. Should you take part we would like you to accept < **agency to fill in**> as a token of our appreciation.

If you wish to check the validity of the research or you have any questions or queries, please call Define Solutions on 020 8346 7171. Please ask to speak to Joceline Jones, Director, who will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

At no time during the interview will any attempt be made to sell anything to you, this is purely a market research exercise.

First, we just need to check you are the right person for us to speak to - could you spare me a few minutes of your time to answer a few simple questions?

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. \_\_\_\_\_ (Hm) \_\_\_\_\_ (Wk) \_\_\_\_\_ (Mobile)

Please note method of recruitment: (tel/f2f/snowballing/list) .....

---



**WRITE IN AGE OF RESPONDENT AND WHETHER OR NOT HAVE CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME**

AGE OF RESPONDENT (WRITE IN)	AGES OF CHILDREN (WRITE IN OR WRITE 'NONE')	CODE LIFE-STAGE
		18-35 NO CHILDREN – <b>YOUNG INDEPENDENT</b> 1
		55-70 NO CHILDREN OR EMPTY NEST – <b>OLDER INDEPENDENT</b> 2
		18-35 WITH CHILDREN – <b>YOUNGER FAMILY</b> 3
		36+ WITH CHILDREN - <b>OLDER FAMILY</b> 4

**RECRUITER:**

**YOUNGER GROUPS:**

- TO INCLUDE MINIMUM 4 YOUNG INDEPENDENTS AND MINIMUM 4 YOUNG FAMILY RESPONDENTS
  - YOUNG FAMILY RESPONDENTS TO REPRESENT A MINIMUM OF
    - o **2 RESPONDENTS WITH CHILDREN NO OLDER THAN 10**
    - o **1 RESPONDENT WITH CHILDREN OLDER THAN 10 ONLY**
    - o **1 RESPONDENT WITH CHILDREN BOTH YOUNGER AND OLDER THAN 10**
- ENSURE A SPREAD OF AGES WITHIN AGE RANGE

**OLDER GROUPS:**

- TO INCLUDE MINIMUM 4 OLDER INDEPENDENTS AND MINIMUM 4 OLDER FAMILY RESPONDENTS
  - OLDER FAMILY RESPONDENTS TO REPRESENT A MINIMUM OF
    - o **2 RESPONDENTS WITH CHILDREN OLDER THAN 10 ONLY**
    - o **1 RESPONDENT WITH CHILDREN YOUNGER THAN 10 ONLY**
    - o **1 RESPONDENT WITH CHILDREN BOTH YOUNGER AND OLDER THAN 10**
- ENSURE A SPREAD OF AGES WITHIN AGE RANGE

Q3. Can you tell me which of the following most closely describes your current accommodation status?

- Living at home with parents 1 **CLOSE**
- Living with partner/friends 2
- Living with family 3

**MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE**

Q4. Thinking about food/grocery shopping, what level of responsibility do you have for both *shopping* and *choosing the goods* that you buy in your household?

- Responsible for all/most 1
- Responsible for about half 2
- Responsible for less than half 3 **CLOSE**
- Not responsible at all 4 **CLOSE**

**RECRUITER: RESPONDENT MUST BE CHOOSING GOODS AS WELL AS SHOPPING (CHOOSING GOODS CAN BE MAKING THEIR OWN SELECTIONS OR FINDING THE GOODS ON A SHOPPING LIST THAT SOMEONE ELSE HAS WRITTEN). SOMEONE WHO ACCOMPANIES THEIR PARTNER ON A SHOPPING TRIP BUT TAKES NO ROLE IN SELECTING PRODUCTS SHOULD CODE 4.**

Q5. Please say which of the following statements about shopping lists is most relevant to you:

i	I don't shop from a list.	1	
ii	I tend to shop from a shopping list that I have written	2	
iii	I usually shop from a list someone else has written and if I can't find what's on the list I look for an alternative	3	
iv	I usually shop from a list someone else has made and if I can't find what's on the list I tend not to look for a replacement myself but either call them or ask someone else.	4	<b>CLOSE</b>

Q6. And which of the following statements most closely matches your cooking arrangements?

