

# Purchasing policy

## Conscious Nutrition

Lidl Ireland and Northern Ireland • Last updated 01.03.2023



A BETTER  
TOMORROW



# Table of Contents

<b>Our Responsibility: Conscious Nutrition</b>	<b>2</b>	Our approach	24
Our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategy	3	Verified quality – Lidl’s own brands are tested thoroughly	24
<b>Background: Sustainable &amp; Healthy Diets</b>	<b>4</b>	How we are reducing unwanted substances in food	25
Our View on “The Planetary Health Diet”	5	Reducing pesticides	25
<b>Our Commitment to Conscious Nutrition</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Glossary</b>	<b>27</b>
Promoting a Healthy Diet	9	Glossary	28
Our Approach	9	<b>Sources and links</b>	<b>29</b>
Children’s Marketing for Healthy Food	10	Sources and links	30
Adding More Whole Grains	12		
Adding More Healthy Fats and Oils	13		
Reducing Sugar and Salt	15		
Fewer additives – streamlined ingredient lists	16		
Promoting sustainable nutrition	19		
Our approach	19		
Development of sustainable product range	20		
More plant-based sources of protein	20		
Reduction of food waste	21		
Promoting labelling, transparency, and empowerment	22		
Our approach	22		
Traffic Light Labelling	22		
Ensure food safety	24		



# Our Responsibility: Conscious Nutrition



# Our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategy

Sustainability is one of Lidl's core strategic priorities for A Better Tomorrow for our customers, suppliers, employees, and communities we operate in across Ireland and Northern Ireland

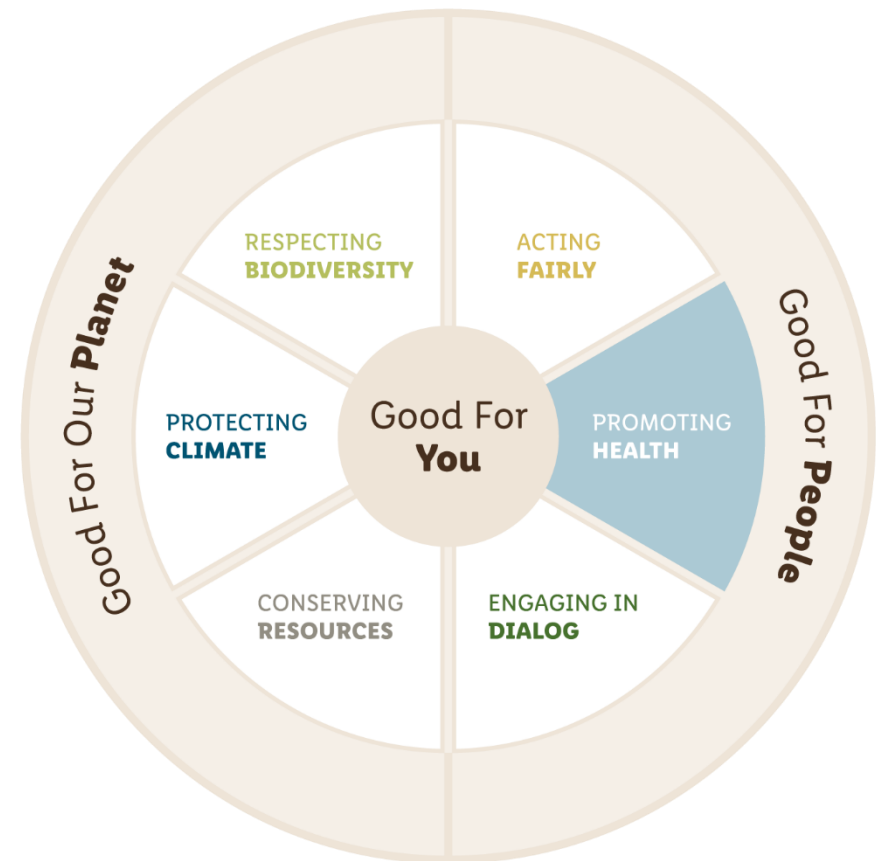
Our CSR strategy, addressing six focus areas:

- Conserving resources,
- Protecting the climate,
- Respecting biodiversity,
- Acting fairly,
- Promoting health, and
- Engaging in dialog.

## A Better Tomorrow: Conscious Nutrition

Our “Conscious Nutrition” strategy has an impact on all our focus areas and brings together the topics of “food safety”, “healthy nutrition”, “sustainable nutrition” and “transparency and empowerment”.

As a food retailer with more than 216 stores in Ireland and Northern Ireland, we interact with more than 1.5 million customers every week and therefore have an impact on their diets. We take this responsibility seriously and want to ensure we give our customers access to a broad range of products that support a healthy lifestyle.



# Background:

## Sustainable & Healthy Diets



## Our View on “The Planetary Health Diet”

Health is a continuously evolving area and where previously the industry focused on an individual's health, it has now developed much further and includes also how 10 billion people around the world can eat in a sustainable way in 2050 within ecological boundaries.

The effect that food systems have on the environment is becoming increasingly clear. Food currently takes up 55 percent of the planet's biocapacity.<sup>1</sup> In 1970, the Global Earth Overshoot Day, which marks the date when humanity has used all the biological resources that Earth regenerates during the entire year, was on December 31, but in 2022 it was moved forward to July 28. Our food has a big impact on our health in addition to the environment.

At Lidl, we have been very proactive in the reformulation of our own brand products with our goals of reducing added sugar and salt, as well as targets for residues, contaminants, and additives in our products. Examples are our Choco Rice breakfast cereal where the sugar has been reduced by 32% and we have reduced the salt in our Seed & Grain loaf by 27%.

