

Label Me

Key guidelines about how and why to create Short Food Supply Chain (SFSC) labels

agroBRIDGES Project



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Contents

This document presents information about how you can create **Short Food Supply Chain labels** respecting European Union practices. The overall objective of this guide is aimed at providing you with a labelling tool to increase the demand for your products and help consumer make better-informed choices.

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1. Why a label?

Defining and understanding the key concepts to develop an impactful label

The foods involved are identified by, and traceable to, a farmer. The number of non-productive or unnecessary intermediaries between farmer and consumer should be ‘minimal’ or ideally nil.

Defining and understanding the concept and the benefits of Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC) is a necessary step in understanding the importance of consuming food in this way.

The aim of this model is to reconnect producers and consumers, contribute to social relations in urban areas, and provide fresh, affordable and high-quality products among other benefits. SFSCs are all about minimising intermediaries and establishing direct contact between producers and consumers.

Furthermore, SFSCs models help to promote the development of trust by creating a community of “living together” as well as the economic recovering of rural areas generating collaborations with other industries such as tourism and/or gastronomic sector. It also reduces the pollution due to less transportation, energy savings and less packaging. A summary of these benefits can be found in this guide to increase the awareness of how important is the local food².





Consumers are looking to find out how to access SFSC products, but SFSCs may have limited resources for marketing and communication compared to global brands.

SFSCs offer a wide variety of high quality, traditional and artisan foods. However, sometimes it is difficult for consumers to identify those products as there are no common standards for the identification.

On the other hand, producers may need a support tool that helps them to improve their position in the market to show customers the benefits of consuming food in this way. For example, farmers offer their products to consumers and other clients while building a personal relationship with them.

Based on the above, in agroBRIDGES, we define SFSC as follows:

Short Food Supply Chains have as few links as possible between the food producer and the consumer/citizen who eats the food.



Consumers Insights

What are the main reasons why consumers choose SFSCs products?

Consumers associate local products with higher quality, healthy eating, more environmentally friendly production methods.

Products sold in local food systems are usually produced by farmers who make use of less harmful inputs, avoiding pesticides and synthetic fertilisers, using more sustainable animal feed, and reducing their overall usage of water and energy.

SFSC advantages include consumer access to fresh and seasonal produce, a lesser burden on the environment and building social relationships at a local level.

Why consumers choose SFSCs products?



Health

Higher quality standards (freshness, nutritional value...).



Environment

Environmentally sustainable production.



Ethics

Contribution to social relations in urban areas.



Producers

Insights



What are the main benefits for the SFSCs producers?

SFSCs bring advantages for local farmers such as fairer selling prices for the produce, higher protection of the local environment and greater connection among local citizens.

Local products are less likely to contain harmful chemicals from pesticides and synthetic fertilizers that may harm the consumers' health and the local environment.

In other words, one can understand SFSCs as "sales close to you" which rely less on intermediaries and, even better, bring producers and consumers in direct contact.

Main benefits for the producers



Fair Prices

A fairer price for farmers as the Number of intermediaries is minimal



Sales at a close distance

Locally grown or produced foods are sold to local consumers



Environmental footprint

Energy savings, less plastic, and less transportation



2. European Union Labelling Practices



Can a labelling scheme help?

Labels can be used as a **symbol to communicate** important and relevant information to consumers, especially in situations **when there is no direct contact with the producers.**

The label needs to replace the information that the consumers can get from the producers. Pieces of information such as the **origin**, the **nature** of the supply chain, the **quality** of the product as well as the processes and the **human resources** behind those products should be included in the labels.

However, if a producer needs to design a label for their products, they should know the **European Union labelling** practices to avoid common mistakes leading to the design of bad or incomplete labels.



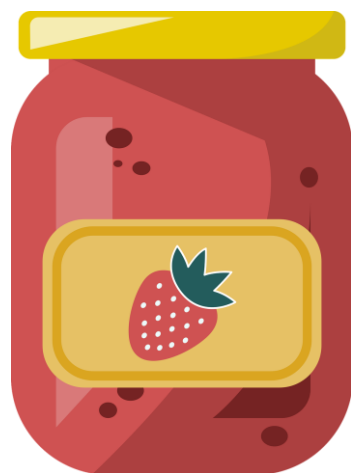
2. European Union Labelling Practices



Can a labelling scheme help?