I do all the cooking in the household	1
I do at least 50% of the cooking in our household	2
I do less than 50% of the cooking in our household	3
I don't do any cooking	4

**RECRUITER: AT LEAST HALF WITHIN EACH SESSION TO CODE 1 OR 2**

Q7. I'm going to read out some statements that reflect how other people feel about food and food issues. Which one of the statements most closely reflects the way you feel?

i	I don't pay much attention to food issues and tend to buy what my family want to/will eat.	A	1	<b>Go TO Q7a</b>
ii	If there is a scare or I hear things on the news about some foods I tend to stop eating them ...but after a while when it dies down I usually start eating it again	HR	2	
iii	I am concerned about some food issues but so many things get blown out of proportion... you can't let hype dictate what you eat.	P	3	
iv	I really think about what I am eating and watch out for any new information so I can make informed choices whenever I shop for food.	D	4	<b>Go TO Q7b</b>

**RECRUITER: CHECK QUOTA.**

**AVOIDER GROUPS TO CODE 1. MAINSTREAM GROUPS TO INCLUDE AN EVEN MIX OF THOSE CODING 2 AND 3. ALL DISCERNER RESPONDENTS TO CODE 4 ONLY.**

**THOSE WHO CODE 1 AT Q.7 ONLY**

Q7.a Which of the following two further statements is closest to the way you feel about food and food issues?

i	I'm just not that bothered to think about food in this much detail	<b>1</b>	<b>CLOSE</b>
ii	It's not that I'm completely uninterested in food and food issues, it's just not a priority at the moment	<b>2</b>	

**THOSE WHO CODE 4 AT Q.7 ONLY**

Q7.b Are you involved with or a member of any organisations involved in the following issues?

Organic Food	1	<b>CLOSE</b>
Production methods	2	
Animal welfare	3	
Other food issues	4	
NONE	5	<b>CONTINUE</b>

Q8. Do any of the following have an effect on the foods that you buy?

You are on a diet or watching your weight	1	<b>2 RESPONDENTS PER GROUP TO CODE ANY RESPONSES (MUST HAVE DIFFERENT CODES)</b>
You or someone you shop for has an allergy or intolerance	2	
You or someone you shop for is a vegetarian or vegan	3	
You or someone you shop for have certain religious or cultural beliefs*	4	
You or someone you shop for has a health condition that requires them to what they eat, e.g. high cholesterol, diabetes, heart condition, eczema, etc*	5	

\*Please specify: .....

**RECRUITER: IT IS IMPORTANT TO SPECIFY THIS INFORMATION AS IT IS PART OF THE PROJECT FINDINGS**

## Appendix 3 – Discussion Guides

### DISCUSSION GUIDE: FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY Labelling Research

#### Workshops – Stage 1

*N.B. This Guide indicates the areas to be explored in the workshop, the likely order in which topics will be covered and the kinds of questions and techniques which may be used. However, as this is qualitative research, the approach will be flexible depending on the dynamics, ability and understanding of each group. The moderator will also make judgements on time and either push exercises further or cut them short in the interests of achieving the best possible coverage and elicitation of detail within each group.*

#### **Stimulus**

*List of current EU legislated information areas – cards and list within Guide*  
*Sets of cards with all information areas listed on food packaging for sorting (see back of Guide)*  
*Food category cards (see back of Guide)*  
*Range of goods representing full range of categories*

#### INTRODUCTIONS

- **Moderator** to introduce self, explain the process of market research to respondents (format of the discussion session and code of conduct and data protection requirements re recording)

Explain topic of discussion as their ideas for food labelling.

- **Respondents:** Individual / paired introductions as appropriate - brief background details of respondents:
  - First name
  - Family details
  - Working details
  - Key interests, etc
  - General attitudes to food shopping – what they enjoy about food shopping these days; what they do not enjoy.
- **Pre-task:** Gather questionnaires then briefly ...