Unbalanced diets can lead to numerous health complications, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and strokes. Despite an increased awareness of these issues, 60 percent of Ireland's population over the age of 15 years are either overweight or obese.<sup>2</sup>

However, as a society, there is a broad understanding that we need to evolve our habits. Two-thirds of consumers in the EU want to eat healthier and more sustainable foods.<sup>3</sup> The Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Department of Health have created a strategic taskforce focusing on the reformulation of products in Ireland as a key action point in the Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan<sup>4</sup>. Their aim is to reduce calories, saturated fat, sugar, and salt in the Irish diet through voluntary targets. While in Northern Ireland, the Food Standards Agency have a programme called “Eating Well Choosing Better”<sup>5</sup> which aligns with the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities' reduction and reformulation programme. Proposed EU legislation, such as the “farm to fork” strategy, draft legislation for deforestation-free supply chains and tax on CO<sub>2</sub>, plastic, sugar, or salt, shows the political will to move towards a more mindful and sustainable diet

<sup>1</sup> Earth Overshoot Day: Earth Overshoot Day 2022: Ecuador's Environmental Minister calls for action: “Use our ecological strength to shape our future”, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Healthy Ireland: Healthy Ireland Survey 2016 Summary of Findings, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> European Commission: Making our food fit for the future – Citizen's Expectations, 2020

<sup>4</sup> Health Ireland: Strategic Plan

<sup>5</sup> Food Standards Agency NI: Eating Well Choosing Better

## What is a sustainable and healthy diet according to the “Planetary Health Diet”?

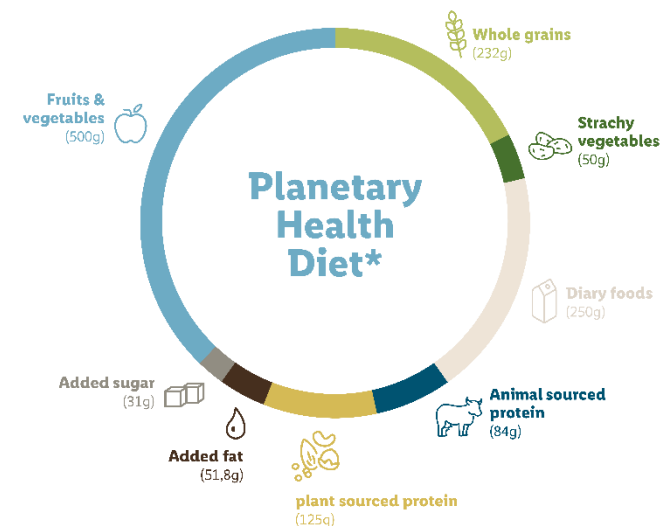
In 2019, the EAT Lancet Commission issued its Planetary Health Diet (PHD)<sup>6</sup> as the scientific basis for global dietary change. Led by Prof. Johan Rockström with support from 37 scientists from 16 countries in the disciplines of nutrition, health, sustainability, agriculture, and politics. According to the study, if everyone were to follow a predominantly plant-based diet, around 10 billion people could be fed with healthy foods in 2050 without overburdening the planet.

According to the PHD, diets will need to transition to be predominantly plant-based, with a smaller proportion of animal-based products. Although the PHD is still a theoretical model, it provides a long-term vision and a holistic nutritional framework that is within the limits of the planet’s resources. It is for this reason that we have chosen to base our key objectives around meeting the long-term goal of aligning with the PHD.

The Healthy Food for Life resources are for the entire population over the age of five and they define the Irish Government recommendations on healthy eating<sup>7</sup> and a balanced diet. The guidelines and resources provide practical

support for individuals and families to make healthier food choices and to ultimately improve their health and wellbeing.

In the UK, we also recognise that the Eatwell Guide<sup>8</sup> follows the UK government’s advice on healthy, balanced diets. As such we continue to support our customers to reach the dietary recommendations of the Eatwell Guide, whilst ensuring sustainable diets are built into our long-term commitments, hence aligning ourselves with the PHD



\* The quantities given refer to the recommended amount per day for an energy intake of 2,500 kilocalories. Source: Summary Report der EAT-Lancet-Kommission

<sup>6</sup> EAT Lancet Commission: Food, Planet, Health, 2021.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/heal/healthy-eating-guidelines/>

<sup>8</sup> Public Health England: The Eatwell Guide, 2016

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide>

# Our **Commitment** to Conscious Nutrition





# Our Commitment to Conscious Nutrition

As mentioned before our “Conscious Nutrition” strategy has an impact on all our focus areas and brings together the topics of “food safety”, “healthy nutrition”, “sustainable nutrition” and “transparency and empowerment”.

Food safety is the foundation of our strategy and is a prerequisite for the implementation of the other pillars. Healthy nutrition focuses on improving the physiological nutritional aspects of our product range. Sustainable nutrition describes the objective of having ecologically and socially just nutrition that is within the planet’s limits. To support our customers in the process of accepting this strategy, it is crucial to have transparency and communication so they can make more conscious purchasing decisions.

We are continually driving the further development our own-brand products based on these pillars.



# Promoting a Healthy Diet

## Our Approach

Consumers are becoming increasingly conscious of maintaining a healthier and more sustainable diet. According to an EU-wide survey, 70 percent of the consumers surveyed indicated that having a healthy diet was the most important thing for a sustainable lifestyle.<sup>9</sup> Eating healthier means focusing on consuming more fruit, vegetables and fibre and reducing the intake of salt, sugar, and saturated fats. With our assortment of more than 3,000 own brand products in Ireland and more than 2,800 own brand products in Northern Ireland, we offer our customers a wide selection of food that supports a healthy lifestyle. Moreover, we keep further developing our product range based on the latest scientific knowledge.

We are taking a holistic approach to the reduction of sugar, salt, saturated fats, energy density and ensuring flavourings, preservatives and colourings are natural. At the same time, we will endeavour to gradually increase the whole grain content and Lidl's range of own-brand whole grain products where possible. Promoting healthy eating to children is extremely important. From March 2023, in line with the current recommendation by the World Health Organisation (WHO), we

will not be advertising any foods to children that are high in saturated fats, sugar or salt, except for the Easter, Halloween and Christmas seasons.

