



News Release

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"Connecting Cows, Cooperatives, Capitol Hill, and Consumers"

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New Poll: Consumers, by Nearly 3-to-1 Margin, Want FDA to End Mislabeling of Fake Milks

ARLINGTON, Va. – New national survey data released today finds that consumers – by a nearly 3-to-1 margin – want the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to enforce existing regulations and prohibit non-dairy beverage companies from using the term “milk” on their product labels. FDA is soliciting public comment regarding front-of-package dairy labeling regulations through Jan. 28.

The national survey conducted by IPSOS, a global market research and consulting firm, found that 61 percent of consumers believe FDA – which currently defines “milk” as the product of an animal, but doesn’t enforce that labeling rule – should restrict non-dairy beverage companies from using the term “milk” on their product labels. Only 23 percent said FDA should not limit the term “milk” to dairy products, while 16 percent were uncertain.

“Consumers have spoken, and they are clear in their desire for FDA to enforce its own rules,” said National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) President and CEO Jim Mulhern. “FDA must listen to their voice and end deceptive labeling by plant-based beverage manufacturers.”

Plant-based beverage brands regularly exploit lax regulatory enforcement to label their products as “milk,” and polling data shows that consumers are widely misinformed by mislabeling. A survey by IPSOS from last August showed that [73 percent](#) of consumers erroneously believe that almond-based drinks had as much or more protein per serving than milk. In a separate poll from the International Food Information Council Foundation released in October, [one-quarter](#) of consumers either thought almond drinks contained cow’s milk or weren’t sure.

The newly announced online IPSOS poll – commissioned by NMPF – was conducted Jan. 4-7, 2019, and surveyed 1,005 adults nationwide.

The question was: “The U.S. Food and Drug Administration currently defines ‘milk’ as the product of an animal, but doesn’t enforce that labeling rule. Do you believe that the FDA should restrict non-dairy beverage companies from using the term ‘milk’ on their product labels?”

About the study:

For the survey, a sample of 1,005 adults 18+ from the continental United States, Alaska and Hawaii were interviewed online in English. The source of these population targets is U.S. Census 2016 American Community

Survey data. The sample drawn for this study reflects fixed sample targets on demographics. Post-hoc weights were made to the population characteristics on gender, age, race/ethnicity, region, and education.

Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to, coverage error and measurement error. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to the effects of rounding. The precision of IPSOS online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points for all respondents. Ipsos calculates a design effect (DEFF) for each study based on the variation of the weights, following the formula of Kish (1965). This study had a credibility interval adjusted for design effect of the following (n=1,005, DEFF=1.5, adjusted Confidence Interval=+/-5.0 percentage points).

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The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), based in Arlington, VA, develops and carries out policies that advance dairy producers and the cooperatives they own. NMPF's member cooperatives produce the majority of U.S. milk, making NMPF the voice of dairy producers on Capitol Hill and with government agencies. For more, visit www.nmpf.org.