- Explore whether found easy or difficult; any surprises while completing; initial thoughts about it?
- [Moderator note: use the pre-task if/as necessary later to enable discussion where respondents are having difficulty]

## SPONTANEOUS PERCEPTIONS and KNOWLEDGE

### **Full group work: Top of Mind Information on Food (Warm Up)**

- Thinking about **food packaging in general** *brainstorm list* of what information can be found on food packaging (put onto cards)
- Respondents to spontaneously generate knowledge on all areas (no prompting at all from moderator)

*This is to warm up respondents as well as understand what information is most prominent/salient (much likely to be drawn from their pre-task)*

### **Break out groups: Mapping**

- Once list has been generated, respondents to split into two sub-groups (*by life-stage or gender – attention not to be drawn to this by moderator*) and work within those groups to **cluster the different types of information into categories** (any categories at all that they see fit / clustering to be completely unprompted)
- Respondents to then *justify* their categories: why they have put specific types of information into the categories; why the categories themselves are relevant; etc

*This is to understand how consumers make sense of information and labelling (if at all) and whether any natural themes emerge (in terms of what they think is important, priorities, etc); tendency towards standardisation, etc*

### **Full group work: Information Sources**

- Explore with group perceptions of where they can **find information** about food and food issues, understanding (brainstorm list), and understand:
  - What sources of information they actually use (probe for examples)
  - When thinking about food sources is relevant – point of purchase, other times? Why? What are they thinking about?
  - The nature of each of the sources (who uses it/why is it provided, positives and negatives of the sources, why they personally would/would not use it, etc)

*This is to understand warmth towards different channels*

*Note: we will return to sources later in the session for further discussion*

## CURRENT EU LEGISLATED INFORMATION

### **Full group work: Awareness and knowledge of EU information**

- Using cards with the **current EU legislated information** areas, go through individually to identify which are known, which are new (i.e. unaware of) and which had been forgotten about (aware of but not spontaneously identified). [*Note: information in square brackets below is for the moderator to use as appropriate to clarify discussion*]
  - ★ Name of food
  - ★ Ingredients list
  - ★ Quantity Declaration of Ingredients (QUID) e.g. cocoa (10%),
  - ★ Net quantity [weights and measures]
  - ★ Any special storage conditions or conditions of use
  - ★ Date of minimum durability ('best before' or 'use by' date)
  - ★ Allergen information in the ingredients
  - ★ The name and address of the manufacturer/packer/seller
  - ★ Place of origin [The place of origin of the food is required if by not giving it, the purchaser could be misled, example "English Brie Cheese"]
  - ★ Instructions for use [These are required if the user might be misled e.g. it would be difficult to use the food without them, e.g. "how to make a cake from cake mix"]
  - ★ Alcoholic strength by volume [Drinks over 1.2% only]
  - ★ Quinine labelling
  - ★ High caffeine content warning [Drinks containing over 150 mg/l of caffeine]
  - ★ Sweetener labelling (e.g. "with [sugar(s) and] sweeteners")
  - ★ Polyol warning (e.g. "excessive consumption may produce laxative effects")
  - ★ PKU warning (e.g. "contains a source of phenylalanine")
  - ★ Packaging gases (e.g. "packaged in a protective atmosphere")
  - ★ Raw milk labelling
  - ★ GMO labelling
  - ★ Irradiated food labelling (e.g. "irradiated" or "treated with ionising radiation")
  - ★ Nutrition Table [Required only where a nutritional claim is made]
  
- [If not covered above] Explore for each of those which are **known**...
  - Extent to which they are they used – why and in what circumstances
  - Who is the information provided for
  - Why is it important/not important?
  
- Explore for each of those **forgotten about**...
  - Why was this not top of mind?
  - Who is it provided for
  - Why is it important/not important?
  - [If relevant/possible given responses from previous exercise] How do these map onto the clusters created by respondents – would they make any additions/changes to the clusters?
  
- For those which are **new**...
  - To what extent are they surprised? Why?
  - What value do they think it has – for whom?

- Where would they expect to find this information (on pack/where else)?
  - Now they know it's available do they think *they* have reason to use it? Why?
  - [Again, if relevant/possible given responses from previous exercise] How do these map onto the clusters created by respondents – would they make any additions/changes to the clusters?
- Finally, if necessary, add in any pack information not identified so far (e.g. product claims, etc) and add to/asertain impact on clusters
  - What value does this have – for whom?
  - Explore all benefits and drawbacks of each
  - How much does this information feature in the decision process?
  - Is this information better placed elsewhere – where and why?
  - Should any of these be mandatory – why? [*Note: we will bear in mind that we do not want a more extensive list of requirements for legislation but do need to understand why this voluntary information should be allowed to take priority on packs if this is what respondents want and considering 'mandatory' will help gauge importance*]