Our nutrition experts review our own brand range on an ongoing basis. We work with our suppliers to develop their recipes in line with our specifications, which take all aspects of nutritional physiology into account. This also enables us to keep an eye on energy density. We have developed nutrient profiles that reflect the WHO recommendations, and to some extent, stricter national regulations (see p. 12 “WHO Recommendations” for additional information).

**In doing so, our focus remains on meeting the wishes and needs of our Lidl customers. Our unwavering standard is providing the best quality products to our customers. For this reason, we share our customer's feedback with our purchasing teams who use this to help to shape our range. There is no standardised approach for defining the term 'healthy' or 'healthier'.**

<sup>9</sup> European Commission: Making our food fit for the future – Citizen's expectations, 2020.

## Children's Marketing for Healthy Food

The number of overweight schoolchildren in the EU has been increasing for the past 20 years<sup>10</sup>. Children and adolescents who are exposed to media in Ireland see at least 5-7 adverts per day for unhealthy foods such as cakes, chocolate, and soft drinks. The Advertising Standards Agency of Ireland Code heavily prohibits targeting children under 15 as much as possible, therefore the number of adverts for unhealthy products would trend higher in other countries.

Having an unhealthy diet as a child increases the risk of food-related diseases as an adult, so the advertising of healthy food and the avoidance of adverts for unhealthy food up to the age of 14 is crucial for long term health<sup>11</sup>.

In addition to non-governmental organisations and consumer advocacy organisations in the EU, the European Consumer Organisation (BEUC) also promotes prohibiting advertising for unhealthy food that targets children.<sup>12,13</sup> Therefore, we have set the following goals:

### Our Objectives for Promoting a Healthier Diet for Children:

1. Starting in 2023, we will no longer advertise unhealthy food to children for our own brands.  
This includes advertising on the television, radio, social media, and on our leaflets.
2. By the end of 2025, we will only sell food with children's designs<sup>14</sup> on the packaging of our own brands if they fulfil the WHO criteria for healthy<sup>15</sup> food.  
Packaging will therefore be changed gradually.

Exception: Promotional items for Christmas, Easter, and Halloween.

<sup>10</sup> World Health Organization: Digital food environments, 2021.

<sup>11</sup>8 Verbraucherzentrale Bundesverband: Lebensmittel mit Kinderoptik und deren Bewerbung, 2021.

<sup>12</sup> The European Consumer Organisation: Food marketing to children needs rules with teeth, 2021.

<sup>13</sup> Foodwatch: Pressemitteilung Marktcheck, 2015.

<sup>14</sup>Items with children's designs means all foods where the packaging appeals to children up to and including the age of 14, or which suggest that they are particularly suitable for children.

<sup>15</sup>All foods that meet the nutritional guidelines (e.g. salt, sugar, saturated fats) in the WHO nutrient profile as they stand at the publish date of this paper are considered to be healthy foods.

Foods that meet the nutritional guidelines of the current WHO nutrient profile are considered healthy food and can be advertised in environments where children are present.

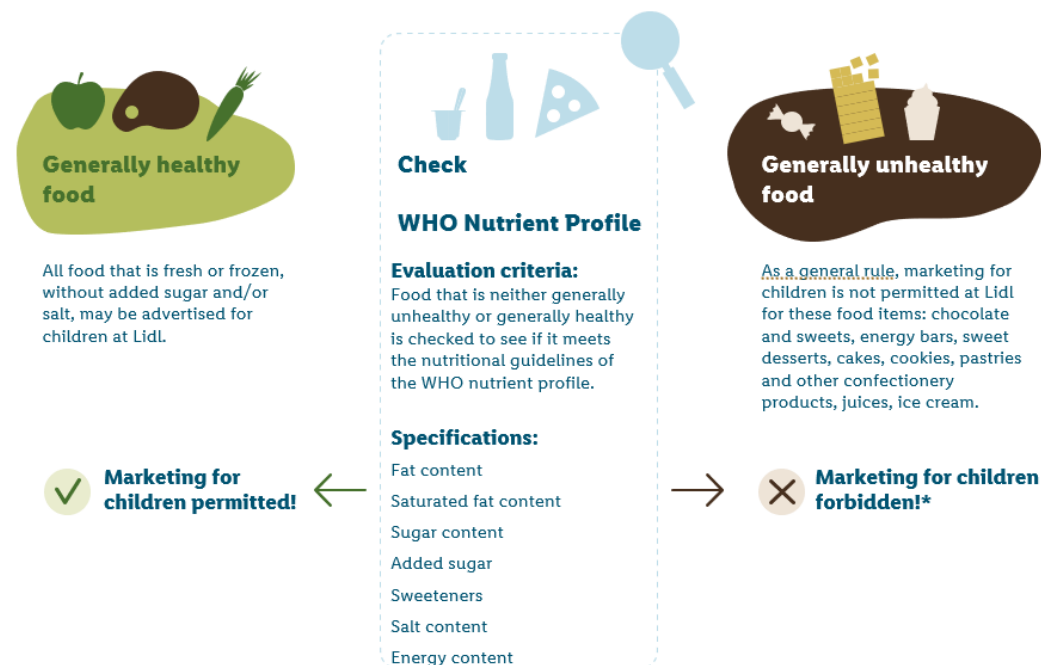
Christmas, Easter, and Halloween are special occasions in a child's life and do not constitute everyday diets. For this reason, we have decided to make an exception for these occasions. We do not want to promote that children make up for the rest of the year here but there will always be special occasions where we can indulge in treats.

### WHO-Recommendation

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has defined a system aimed specifically at children's diets that classifies foods as healthy or unhealthy. The nutrient profile currently divides foods into 17 categories and defines thresholds for nutrients, beyond which marketing should not be aimed at children.

