

From Science to Sensationalism: why the ‘ultra-processed’ agenda misses the point

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Tomorrow, 18 November, *The Lancet* journal is expected to release a series of three papers examining the role of so-called ‘ultra-processed foods’ (UPF) in our food systems. The papers add to an increasingly polarised discussion where one fact remains: the science behind UPFs is **far from settled**.

Public authorities across Europe, including the [UK](#), [Nordic countries](#), and [France](#), all reject the use of the ultra-processed food concept as a basis for developing public health policy because it lacks scientific consensus, is imprecise and confusing, and it risks undermining existing public health efforts.

While the campaign against so-called ‘ultra-processed foods’ makes for provocative headlines, it oversimplifies complex dietary issues, risks confusing consumers, and undermines existing effective public health efforts.

The food and drink industry shares the goal of promoting healthier choices and food environments. That’s why food and drink makers here in Europe are [playing their part](#) by reformulating products to cut salt, fat, and sugars whilst boosting fibre and micronutrients, all the while providing more nutritious offerings that deliver health benefits to suit all diets.

Well-established nutrition science tells us that the best way to tackle obesity and non-communicable diseases is to focus on the nutrition content of a food and how often we consume it, in conjunction with what type of lifestyle we lead.

Europe’s food and drink makers stand ready to support EU policymakers and public health communities in promoting better nutrition and dietary habits.

Note to the editors

FoodDrinkEurope is the organisation of Europe’s food and drink industry, the largest manufacturing sector in Europe, a leading employer and a key contributor to the economy (300,000+ companies, 99% SMEs, 4.7 million employees).

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