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Title: Range of processed foods available in France and nutrition labelling according to the type of brand

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Original research article

Highlights:

- Entry-level retailer brand processed products had the lowest variety of recipes
- National brand processed products had the widest diversity of recipes
- Retailer brands showed the highest frequency of almost all nutritional indicators
- National brands displayed the highest frequencies for nutrition and health claims
- Entry-level retailer brands had the least nutritional information labelled

Abstract: The French Observatory of Food Quality (Oqali) aims at collecting all nutritional data provided on the labels of processed foods (nutritional information and composition), at the branded products level, in order to monitor changes in food composition (including reformulation) and nutritional labelling over time. This study involved a cross-sectional analysis of both the range of processed foods available and the associated nutritional information labelling according to the type of brand (national brands, retailer brands, entry-level retailer brands, hard discount and specialised retailer brands). On the basis of the data collected for 16 081 products from 24 food sectors between 2008 and 2011, the range of entry-level retailer brands was concentrated on the most basic and traditional recipes: for instance among Fresh dairy products, there were 30% Fresh creams, liégeois and flavoured jellied milk (n=19), 24% Classic sweet yogurts (n=15), and 17% Classic plain fresh cheeses with no added sugar (n=11), but no Light and/or sweetened fresh dairy desserts (n=0). Analysis of nutritional information labelling showed that retailer brand products carried the highest frequency of nutrition labelling (94%), guideline daily amounts (54%), and serving sizes (78%). National brand products displayed the highest frequency of claims (28% for nutrition claims and 8% for health claims). Entry-level retailer brand products displayed the lowest amount of nutritional information.

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