As a starting point, we explain in detail the information that a well-designed label should include, as part of the general objectives of **Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011**:

*“The provision of **food information** shall pursue a high level of **protection of consumers’ health** and interests by providing a basis for final consumers to make **informed choices** and to make safe use of food, with particular regard to **health, economic, environmental, social and ethical considerations**”.*





“Food information shall not be misleading, particularly: as to the characteristics of the food and, in particular, as to its nature, identity, properties, composition, quantity, durability, country of origin or place of provenance, method of manufacture or production” ⁴

The following information is mandatory to include in the label⁴ :

1. The name of the food.
2. The list of ingredients (if applicable).
3. Any ingredient or processing aid or derived from a substance or product causing allergies or intolerances (if applicable).
4. The quantity of ingredients.
5. The net quantity.
6. The date of minimum durability or the “use by” date.
7. Any special storage conditions and/or conditions of use.
8. The country of origin.
9. Instructions for use (if applicable).
10. The actual alcoholic strength by volume (if applicable).
11. The name or business name and address of the food business operator.
12. A nutrition declaration .





The Twelve Rules Of Labelling

1. Name of the food: The name of the food shall be its legal name. In the absence of such a name, the name of the food shall be its customary name, or, if there is no customary name or the customary name is not used, a descriptive name of the food shall be provided.

2. List of ingredients: The list of ingredients shall be headed or preceded by a suitable heading that consists of or includes the word ingredients. It shall include all the ingredients of the food, in descending order of weight, as recorded at the time of their use in the manufacture of the food. Not applicable in the case of fresh and fruit vegetables, carbonated water, vinegar, cheese, butter, milk and cream.

3. Substances causing allergies: they shall be indicated in the list of ingredients with a clear reference to the name of the substance or product and clearly distinguishes it from the rest of the list of ingredients

4. Quantitative indication of ingredients: The indication of the quantity of an ingredient or category of ingredients used in the manufacture or preparation of a food shall be required where the ingredient or category of ingredients concerned.

Full EU Regulation



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The Twelve Rules Of Labelling

5. Net quantity: The net quantity of food shall be expressed using litres, centilitres, millilitres, kilograms or grams, as appropriate: in units of volume in the case of liquid products or in units of mass in the case of other products.

6. Minimum durability date: In the case of foods which, from a microbiological point of view, are highly perishable and are therefore likely after a short period to constitute an immediate danger to human health, the date of minimum durability shall be replaced by the 'use by' date. After the 'use by' date a food shall be deemed to be unsafe.

7. Storage or use conditions:

In cases where foods require special storage conditions and/or conditions of use, those conditions shall be indicated. To enable appropriate storage or use of the food after opening the package, the storage conditions and/or time limit for consumption shall be indicated, where appropriate.

8. Origin: Indication of the country of origin or place of provenance shall be mandatory.

Full EU Regulation



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The Twelve Rules Of Labelling

9. Instructions for use: The instructions for use of a food shall be indicated in such a way as to enable appropriate use to be made of the food.

10. Alcoholic strength: The rules concerning indication of the alcoholic strength by volume shall, in the case of products classified in CN code 2204.

11. Business Name: The name or business name and address of the food business operator.

12. Nutrition declaration:

Expressed per 100 g or per 100 ml, the mandatory nutrition declaration shall include the following :

- Energy value.
- The amounts of fat, saturates, carbohydrates, sugars, protein and salt.

This content can be supplemented with an indication of the following amounts:

- Mono-unsaturates.
- Polyunsaturates.
- Polyols.
- Starch.
- Fibre.

Full EU Regulation



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3. SFSC Label



The EU labelling framework and the importance of a visually appealing label

The objective of this section is to provide an overview of the actual European labelling framework. A series of studies on EU Food Quality Schemes (FQS)⁵ carried out by the Strength2Food project evaluated the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and consistency of these models based on the public consultation launched in 2019 by the European Commission (EC) on EU FQS⁶, and the new EC priority on strengthening Geographical Indications stated that there is still a weak knowledge and understanding of the actual meaning and functioning of FQS.

Consumer's knowledge does not seem to be high, there is a lack of information regarding labelling, certification and assurance schemes.

