



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

September 2018

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about the Real Bread Campaign's 'Honest Crust Act' campaign.

I am proud that the UK offers some of the best food produce in the world and I agree that consumers have a right to be informed about the products they buy. Longstanding EU regulations ensure that the labelling and advertising of food must not mislead the consumer.

Pre-packaged loaves must display a full ingredient list, whereas loaves sold at the point of production are exempted for the express purpose of reducing unnecessary regulatory burden on small businesses and bakeries, while still retaining essential, relevant information. These requirements, together with guidance on terms such as 'hand-made', 'Farmhouse' and 'home-made', already provide robust protection to consumers against misleading practices. If, however, a consumer thinks they are being misled by bread labelling, I would suggest either approaching the business selling the bread directly or seeking advice from the local trading standards office.

The regulations also define a list of approved additives and their conditions of use. Additives are restricted in sourdough breads. I am not aware of any current plans to review these regulations, but once we have left the EU it will be possible for the UK to do so. The Bread and Flour Regulations 1998 include some limited definitions such as of wholemeal, but their focus is on fortifying white and brown flour with certain nutrients, mainly for restorative purposes.

There are no current plans to introduce a legal definition for sourdough, but the baking industry itself may consider agreeing a code of practice on how a product should be composed in order to be described as a UK sourdough bread. Before becoming a Minister I took some interested constituents into DEFRA to talk about this.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me. I will continue to keep an eye on this area of policy.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris".

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY

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