### Full Group Work: Standardising?

- If previous mapping has been unproductive, redo exercise using EU legislated information areas only to see how respondents cluster the different information and explore why these natural groupings arise
- Then probe, looking at the information clusters that have been generated, (or any specific information areas), do any stand out as having potential for being standardised [e.g. simplifying, making consistent across packaging, etc] in any way? Which and why? What are their spontaneous suggestions?
- Using examples, explore how respondents react to the idea of standardising some information including
  - Perceived benefits and drawbacks
  - Any concerns

*Asking for spontaneous responses is to see if a need for simplification arises spontaneously. Introducing ideas for how information might potentially be standardised will also help respondents take a solution-focus for the remaining discussion*

## PRIORITISING INFORMATION FOR LABELLING

### Full group work: Food Packaging Examples

*Respondents to look at range of food packs representing: variety of food categories, range of volume and type of information, variety of good and bad examples of clear labelling, variety of brands, examples which use more words/descriptions versus more icons and symbols, etc. Respondents to spend 10 minutes or so looking at packs in detail, either individually or pairs, and making notes ...*

- Now they are looking at packs in 'real life' is there anything that they would add to the discussion so far - explore spontaneous comments in detail, then probe if necessary:
  - Can they see the information they want? Why/why not?

- Is there information that they do use but less consciously than previously thought – what and why?
- How does the packaging **assist in or detract from** finding information? (Understand specific elements, e.g. size, clarity, positioning, language, etc)
- What else does seeing packs bring to mind in relation to labelling
- The extent to which there is perceived to be a need for simplification and improved clarity

*This is see if anything has been overlooked by talking theoretically so far; to get some feedback on the principles behind clear labelling; and to remind respondents of the reality of pack size and restrictions before the next stage of discussion*

*N.B. Refer back to changes and developments discussion if necessary for clarification of any issues*

### **Break out groups: Prioritisation**

*Respondents to be put into pairs by life-stage and/or gender (although moderator not to draw attention to this). Each pair to be given pack of cards with full set of information areas shown on food packs (voluntary and regulation) – note: may need to be added to in light of earlier discussion*

- In their pairs, respondents to work together to decide:
  - which information/labels are most important to them personally?
  - writing up their responses, respondents to *rank* the different types of information with reasons why important/not important to them
- When task is complete, respondents to report back findings to group: during this, moderator to probe:
  - reasons for choice
  - perceptions (and differences in perceptions) of overall frequency of use currently
  - which categories information is particularly important for

### **Full group work: Food Categories**

*Using cards, group to talk through different food categories and how different information might be more or less important; and/or specific issues around packaging of these different categories*

- If relevant following discussion, *group* to map categories according to ‘different’ labelling requirements and justify
- If necessary, probe rationale for any more or less ‘sensitive’ categories (in relation to labelling)
- In *pairs*: following consideration of the different categories, would they change their prioritisation at all (how and why)

### **Break out groups: Deprivation**

*Back in their pairs (by life-stage and/or gender), respondents to revisit information rankings (prioritisation above) and identify (write down):*

- If they could only have 5 areas of information (discounting brand name) on the pack itself, what would they be?
- If they could have 10, what else would they include

*This is to ensure ranking is clear and any differences can emerge*

**Full group work: Alternative Information Channels**

*Thinking about information that no 'shouldn't' or 'can't' be on the pack*

- What are appropriate channels/where are appropriate places to find this information?
- Explore all spontaneous suggestions – why appropriate, specific merits and drawbacks
- Prompt if necessary the following options: leaflets, customer services, internet (specific websites?), scanning process, loyalty card booths, lists displayed within retailers

<b>SUMMARY</b>
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**Two sub-groups: Summary**

- Present each group with nutshell issues – each group to work together to decide their recommendation in response to the following:
  - Which is more important – having a wide variety of information on packs which is less clear and less detailed or less information with more detail and clarity on that information – why?
  - If there should be less information, what should be dropped or placed elsewhere?
  - What should 'improved' clarity include (legibility? Explanation as to why the warning is there? Usability issues such as icons and terms? Etc)
- Last word - what else would they want to say?
- Any questions