EU certifications are lower effective compared to national or international brands, and levels of knowledge, recognition, validation or confidence about these models are lacking cross Europe. Specific efforts are needed in order to improve communication on strategies linked to EU FQS.



EU Organic Green logo, Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indication (PGI), and traditional Specialites Guaranteed (TSG).





Identifying the opportunities to create an effective and powerful label that brings across the key messages of SFSCs.

Protected Designation of Origin, Protected Geographical Indication, Traditional Specialities Guaranteed and the EU's Organic Green leaf logos are not performing well in terms of communication effectiveness for neither consumers nor producers.

The definition and creation of a new label needs to be developed more clearly and effectively to increase consumers overall recognition, valuation and awareness in the following areas:

- Visual identity needs to represent the essence of SFSCs.
- The meaning of the label is required for better consumer understanding.
- Farmer's engagement is necessary through an easy-to-use design.





Designing a prototype: Size

The overall design of this prototype label is based on international standards such as the size which respects the ISO 7810⁷ standard on physical characteristics of identification cards. This size helps to easily allocate a trademark as well as the mandatory information, a declaration of the benefits and advantages of SFSCs business models and some additional information such as the QR code and/or a brief disclaimer.

85,6 mm

53,98 mm



Powered by Label Me

The Label Me Mark is the symbol to stimulate the adoption of Short Food Supply Chains (SFSCs) in the European Union. When buying SFSC products you are contributing to multiple economical, social and environmental benefits for sustainable development. Know more at www.agrobridges.eu



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Designing a prototype: Front side



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A trademark must be designed adopting an agricultural and sustainable design referencing sustainable development.

A description about what the label and the trademark means, reinforcing the importance, benefits and advantages of buying products based on SFSC models.

As the space is limited, a QR Code to your website can be added to the label. This would help consumers to easily inform themselves further.

European disclaimer referencing the EU project where the label has been created.



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Designing a prototype: Backside

Name of the product

List of ingredients: Include all the ingredients in descending order of weight and the quantity expressed in %, as recorded at the time of their use in the manufacture of the food.

Substances causing allergies: Include this information if applicable.

Instructions for use: If applicable, the instructions for use of food shall be indicated in such a way as to enable appropriate use to be made of the food

Alcoholic strength: If applicable, the rules concerning indication of the alcoholic strength by volume shall, in the case of products classified in CN code 2204.

Nutritional Facts

Average values per 100g/ml

Energy value

Fat

Saturated fat

Mono-unsaturates

Polyunsaturates

Carbohydrate

Sugars

Polyols

Starch

Fibre

Proteins

Salt

Best before date:

Product origin

City

Country

Business Name

Address of the food operator

Net quantity

The backside must include all the mandatory information respecting the European Union practices.

Producers need to fill in all the required information and only if applicable, the following fields too: allergy information, instructions for use, and alcoholic strength.

The list of ingredients can be omitted in the case of products derived exclusively from a single basic product (fruits, vegetables, cheese, butter, fermented milk etc.).





Tips of design: Finding your trademark

This section includes information, best practices, and resources that can help to boost the design of a label in order to maximise the effectiveness, impact, and awareness of the benefits of consuming SFSC products.

