



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



Department  
for International  
Development

**Zac Goldsmith MP**  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

Lord Teverson  
Chair of the European Union Energy and  
Environment Sub-Committee  
House of Lords  
London  
SW1A 0PW

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Dear Lord Teverson,

The government supports clear and honest food information to consumers that protects shoppers from being misled and allows them to make safe and healthy choices. Many people are reducing or eliminating meat from their diet while others continue to enjoy meat and we support the right of citizens to make those choices.

Current legislation on nutrition and ingredients labelling helps consumers compare the nutritional and other qualities of their food, whilst the UK front of pack 'traffic light' system helps consumers balance the basic nutrients in their diets. Furthermore, consumers are protected from misleading information both on food labels and on advertising for food products by the *Regulation on the Provision of Food Information to Consumers (EU 1169/2011)*.

Vegetarian sausages and burgers have been on the UK and European market for many years now and where they are clearly and honestly labelled, as the large majority are, consumers are not at all misled. There appears to be a growing demand for such foods and exciting opportunities for our great British food industry to meet this demand with new products. I agree with you that we should not stand in the way of these innovations, and that any problems that arise from the marketing of these foods can be addressed by existing legislation.

Part of this is ensuring that vegetarian foods are not marketed in a way that suggests a nutritional equivalence with meat products where this does not exist, or that undermines the well-deserved reputation for high quality, high-welfare meat enjoyed by UK livestock farmers. Responsible food producers must design labels that do not mislead as to the characteristics of the food, including its nature, composition or method of manufacture or production.

In conclusion, I agree with the points made in your letter, that existing legislation properly protects consumers from misleading information and that the Government should not put unnecessary barriers in the way of new foods being put on the market.



**ZAC GOLDSMITH**