Thanks and close

## DISCUSSION GUIDE: FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY Labelling Research

### PHASE 2 WORKSHOPS

*This is an outline of what we currently envisage to be an appropriate approach for the second phase of workshops, to illustrate the sorts of discussion and exercises we are intending to cover. This is an extended workshop of 3.5 hours, including a break. All workshops are taking place in hotels in order to have sufficient room for break out group activities and tasks.*

#### **Stimulus**

*List of current EU legislated information areas*

*Sets of cards with all information areas listed on food packaging for sorting*

*A3 print outs with full list of information areas for Deprivation task*

*Food category cards*

*Range of packs representing full range of categories*

*A3 'Concepts' describing simplification ideas – including visuals where appropriate*

*Selected examples of Dutch pack design work to illustrate ways of simplification*

### INTRODUCTIONS

- **Moderator** to introduce self, explain the process of market research to respondents (format of the discussion session and code of conduct and data protection requirements re recording)

Explain topic of discussion as their ideas for food labelling.

- **Respondents:** Individual / paired introductions as appropriate - brief background details of respondents:
  - First name
  - Family details
  - Working details
  - Key interests, etc
  - General attitudes to food shopping – what they enjoy about food shopping these days; what they do not enjoy.
- **Pre-task:** Gather questionnaires then briefly ...

- Explore whether found easy or difficult; any surprises while completing; initial thoughts about it?

## PRIORITISING INFORMATION FOR LABELLING

### **Full group work: Information on Food (Warm Up)**

- Thinking about **food packaging in general** *brainstorm* what information can be found on food packaging (write onto flip chart)
- Respondents to spontaneously generate knowledge on all areas (no prompting at all from moderator)
- Once list generated, explore which are most/least important, which are used most often (which are used for *new/first time* purchases vs *regular/ repeat* purchases)

*This is to warm up respondents and understand what information is most prominent/salient for them (much likely to be drawn from their pre-task)*

### **Full group work: Awareness and knowledge of all information areas**

*Explain to respondents that there is a wide range of information that currently has to be on food packaging by law and other information that is voluntary. Use cards with all regulation, voluntary and other information areas generated from phase 1.*

- Using cards of **all the information** areas, go through individually to identify which are perceived as important for everyone to know about, which are important for some (and specify who) and which are less important to know about

*Note: after gauging spontaneous perceptions, respondents will not be told which are legislated and which are voluntary to prevent this boosting sense of importance.*

- [If not covered above] Explore for each of those ...
  - Extent to which they are used – why and in what circumstances
  - Who is the information provided for
  - Why is it important/not important?
  - Where do they/would they expect to find this information (on pack/where else)?
  - NB when discussing cooking instructions - assess degree to which these are used and needed, e.g how much detail would be enough

*This section is to warm respondents into the area of consideration and to benchmark understanding of the EU legislated areas with Phase 1 respondents. This exercise will still ascertain awareness/knowledge of each information area as generated in phase 1.*

### **Break out groups: Deprivation**

*Respondents to complete task individually. Each to be given a list with the full set of information areas shown on food packs printed on A3 sheets. Each then allocated a different product (ensure coverage of – ready meal, bottle of salad dressing (not salad cream) or pasta sauce, bag of fresh salad, pack of sausages, meat or fish pie, breakfast cereal, margarine, spaghetti, can of lemonade and bread - in order to cover a variety of product categories) – N.B – rotation to be set across groups to ensure coverage of different categories/products by different types of individual. Respondents to examine full range of information and identify for their product (write down):*

- Which areas of information are essential just to know what the product is? [*note on sheet with ‘✓’*]
- If they could only have 10 areas of information (discounting those listed above) on the pack itself, what would they be? [*note on sheet with ‘+’*]
- What areas are not important/essential to have on pack [*note on sheet with ‘x’*]
- Once task completed, explore responses – write up onto flip key reasons for selection (taking category into consideration and ascertaining extent of agreement/disagreement of other respondents and why)

*This is to benchmark understanding and prioritisation versus Phase 1 respondents, explore further in relation to category and sensitise respondents to the simplification tasks ahead*

