

INTRODUCTION, OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

Commercial food products have to guarantee the health and the right of consumers to information. This is why labelling is so important. To make sure it is done properly there is a legislation that regulates what labels must have.

The main objective of the project was to determine the effectiveness of the implementation of the law, especially the Royal Decree 4/2014 through which the quality of meat products is regulated, as well as the content of the labels of meat products sold in supermarkets and meat products produced and sold in retail trade in Catalonia.

The other objective was to get information about people's knowledge of this legislation and whether it was useful for consumers of meat products and/or for people who produced them.

To find it out, 700 meat product labels have been evaluated, 400 in supermarkets and 300 in retailers, along with 400 surveys.

RESULTS

SUPERMARKETS

VERSUS

RETAIL TRADE

COMPARING THE MISTAKES FOUND ON THE
LABELS OF MEAT PRODUCTS

18/400 labels with
mistakes (4,5%)

Compliance with
legislation 95,5%

6 mistakes
concerning the Royal
Decree 4/2014

12 mistakes in the
(UE) Regulation 1169

The mistakes in
supermarkets in
Catalonia represents
2,5% to 6,5% of the
total and the
compliance 93,5% to
97,5% of the total.

160/300 labels with
mistakes (53,33)

Compliance with
legislation 46,67%

72 mistakes in non-
packaged goods

88 mistakes in
packaged goods

The mistakes in retail
trade in Catalonia
represents 47,63% to
59,03% of the total
and the compliance
40,97% to 52,37% of
the total.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE CURRENT LEGISLATION

The 47% of the
supermarket staff
make a correct
interpretation of the
information on the
labels and the 100%
believe in the need of
legislation.

The 20% of the
consumers make a
correct
interpretation of the
information on the
labels and the 100%
believe in the need of
legislation.

The 88% of the retail
trade staff make a
correct interpretation
of the information on
the labels and the
52% believe in the
need of legislation.



EXAMPLES OF LABELS WITH MISTAKES



Image 1. Image that could lead to misinterpretation



Image 2. No nutritional information available



Image 3. No poster or sign

Table 1. Compilation of mistakes according to the breached legislation

(RD 474/2014 (1) / R.(UE) 1169/2011 (2) /
RD 1376/2003 (3))

MISTAKE	AMOUNT	BREACHED LEGISLATION
SUPERMARKETS LABELS		
Defects in the name of the product	1	1
Errors in ingredient list	2	1
Minimum duration date or lack of expiry date absent	1	2
Special storage conditions and/or conditions of usage absent	2	2
No nutritional information available, incomplete, or with errors	9	2
Images that could lead to misinterpretation	3	1
TOTAL	18	
RETAIL TRADE NON-PACKAGED PRODUCTS LABELS		
No poster or sign	28	1 / 2 / 3
Ingredient list absent or incomplete	31	2 / 3
No mention of species from which meat was obtained	7	1 / 2 / 3
Defects in the commercial name	3	1 / 2 / 3
No indication of «Own elaboration»	3	3
TOTAL	72	
RETAIL TRADE PACKAGED PRODUCTS LABELS		
No label	47	1 / 2 / 3
Ingredient list absent or incomplete	24	2/3
No mention of species from which meat was obtained	11	1 / 2 / 3
Defects in the commercial name	4	1 / 2 / 3
No health mark	2	3
TOTAL	88	

CONCLUSIONS

The labels of commercial meat products in supermarkets present a higher compliance with the legislation than meat products produced by retail trade establishments. Despite this, in both cases there is a significant percentage of mistakes that is unacceptable, since the correct application of the legislation is compulsory.

Mostly those who were surveyed knew of the existence of the legislation which controls labelling, but an important part of them misinterpreted the information on the labels.

Measures should be implemented to improve the compliance with the legislation and there would have to be training and dissemination campaigns, and a more understandable terminology should be used in order to guarantee the right to information.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Reglamento (UE) 1169/2011 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 25 de octubre de 2011, sobre la información alimentaria facilitada al consumidor

Real Decreto 1376/2003, de 7 de noviembre, por el que se establecen las condiciones sanitarias de producción, almacenamiento y comercialización de las carnes frescas y sus derivados en los establecimientos de comercio al por menor

Real Decreto 4/2014, de 10 de enero, por el que se aprueba la norma de calidad para la carne, el jamón, la paleta y la caña de lomo ibérico

Real Decreto 474/2014, de 13 de junio, por el que se aprueba la norma de calidad de derivados cárnicos