The assessment criteria used are the total fat and total sugar content, saturated fats, added sugars and sweeteners, salt, and the energy density of the food.

### Food classification for children according to WHO Nutrient Profile



\*Exception: Easter, Halloween and Christmas seasons.

## Increasing dietary fibre

The role of dietary fibre has been investigated, with associations found between increased fibre intakes and reduced risk of diet-related diseases such as cardiovascular disease and coronary heart disease.<sup>16</sup> In the 2016 the Irish Nutrition and Dietetics Institute (INDI) recommended 24g-35g of fibre every day to support our digestion and health<sup>17</sup>.

Fibre is a type of carbohydrate which cannot be broken down by the body but plays a role in the movement of food in the gut. Research has found that some types of fibre support the growth of 'good' bacteria in the gut. This has also been shown to support the reduced risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease.<sup>18</sup>

Increases in wholegrain consumption have been found to be particularly successful at lowering the risk of some diseases, such as cardio-metabolic disease.<sup>19</sup> Wholegrain products contain more fibre, phytochemicals, and minerals (zinc, iron, magnesium) than white flour products, and is therefore a good mechanism for increasing fibre intake.

## Our goals for increasing fibre

1. By the end of 2023, we will have assessed the whole grain content and by end of 2024 the fibre content of our own brand product range.
2. By 2025, we aim to increase the fibre and whole grain content in our own brand product range.
3. We will continue to increase the number of products with fibre declared on packaging.

<sup>16</sup> Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition: Carbohydrates and Health, 2015, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/445503/SACN\\_Carbohydrates\\_and\\_Health.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445503/SACN_Carbohydrates_and_Health.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> [https://www.indi.ie/images/fact\\_sheets/Fabulous\\_fibre\\_fact\\_sheet\\_2.pdf](https://www.indi.ie/images/fact_sheets/Fabulous_fibre_fact_sheet_2.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Geng Zong, Alisa Gao, Frank B. Hu, Qi Sun: Whole Grain Intake and Mortality From All Causes, Cardiovascular Disease, and Cancer: A Meta-Analysis of Prospective Cohort Studies, 2016

<sup>19</sup> University of Washington: Health effects of dietary risks in 195 countries, 1990-2017: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study, 2017



## Adding More Healthy Fats and Oils

As a result of the continually increasing consumption of animal products in the past, the proportion of saturated fatty acids in our diet in the EU has also increased.<sup>20</sup> The excessive consumption of saturated fatty acids increases the risk for cardiovascular disease – the number one cause of death in Europe and North America.<sup>2, 21</sup> Unsaturated fatty acids like Omega 3 are primarily of plant origin and prevent cardiovascular disease.<sup>22</sup> We have set ourselves the aim of continually increasing the quality of fats and oils in Lidl's own brand products. We will realise this by increasing our use of unsaturated fatty acids and reducing our use of saturated fatty acids. Additionally, we are mindful that the fats and oils should come from sustainable sources as far as possible.

If a product requires a solid oil due to texture or other physical properties, we prefer vegetable fats. Hardened vegetable fats can be used, provided they are fully hardened fats. Partially hydrogenated vegetable fats carry the risk of containing harmful trans-fatty acids and will therefore still not be used.<sup>23</sup>

### Our objective for healthy fats and oils

We are committed to reviewing the nutritional composition of all own brand products through the existing product development process. Through this process we aim to:

- Decrease the total fat content of our own brand products
- Shift the proportion of fat in our own brand products from saturated fats to unsaturated fats

When the goal is to make the most sustainable choice, it needs to be considered whether to use certified palm oil or a fully hydrogenated vegetable fat.

<sup>20</sup> European Environment Agency: Consumption of Meat, Dairy, Fish and Seafood, 2017.

<sup>21</sup> Eurostat – Statistics Explained: Causes of Death Statistics, 2022.

<sup>22</sup> MD Dr PH Dariush Mozaffarian: Dietary fat, 2022.

<sup>23</sup> World Health Organization: Nutrition – Trans fat, 2018.

### What is palm (kernel) oil and what is Lidl's approach to it?

The oil palm, from which palm oil is extracted, is particularly high-yielding and, compared to other vegetable oils, makes much better use of the available land. Due to its consistency, palm oil does not need to be hydrogenated like other vegetable oils. These properties make palm oil the most widely used vegetable oil in the world. However, palm oil is cultivated in highly sensitive tropical regions.<sup>24</sup>

Responsible commerce that protects the rainforests and biodiversity and that benefits the local population is important to Lidl. For this reason, the palm (kernel) oil used in Lidl's own brand products has been required to have sustainability certification since 2018.

To do this, we work closely with recognised initiatives and certification organisations such as the Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), Fairtrade, Organic and Rainforest Alliance.

Additional information on our commitment to realising more of our commercial practices when purchasing palm (kernel) oil is available

in [the Position Paper for the More Sustainable Purchasing of Palm \(Kernel\) Oil](#).

### Required space for producing one tonne of oil



<sup>24</sup> WWF: Auf der Ölspur: Berechnungen zu einer palmölfreieren Welt, 2016.

## Reducing Sugar and Salt

In the EU, an average of approximately 37 kg of sugar is consumed per head per year<sup>25</sup> – according to the WHO a maximum of nine kg is considered to be healthy.<sup>26</sup> Additionally, in Ireland, an average of approximately 10g<sup>27</sup> of salt is consumed per head per day – according to the WHO, a maximum of 1.8 kg per year is considered to be healthy.<sup>28</sup> The overconsumption of sugar results in people becoming overweight and increases their risk of diabetes<sup>29</sup> The overconsumption of salt increases the risk of cardiovascular disease and strokes.