**PACKAGING EXPLORATION**

**Break out groups: Labelling Principles**

*Prior to session starting arrange the food packs over a number of tables by food categories (3 food categories on each table so full range represented across room). Packs used in Phase 1 to be used here representing: variety of food categories, range of volume and type of information, variety of good and bad examples of clear labelling, variety of brands, examples which use more words/descriptions versus more icons and symbols, etc.*

*Respondents to be put into pairs pairs (by attitude, life-stage or gender - moderator not to draw attention to reasons for pairing) and asked to work at one of the tables (thereby ensuring coverage of a range of food categories). Each pair to thoroughly explore range of packs and select 3 each (selected by relevance of product to self). Respondents to spend 15 minutes or so looking at packs in detail, either individually or pairs, and making notes against the following..*

- Respondents to use following frame (handed out) to write up for their **3 products what information is easy to use on the pack and what is more difficult**, identifying the different factors they think contribute to this (e.g. size, position, colour, etc). In addition they will consider **where each information area should be positioned** (on front, side, back or not at all).

<i>Name of product and brand name</i>	<i>What information IS easy to read/use</i>	<i>Why</i>

	<i>What IS NOT easy to read/use</i>	<i>Why</i>
	<i>What information should be on the front of this pack</i>	<i>Why</i>
	<i>What information should be on the side/back</i>	<i>Why</i>
	<i>What information doesn't need to be on this pack</i>	<i>Why</i>

- Respondents asked to consider main outputs from this exercise. Moderator to write up responses on a flip chart.
  - Drawing on all of the positive examples you just saw on the packs - what would you say should be the guidelines for good information labelling?
  - What are the things to avoid doing with food labelling?
  - NB When discussing font size explore general minimum requirements but also if there are any differences between types of information (e.g. does some information require a larger font size? If so, what and why)
  - For those things that don't need to be on pack – where else might you find that information, if necessary e.g.: leaflets, customer services, internet (specific websites?), scanning process, loyalty card booths, lists displayed within retailers?

*This is to clarify the principles behind clear labelling; to stimulate respondents into thinking about how labelling might be executed/ developed and to remind respondents of the reality of pack size and restrictions before the next stage of discussion. By exploring positioning of information on pack it will add to the findings from the deprivation task and clarify on real packs what information is needed where and why.*

## SIMPLIFYING INFORMATION

### Full Group Work

*Explain that the legislation for labelling is up for review and there is research to show that simplification is required. As such the task of the session is to understand how labelling could be made easier for the British public to use.*

- Firstly ask them if they have any ideas from what they have learnt/thought about so far that could be used to simplify labelling.
- Explore all ideas (write onto flip chart)

### Categorisation

*Using cards of all information areas (except any felt not necessary to put on pack) show respondents information clusters generated from Phase 1 analysis as groups of information 'that potentially fit together and can be shown in a similar way on pack'*

- Respondents to consider groups and then

- Explore if it is helpful to have information grouped together - does it help to use the label and find information more easily?
- Ascertain the extent to which they agree or disagree with the categories and why, any changes required – find consensus
- Ask them to describe the groups (to ascertain terminology)
- Probe characteristics of the type of information allocated to each category – what’s important to include in this category? What do they use and not use in each category? [e.g. probe degree to which cooking instructions used and needed on pack]

*This task will validate or further qualify clusters already generated and assist respondents in thinking how information can be simplified further.*

Introduce **potential solutions/best examples of current** on concept boards with related visuals where appropriate. *These are drawn from Phase 1 findings. These will include where relevant a number of examples so that comparisons can be made and the ideal elements can be debated.*

- See stimulus

For each solution above explore:

- Reactions to each – positives, negatives, concerns
- Preferences where relevant
- Developments, changes or additions required
- Overall agreement with idea (versus not making any change) – if disagreement, respondents to work to agree an alternative solution

*This exercise will gauge reactions to certain simplification solutions understanding which work best and why and help to extend their thinking and creativity for the next task.*

### **Break out groups: Developing Blue Print Packaging Designs**

*Respondents to be put back into pairs (or exercise many be conducted individually as appropriate). Each pair to work together to design the ideal information solution for an allocated product (each pair to work on a different product to gain a range of product categories – different products within categories to be covered across groups and between different types of respondents). Ensure coverage of at least 5 of the following (see rotation) – ready meal, bottle of salad dressing (not salad cream) or pasta sauce, bag of fresh salad, pack of sausages, breakfast cereal, meat pie. Each pair provided with examples from numerous packs from a range of brands for their product type including some of the potential solution examples and Dutch examples.*

