FACTS ABOUT SUGARS

ABOUT THIS INITIATIVE

The aim of this initiative is to contribute to an objective, fact-based and informed debate on sugars in the European Union through the provision of clear information with today's established scientific evidence.

It is supported by the following European organizations:

CAOBISCO – Chocolate, Biscuits and Confectionery of Europe
CEFS – European Association of Sugar Producers
PROFEL – European Association of Fruit and Vegetable Processors
STARCH EUROPE - European Starch Industry Association
UNESDA – Soft Drinks Europe

MORE INFORMATION AND FACTS CAN BE FOUND ON THE WEBSITES OF THE SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS:

CAOBISCO WWW.CAOBISCO.EU
T:+32 2 539 18 00

CEFS WWW.CEFS.ORG
T: +32 2 762 07 60

PROFEL WWW.PROFEL-EUROPE.EU
T:+32 2 761 16 56

STARCH EUROPE WWW.STARCH.EU
+32 2 289 67 60

UNESDA WWW.UNESDA.EU
T:+32 2 737 01 30

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FOR AN OBJECTIVE & INFORMED DEBATE ON SUGARS

OVER RECENT YEARS, A DEBATE HAS ARISEN OVER THE AMOUNT OF SUGARS PEOPLE SHOULD EAT AND THE POTENTIAL EFFECTS SUGARS MAY HAVE ON HEALTH.

HERE ARE 9 BASIC FACTS ABOUT SUGARS:

1. Sugars provide a source of energy required by the body to function.

2. Sugars are found in nature. All green plants providing foodstuffs, including fruits and vegetables, grains, as well as milk and honey, contain naturally-occurring sugars.

3. Many types of sugars are found in the diet on a daily basis. These include, for example, glucose, fructose, sucrose, and lactose. When the term 'sugar' is used, people are referring to 'sucrose' (table sugar)[1].

4. The human body does not differentiate between sugars naturally present in foods and added sugars.

5. In the EU, sugars must be labelled as total sugars[2] according to Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers.

6. In addition to bringing sweetness, sugars have many functions in foods, such as helping provide taste, texture and colour, extend shelf-life, and ensure safety and quality. No other single ingredient can replace all the functions of sugars in every food and drink.

7. Scientific studies in humans do not support the hypothesis that sugars may be physiologically addictive.

8. Frequency of consumption of fermentable carbohydrates[3] and lack of oral hygiene are the most important factors influencing the development of dental caries.

9. Sugars can be part of a healthy and balanced diet. Excessive consumption of calories from any source, combined with insufficient energy expenditure, is associated with an increased risk of overweight, obesity and non-communicable diseases.

1 Table sugar is produced from sugar beet or sugar cane.

2 Total sugars: this includes all sugars, whatever their food sources (whether added or naturally present in foods).
3 Fermentable carbohydrates are carbohydrates or carbohydrate mixtures as consumed in foods or beverages that lower the plaque pH by bacterial fermentation in the mouth.