A voluntary Salt Reduction Programme was first established and coordinated by the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) in 2003 with the aim to achieve gradual and sustained reductions in the salt content of processed foods<sup>30</sup>. The FSAI has continued to set and track targets for reducing salt and sugar content since then. Currently as part of the Roadmap for Food Product Reformulation in Ireland the targets are a 10 % salt reduction focused on the food groups that contribute the most to people's salt intake and 20 % sugar reduction focused on the food

groups that contribute the most to people's sugar intakes from 2021-2025<sup>31</sup>

Under the umbrella of the Irish salt reduction programme and the Roadmap for Food Product Reformulation in Ireland, Lidl has been and will continue to review the added salt and sugar content in our own-brand product range item by item as part of our continuous new- and existing-product-development process. The aim here is for the added salt and sugar content to be below or on par with comparable items on the market. This way we are constantly optimising our range to be the best in class while keeping food safety, shelf life, quality, and taste in mind.

### **Our aim for reducing sugar and salt**

We are aiming to reduce the sales-weighted average content of sugar and salt in our own brand assortment by 20% by 2025.

<sup>25</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation Development: Agricultural Outlook 2021-2030, 2022.

<sup>26</sup> World Health Organization: WHO calls on countries to reduce sugars intake among adults and children, 2015.

<sup>27</sup> Food Safety Authority of Ireland: Salt and Health: Review of the Scientific Evidence and Recommendations for Public Policy in Ireland, 2016.

<sup>28</sup> World Health Organization: Salt Intake, 2022.

<sup>29</sup> World Health Organization: Diabetes, 2022.

<sup>30</sup> Food Safety Authority of Ireland: Monitoring of Sodium and Potassium in Processed Foods 2022

<sup>31</sup> Food Safety Authority of Ireland: Food Reformulation 2021

## Not all kinds of sugar are the same

Isoglucose in food has been linked to people becoming overweight and fatty liver disease. However, new nutritional evaluations show that this assumption is not confirmed and that isoglucose has no different effect on human health than other types of sugar.<sup>32</sup>

## Not using sweeteners as sugar substitutes

When reducing sugar, we want to gradually introduce our customers to our own brands having a less sweet taste. In doing so, we do not replace sugar with sweeteners, as sweetener-containing foods contribute to a sweet habit due to their intense sweetness. This would further encourage a poor, sugar-rich diet and reduce the consumption of healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables.

We also reduce fructose in the form of pure fructose and fructose-glucose syrup in our products, as high fructose intake is suspected to be a risk factor in the development of obesity and fatty liver disease.<sup>33</sup>

In addition to products sweetened with sugar, we also offer reduced sugar and sugar-free alternatives, which contain sweeteners. Our

reduced-sugar or sugar-free foods are aimed at customers who want to eat foods with a low energy density, but not give up the sweetness they are familiar with.

### Our objective for different types of sugar

We will continue, where possible, to avoid the use of fructose-glucose syrups and pure fructose, where they are being used primarily for sweetening.

## Fewer additives – streamlined ingredient lists

Additives are substances that are added to food for technological reasons. Preservatives, for example in sausages, protect against microbial spoilage.

Scientific findings and consumer advice centres generally advise against consuming highly processed foods containing certain additives,

<sup>32</sup> Max Rubner-Institut: Ernährungsphysiologische Bewertung und Auswirkungen des Isoglukosekonsums auf die menschliche Gesundheit, o.J.

<sup>33</sup> James J DiNicolantonio, Ashwin Subramonian, James H O'Keefe: Added fructose as a principal driver of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease: a public health crisis, 2017.

especially for children.<sup>34</sup> In addition, many consumers have a critical view of additives.<sup>35</sup> Therefore we are constantly working to reduce additives in our Lidl own brand products.

### **Food colouring**

We will continue to avoid artificial colourings in our own brands as far as possible. As a matter of principle, we prefer colouring foods that are food ingredients with beetroot, for example, to using artificial food colourings.

We have not used azo dyes in food since 2009, except for some spirits and aperitifs.

### **Aromas**

Excessively flavoured foods can result in children forgetting what natural foods normally taste like. For this reason, we believe the moderate use of flavourings is therefore key. If flavourings are used, then flavour extracts or natural flavours derived from the foods of the same name are preferred.

### **Flavourings in vegan substitute products**

Vegan substitute products that are supposed to taste like chicken, for example, are a special case when it comes to the use of flavourings. If using a natural flavouring would mean that the food was no longer vegan, then we consciously use artificial flavourings.

### **Adding vitamins and mineralisation**

With a few exceptions, a balanced diet provides an adequate amount of vitamins and minerals. Only certain groups of people (e.g. pregnant women or smokers) or people with certain illnesses usually need additional quantities. For everyone else, excessive intake of foods with added vitamins and minerals may have a negative impact on their health in isolated cases. We therefore only add vitamins and minerals to selected products, such as multi-vitamin drinks (vitamins), sports drinks, meat substitute products (vitamin B12), plant-based milk alternatives (calcium), milk, margarine, and iodised table salt.

### **Preservatives**

<sup>34</sup> Leonie Elizabeth, Priscila Machado, Marit Zinöcker, Phillip Baker, Mark Lawrence: Ultra-Processed Foods and Health Outcomes: A Narrative Review, 2020.

<sup>35</sup> Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit: Eurobarometer Spezial 354: Lebensmittelrisiken, 2010.



Our aim is to reduce the use of preservatives so far as possible, or to avoid them altogether, while also paying attention to possible effects on food losses. The safety of the food must not be impaired.

#### **Our objectives for fewer additives**

1. Flavouring natural food ingredients over food additives.
2. Reduction of colourants in addition to not using azo dyes where possible.
3. Moderate use of flavourings, including in vegan substitute products
4. No general, wide-scale addition of vitamins and minerals
5. Reducing and avoiding the use of preservatives while taking food safety into consideration.