*Each pair asked to create 3 designs on 3 sheets of paper.*

- *Firstly ‘a front’ sheet and secondly a ‘back and sides’ sheet to illustrate ideal positioning, design and size of each information area relevant to that product by cutting out best examples or drawing new ideas.*
- *A third sheet to highlight any information not deemed necessary on that pack and detailing alternative information channels and how they should be publicised, etc*

*Each pair to consider the following in their design:*

- *what information should be found together/front of pack/back of pack/in distinct 'warning' design (boxes? exclamation marks? colours?) etc*
- *writing warnings to develop consumer language for specific information or category description*
- *drawing appropriate icons*
- *ideal size of font*

*Hand out A4 sheet with following prompts of things to consider and to assist in task:*

- *On pack*
  - *Inside pack – insert/ leaflet*
  - *Inside pack – printed on packaging*
  - *Peel off labels*
  - *In store leaflets*
  - *In store: customer services*
  - *General/ central website*
  - *National helpline*
  - *Manufacturers website*
  - *Manufacturer helpline*
  - *Icons*
- Once all designs completed all to circulate and look at each others designs
  - Each then to go round and record their own perceptions of 'best of' and 'worst of' and why

*This task aims to pull together all of the previous tasks and get respondents to start to consider an ideal solution. While unlikely to generate very specific or finalised solutions, the work generated overall should highlight: requirements for clustering different types of information; parameters for display and description on pack; best alternative channels with reasons why.*

<b>SUMMARY</b>
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- Last word - what else would they want to say?
- Any questions

Thanks and close

## Appendix 4 – Data collection sheets

**Information Prioritisation for Specific Products** – asked to identify information that is essential and information that could be omitted for different products

Your name:.....	Product: .....
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- Storage instructions
- Name of food
- Ingredients list
- Quantity Declaration of Ingredients (QUID), e.g. Chicken (10%),
- Net quantity
- Any special storage conditions or conditions of use
- Date of minimum durability ('best before' or 'use by' date)
- Allergen information in the ingredients list
- The name and address of the manufacturer/packer/seller
- Place of origin
- Instructions for use
- Alcoholic strength by volume
- Contains Quinine e.g. "Flavourings (Quinine)"
- High Caffeine Content
- Contains Sweeteners
- Contains Sugar and Sweeteners
- Excessive consumption may produce laxative effects
- Contains a source of phenylalanine
- Packaged in a protective atmosphere
- Contains raw milk (e.g. "This milk has not been heat-treated and may therefore contain organisms harmful to health")
- Genetically modified
- Irradiated food labelling (e.g. "irradiated" or "treated with ionising radiation")
- Nutrition Table
- Slaughter method (kosher, halal, etc)
- Brand information (brand name and logo, e.g. Kellogg's)
- Assurance scheme/certifications/marques (e.g. Soil Association, Red Tractor, etc)
- Health information/nutrition signposting (high or low fat/sugar, etc)
- Vegetarian/vegan labelling
- May contain e.g. "may contain traces of nut"
- Marketing offers (special offers, competitions, etc)
- Animal welfare (free range, etc)
- Marketing claims such as "no artificial additives"
- Environmental impact, e.g. dolphin friendly
- Production methods (organic, etc)
- Guideline Daily Amounts

- Marketing terms, e.g. pure, fresh, natural
- Quality claims e.g. “100% chicken breast”
- Pictures and graphics, including flags and icons
- Number of servings
- Sell by/Display until
- Age recommendations/exclusions
- Guarantees/statutory rights
- Weight Watcher points
- Packaging made from recycled materials
- **Recyclable pack**

*Packaging Exploration – assessment of current packaging examples and suggestions for improvement; each respondent completed up to three*

<b>Your name:</b> .....	<b>Product and Brand name:</b> .....
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<b>What information IS easy to read/use</b>	<b>Why</b>
<b>What IS NOT easy to read/use</b>	<b>Why</b>
<b>What information should be on the front of this pack</b>	<b>Why</b>
<b>What information should be on the side/back</b>	<b>Why</b>
<b>What information doesn't need to be on this pack</b>	<b>Why</b>