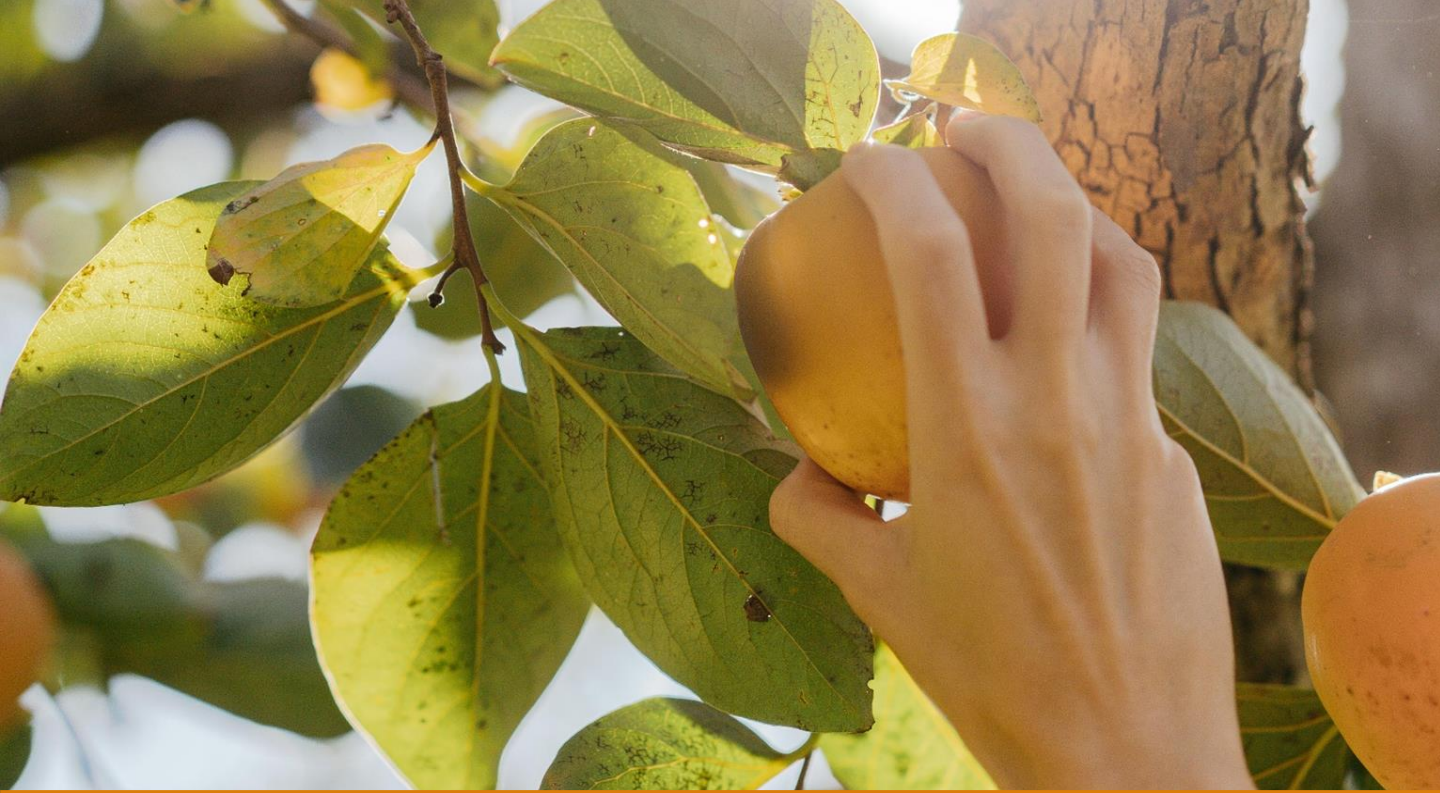
Be unique: Using a trademark or meaningful logo will enliven the importance of SFSC products. The following websites will allow you to download royalty-free vectors:



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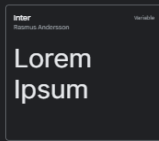


Tips of design: Branding aspects

Colour selection: colours are an important part of the look and feel of a label. When designing a label, it is important to follow a chromatic approach based on colour palettes. Design tools such as [Color.Adobe](#) allows users to find and explore complementary colours, look for trends and filter colors according to their harmony rule.



Typography selection: Text is also an important part of the look and feel of the label. Google Fonts is a free software that allows user to preview the text as well as to download the typography.



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Tips of design: Check your trademark

Before taking any final decisions, check existing trademarks for the same type of products or services to reinforce the authenticity of your design. The software TMDN, allows brand owners a simple way to verify names and logos across Europe. The following page is available in all languages.

Search **101.454.341** trade marks
across the European Union and beyond

Contains ▾ type trade mark name

SEARCH ADVANCED SEARCH

Drag and drop an image or upload it from your computer < 2MB. JPG PNG GIF TIFF

This is a beta functionality, currently supported by these offices: BX, DK, PT, CZ, EM, IT, ES, SI, EE, BG, FR, RO, AT, CY, DE, FI, GR, HU, IE, LT, LV, MT, PL, SE, HR, SK

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<https://www.tmdn.org><https://www.tmdn.org/tmview/#/tmviewg/tmview/#/tmview>



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