# Promoting sustainable nutrition

## Our approach

According to the planetary health diet, the diet of the future should rely on a high share of plant-based products with moderate consumption of meat and dairy. The production of animal products currently causes approximately:

- 20 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions<sup>36</sup>
- 80 percent of the global use of agricultural land<sup>37</sup>
- 40 percent of the global deforestation of primary forests<sup>38</sup>
- 30 percent of the global use of fresh water<sup>39</sup>

Our goal is to provide a wide range of food options, so our customers have the choice to plan their diet. We will increase the offer of plant-based protein sources while also continuing to collaborate with our suppliers and food standards to increase the sustainability in the production of our animal derived products.

To make it easy to choose foods for a more sustainable diet, we will offer more seasonal and regional foods, organic where possible, and develop our assortment to include a wider selection of vegan and vegetarian foods.

We are committed to the sustainable production of fruit and vegetables, soy, palm (kernel) oil, coffee, tea, cacao, rice, nuts, meat, fish, and shellfish. You can find additional information in our respective [purchasing policies](#).

To make the food of the future even more sustainable, we need to reduce food waste. According to studies, one third of all food produced worldwide never ends up on a plate.<sup>40</sup> We are therefore putting several measures in place to reduce food waste (see page 21).

<sup>36</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: GLEAM 2.0 Assessment of Greenhouse gas emissions and mitigation potential, 2017.

<sup>37</sup> Statista: Distribution of land use for food production worldwide as of 2019, 2021.

<sup>38</sup> Our World in Data: Cutting down forests: what are the drivers of deforestation?, 2021.

<sup>39</sup> P.W. Gerbens-Leenes, M.M. Mekonnen, A.Y. Hoekstra: The water footprint of poultry, pork and beef: A comparative study in different countries and production systems, 2013.

<sup>40</sup> World Food Programme: 5 facts about food waste and hunger, 2020.

## Development of sustainable product range

In view of changing climatic conditions, increasing loss of biodiversity and associated consequences for people's living, and working conditions, we as a food retailer have a responsibility for ensuring sustainable development and economic activity within the boundaries of our planet. We are meeting this challenge by continuously aligning our extensive and high-quality assortment with scientifically based sustainability criteria. In concrete terms, this results in a continuous improvement process for existing products and the development of new, more sustainable alternatives. That is why we work closely with credible certification systems, initiatives and partners from science, society, and politics.

### Our objectives for more sustainability in the assortment

1. We certify our critical raw materials according to recognised standards and engage in Initiatives and Projects. All our raw material objectives can be found in the Purchasing Policy for Raw Materials [here](#).

## More plant-based sources of protein

We want to offer our customers a wider choice of food to enable them to choose a regional, seasonal, and varied but plant-focussed diet, where possible. To do this, we are continuously expanding Lidl's own brand assortment according to our international protein strategy.

### Our objectives for more plant-based protein sources

2. From the 2023 fiscal year, we will be transparent about the proportion of animal-based sources of protein in comparison to plant-based sources. To achieve this, we will disclose the proportion of animal-based sources of protein in comparison to plant-based sources in our Sustainability Report.
3. Protein strategy: By 2025, we will increase the proportion of plant-based sources of protein in our assortment by adding new products that support a plant-based diet. This includes pulses, nuts and other plant-based sources of protein.

Lidl sells vegan and vegetarian products in Ireland and Northern Ireland under its own brand Vemondo. With some of the purely plant-based products, we not only want to appeal to vegans and vegetarians, but we also want to build a bridge for all customers who may choose to incorporate more plant-based options in their diets.

## Reduction of food waste

It is estimated that approximately 1.3 billion<sup>41</sup> tons of food waste are created every year worldwide. In Ireland in 2020, it is estimated that 770,300 tonnes of food waste were generated at various stages of the food supply chain.<sup>42</sup> The EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) indicates the distribution of food waste in the country is approximately 31 percent losses in consumption in households and 29 percent losses in manufacturing and processing. Approximately 23 percent of annual food waste is attributable to the restaurants and food service sector (EPA 2020, figures). These losses are followed by direct effects on the use of resources (soil, water, biodiversity) and greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, a reduction in food waste automatically has a positive effect on the climate, the use of land and resource efficiency.

### Our objective for less food waste

On its way to achieving “zero waste”, Lidl Ireland and Northern Ireland has committed itself to reducing food waste by 50% by 2030.

To achieve this, we are relying on a demand based MRP (material requirements planning) system, efficient supply chains with short transport routes, end-to-end compliance of cold chains, fresh produce controls, stock monitoring, discount promotions, and raising customer awareness of waste reduction.

As part of the “Waste not” concept, we want to work with customers specifically to save food within our stores. Despite careful ordering of goods, perishable foods may not be sold shortly before or on their best before date (BBD). Within the scope of that campaign, we offer a price reduction on fresh food that has reached its best before but is perfectly safe to eat. Since the beginning of 2023 our customers can get “Waste not” fruit and veg boxes, priced at just €3, that contain at least 5kg of mixed fruit and vegetables fresh from our store shelves.

We also donate goods that can still be enjoyed but are no longer fit for sale available to charitable organisations, which distribute the food to those in need. Lidl Ireland has been working with FoodCloud since 2017 and to date has redistributed more than 4 million meals to hundreds of charities across the country.

<sup>41</sup> J. Aulakh, A. Regmi: Post-harvest food losses estimation: development of consistent methodology, 2013.

<sup>42</sup> Environmental Protection Agency: Food Waste Statistics, 2020.

# Promoting labelling, transparency, and empowerment

## Our approach

Through transparent labelling of our products, we want to empower our customers to make conscious purchasing decisions. Our own brands therefore carry clear information and recognised labels. Moreover, our customers can find information about the sustainability of our products in household leaflets, on our better tomorrow websites in [IE](#) and [NI](#) and through other channels.

Market analyses within the EU show that the increasing number of product-specific labels can lead to excessive demands.<sup>43</sup> Therefore we rely on simplified labelling of health, and animal welfare on our products.

For the nutritional properties, we use Traffic Light Labelling.