*Information to assist ‘ideal packaging’ exercise – in pairs, respondents simultaneously ‘cut and pasted’ best examples of packaging onto sheets for specified products (range of food categories covered within groups)*

Things to think about:

- what information should be found:
  - together
  - on the front of pack
  - on the back of pack
  - in a distinct ‘warning’ design, etc
- what titles/names would you give information you put together or what words would you use to write a warning
- appropriate icons
- ideal size of font

Places information can go:

- On pack
- Inside pack – insert/leaflet
- Inside pack – printed on packaging
- Peel off labels
- In store leaflets
- In store: customer services
- General/central website
- National helpline
- Manufacturers website
- Manufacturer helpline
- Icons

*Summary sheets – used by respondents to evaluate the total output of the workshop group’s ‘ideal packs’*

<b>Your name:</b> .....	<b>Product and Brand name:</b> .....
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Best Examples/Ideas	Why

Worst Examples/Ideas	Why

## Appendix 5 – Stimulus material

### ***Sets of cards with all information areas listed on food packaging for sorting (Phase 1 and 2)***

Storage instructions

Name of food

Ingredients list

Quantity Declaration of Ingredients (QUID), e.g. Chicken (10%),

Net quantity

Any special storage conditions or conditions of use

Date of minimum durability ('best before' or 'use by' date)

Allergen information in the ingredients list

The name and address of the manufacturer/packer/seller

Place of origin

Instructions for use

Alcoholic strength by volume

Contains Quinine e.g. "Flavourings (Quinine)"

High Caffeine Content

Contains Sweeteners

Contains Sugar and Sweeteners

Excessive consumption may produce laxative effects

Contains a source of phenylalanine

Packaged in a protective atmosphere

Contains raw milk "This milk has not been heat-treated and may therefore contain organisms harmful to health"

Genetically modified

Irradiated food labelling (e.g. "irradiated" or "treated with ionising radiation")

Nutrition Table

Slaughter method (kosher, halal, etc)

Brand information (brand name and logo, e.g. Kellogg's)

Assurance scheme/certifications/marques (e.g. Soil Association, Red Tractor, etc)

Health information/nutrition signposting (high or low fat/sugar, etc)

Vegetarian/vegan labelling

May contain e.g. "may contain traces of nut"

Marketing offers (special offers, competitions, etc)

Animal welfare (free range, etc)

Marketing claims such as "no artificial additives"

Environmental impact, e.g. dolphin friendly

Production methods (organic, etc)

Guideline Daily Amounts

Marketing terms, e.g. pure, fresh, natural

Quality claims e.g. "100% chicken breast"

Pictures and graphics, including flags and icons  
Number of servings  
Sell by/Display until  
Age recommendations/exclusions  
Guarantees/statutory rights  
Weight Watcher points  
Packaging made from recycled materials  
Recyclable pack

### ***Food category cards (Phase 1 and 2)***

Fresh meat and fish,  
Cooked meats inc. tinned meats  
Burger, sausages, nuggets and fish fingers  
Pies  
Pizzas  
Chilled and frozen ready meals  
Sandwiches  
Milk and cream  
Cheese  
Butter and spreads  
Fats and oils  
Bread including rolls  
Tinned products  
Pasta, rice and dried foods  
Fresh fruit and vegetables  
Breakfast cereals  
Crisps  
Cakes and biscuits  
Ice cream and desserts  
Yoghurts  
Chocolate and sweets  
Soft drinks  
Fruit juices

### ***Information sources (Phase 1 and 2)***

Leaflets  
Customer Services  
Internet/Specific Websites  
Scanning Process  
Loyalty Card Booths  
Information Displayed Within Retailers

***5 category types for testing (Phase 2)***

Basic Product Recognition

Product Usage Information

Different types of qualities

Health management information

Consumer rights information

***Extract of font examples (Phase 2)***

All appliances vary. The following is a guideline only. Please remove all packaging.

All appliances vary. The following is a guideline only. Please remove all packaging.

All appliances vary. The following is a guideline only. Please remove all packaging.

All appliances vary. The following is a guideline only. Please remove all packaging.