For transparency and assurance on the husbandry conditions of livestock, all our fresh meat and poultry from Ireland carries the Bord Bia Quality Assurance Mark and all our Northern Irish fresh meat and poultry carries the Red Tractor label. We will continue to develop the quality, sustainability, and performance of these ranges in collaboration with our suppliers and other external stakeholders.

## Traffic Light Labelling

Traffic Light Labelling on front of pack offers a voluntary approach to increasing the visibility of nutrition information for customers. Lidl first adopted the traffic light labels in 2014. This simple colour-coding system can be used by customers to make food choices based on easily accessible, understandable, and comparable nutrition information.

The full traffic light label consists of information on energy (calories), fat, saturated fat, sugar, and salt. Quantities are given in both grams and as a percentage of your daily allowance, Recommended Intake (RIs). The red, amber, and green colours show whether a product is high, medium or low in the nutrient.

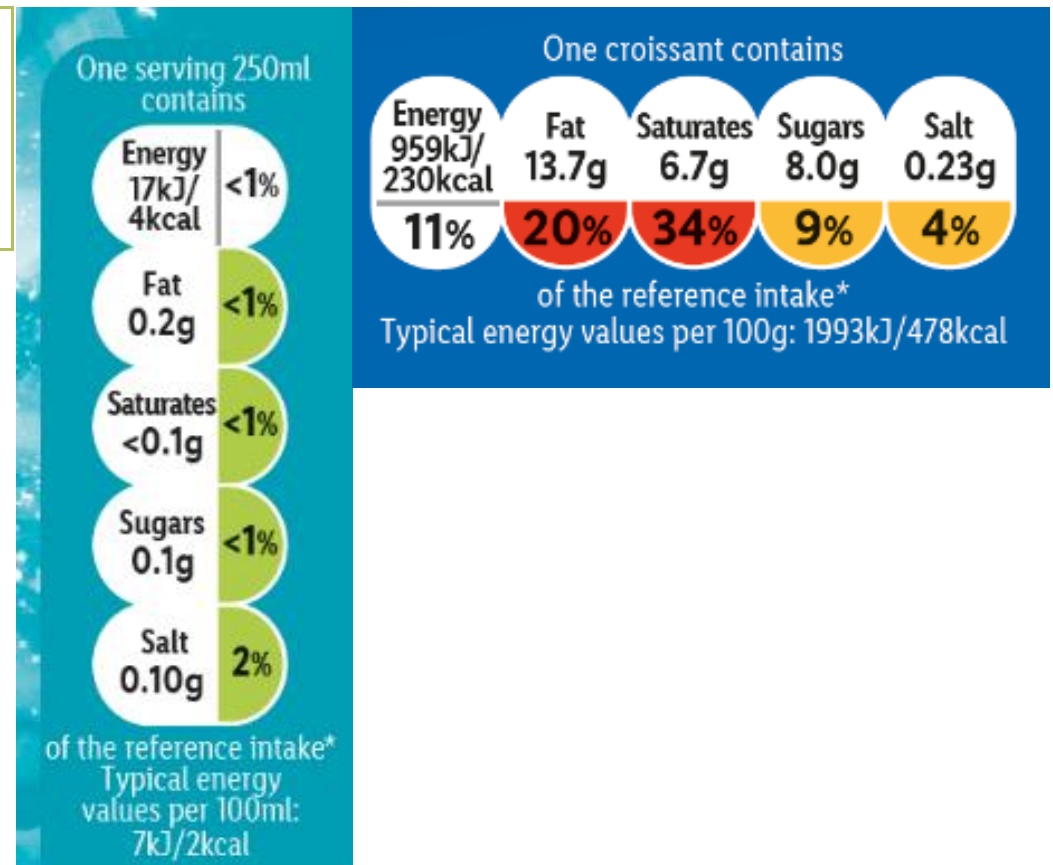
We strive to improve the traffic light labelling by reformulating our own brand products, with the aim to shift reds to ambers and greens. Lidl aims to include traffic light labels on front of pack, where possible. There may be cases where this isn't feasible, for example space restraints on pack.

<sup>43</sup> European Commission: Impact Assessment Report, 2022.



### Our objective for nutritional value labelling

We are committed to continue using traffic light labels on our own brand products where possible. And explore further labels in different countries to gauge their viability.



# Ensure food safety

## Our approach

Food safety is the foundation of our conscious nutrition strategy and therefore our most important focus. Lidl quality assurance starts with the selection of our suppliers.

As a rule, our suppliers are certified according to the International Featured Standard (IFS) or the British Retail Consortium's BRC Global Standard. We work closely with them to ensure the ongoing safeguarding of their manufacturing and production processes.

## Verified quality – Lidl's own brands are tested thoroughly

To ensure the safety, legal conformity and quality of our own-brand food products, all of these products are systematically tested at regular intervals by independent and accredited institutes and unannounced on-site audits. Testing includes reviewing the product labels as well as chemical, microbiological, physical, and sensory parameters. Buyers and Quality Assurance employees at Lidl also test the sensory quality within the scope of expert tasting sessions. This quality assurance is supplemented by regular tasting sessions by consumers, which indicate how customers rate the product.

The standards of our quality assurance are also checked externally and independently. This means that our quality assurance meets the requirements of DIN ISO 9001:2015, among others. The National Standards Authority of Ireland has confirmed this in annual certification audits since 2020.

## How we are reducing unwanted substances in food

We had established internal limits with our suppliers for many undesirable substances which precede legal limits set at EU level. This is the case, for example, with acrylamide, 3-monochloropropanediol, mineral oil hydrocarbons, pyrrolizidine, and tropane alkaloids and trans fatty acids. This is because we not only monitor compliance with food regulations, but also keep an eye on new findings from research and residue analysis and consumer testing magazines. We also remain in close contact with the experts at testing institutes. We provide our suppliers with these specifications in the form of assured quality standards and consistently monitor compliance.

### **Our objective for unwanted substances in food**

Reduction of contaminants and residues to significantly below legal requirements.

## Reducing pesticides

Pesticides are used to protect plants or plant products from diseases such as fungal or pest infestations. However, there can be risks involved in this for biodiversity and people's health. That is why the European "Farm to Fork" strategy as well as the "Biodiversity Strategy for 2030" both require a 50 percent reduction of chemical pesticides. At Lidl, we have had targets for the reduction of pesticides for many years which far exceed current European regulations.

### **Our goals for reducing pesticides**

1. Selling food that is as residue-free as possible.
2. Permitting residues of active ingredients up to a third of the legally permitted maximum levels.
3. The total percentage rate of utilisation of the legally permitted maximum quantity of all active substance residues must not exceed a maximum value of 80 percent.
4. A maximum of four active ingredient residues may be detectable in total.



## OVERVIEW OF THE CONSCIOUS NUTRITION OBJECTIVE

### BACKGROUND:

The role that food systems play in the environment is becoming increasingly clear and relevant. Today, food takes up 55% of our planet's biocapacity, i.e., more than half of the earth's surface.<sup>1</sup> Our diet not only affects the environment it also has a major impact on our health. One third of premature deaths in Europe and North America could be prevented by a healthy diet.<sup>2</sup>

### CHALLENGE:

#### SUSTAINABLE AND HEALTHY DIET

The planetary health diet is the scientific basis for global dietary change.<sup>3</sup> If everyone were to follow the recommendations of this diet, around 10 billion people could be fed healthy food in 2050 without overburdening the planet.

### TARGET:

Our goal is to offer **the best range of products for a mindful and sustainable way of living by 2025**. Food safety is the foundation for this. By setting goals for healthy and sustainable nutrition, we want to support the transformation of food systems.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.overshootday.org/newsroom/press-release-july-2022-german/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://globalnutritionreport.org/reports/2021-global-nutrition-report/health-and-environmental-impacts-of-diets-worldwide/>

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## FOOD SAFETY



### REDUCTION OF UNWANTED SUBSTANCES

Ongoing	Reduction of contaminants and residues to significantly below legal requirements.
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### REDUCTION OF PESTICIDES

Ongoing	Selling food that is as residue-free as possible
	Reduction of residues of active ingredients up to one-third of the maximum legally permitted levels
	Total percentage rate of all residues of active ingredients up to a maximum of 80% of the legally permitted amount
	Residue can be detected from a maximum of four active ingredients for each food

## HEALTHY DIET



### CHILDREN'S MARKETING

Effective immediately	We promote the marketing of a healthy and sustainable diet for children
2023 onwards	We do not advertise our own brand products deemed unhealthy to children
By the end of 2025	Children's designs are only used on the packaging of our own brands which fulfill WHO criteria. Exception: Christmas, Easter, Halloween

### WHOLE GRAIN & FIBER

By 2023	Assess the whole grain content in our assortment
By 2024	Assess the fibre content in our assortment
By 2025	We aim to increase the fibre and whole grain content in our own brand product range.
Ongoing	We will continue to increase the number of products with fibre declared on packaging.

### HEALTHY FATS AND OILS

Ongoing	Increasing the share of high-quality and sustainable vegetable oils in our own brand items, preferably from regional sources
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### SUGAR AND SALT REDUCTION

By 2025	Aiming for a 20% reduction of the average, sales-weighted content of added sugar and salt in our own-brand products
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### ADDITIVES

Ongoing	Using natural ingredients instead of food additives
	Reduction of colorants, no use of azo dyes, quinoline yellow and Green S
	Moderate use of flavorings, including in vegan substitute products
	No general, large-scale vitamination and mineralisation
	Reduction and avoidance of preservatives while taking food safety into account

## SUSTAINABLE NUTRITION



### PLANT-BASED PROTEIN SOURCES

By 2023	Protein strategy: Be transparent in our Sustainability Report about the proportion of animal-based sources of protein compared to plant-based sources of protein
By 2025	Protein strategy: By 2025, we will increase the proportion of plant-based sources of protein in our assortment by adding new products that support a plant-based diet. This includes pulses, nuts and other plant-based sources of protein.

### DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE PRODUCT RANGE

Ongoing	We certify our critical raw materials according to recognised standards and engage in Initiatives and Projects.
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### REDUCTION OF FOOD WASTE

By 2025	On its way to achieving "zero waste", Lidl Ireland and Northern Ireland has committed itself to reducing food waste by 50% by 2030
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## TRANSPARENCY & EMPOWERMENT



### NUTRITIONAL VALUE LABELLING

Ongoing	We are committed to continue using traffic light labels on our own brand products where possible. And explore further labels in different countries to gauge their viability.
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### Animal Welfare

Ongoing	Collaborate and support Bord Bia in the increase in animal welfare standards in Ireland
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# Glossary





# Glossary

<b>Energy density</b>	The energy content of a food per 100 grams. This can be measured in calories (kcal) or kilojoules (kJ). Foods that are high in water and fibre, such as most fruits and vegetables, tend to have low energy density. Products that contain a lot of sugar, fat or starch have high energy density. <sup>44</sup>
<b>Glucose-fructose syrup</b>	Sugar syrup produced from starchy plants such as corn, potatoes, or wheat. In glucose-fructose syrup, the share of fructose (fruit sugar) is between 5 and 50 percent. This syrup has a higher sweetening power and is often used for better solubility or to improve the texture. Consuming too much fructose can lead to an increased risk of severe obesity, diabetes, metabolic disorders, and cardiovascular disease. <sup>45</sup>
<b>MRP (material requirements planning)</b>	demand-oriented ordering systems, which we continuously improve. It places orders for stores based on sales data. While this previously was a very manual process, we increasingly use computer programmes and AI with the aim of getting as close as possible to the exact quantities of products needed in each store.

<sup>44</sup> BMEL: Kompass Ernährung, 2019.

<sup>45</sup> VGMS: Glukose-Fruktose-Sirup, o. J.

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