

Press release

Vegetarian, vegan, vegan: the ISO takes the initiative to get out of the semantic vagueness

Paris, 03/09/2019- The international organization for standardization (ISO) launches a participatory project aimed at providing definitions and criteria accurate for vegetarian, vegan and vegan foods. To all parties stakeholders to get involved in France, from September 13.

Foods without animal ingredients are a growing market that is only going to not without posing definitional problems. Vegetarian, vegan, vegan, veggie... As much terms that have been debated for years and call for choices to be made, collectively, internationally. This is the objective of a voluntary regulation project initiated in February by Switzerland, via the international organization for standardization (ISO). The objective is twofold: support the development of the market and stop the outpouring of claims on packaging, which sows confusion among consumers.

As early as 2011, the European regulation concerning consumer information on foodstuffs deemed it necessary to establish a regulatory framework on this issue.

A voluntary standard in this area could fuel European discussions, since it constitutes a state of the art at a given time . “ *As a result, manufacturers, associations of consumers, supervisory authorities and all stakeholders have an interest in agree among themselves, with a standard of voluntary application. The voice of France must be heard in this project and that is why we created a [commission](#) open to all ,*” summarizes Marie Krol Vel Farmas, the AFNOR project manager in charge of the national standardization commission which will carry the French voice. The first working meeting is organized on September 13 in the AFNOR premises.

A project centered on food

The future ISO 23662 standard will focus on vegan and vegetarian foods and ingredients. Questions relating to packaging will be ruled out, as will those relating to the lifestyles associated with these consumption patterns. Besides Switzerland and therefore [the](#)

[France](#), the project initiated by the ISO currently brings together Argentina, Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands and New Zealand. “ *All interested parties can contact us to take part in the project. They will work to define the French contributions which we will then defend at the international level ,*” announces Marie Krol Vel Farmas. The voluntary standard ISO 23662 should see the light of day by the end of 2020, depending on the level of mobilization of participants and their ability to find consensus.

Each year, more than 19,000 representatives of companies, consumer associations, the State and local authorities define, update and delete

collectively, standards for their activities. In 90% of cases, these projects are carried out on a European or international scale. Complementary to regulation, voluntary standards allow a sector or a market to set rules. Each actor is then free to refer to it. They are also economic intelligence tools for those who decide to take an offensive approach, by actively participating in their definition.

About AFNOR - AFNOR is the French reference organization for voluntary standards.

It manages the collection of existing documents and leads the work of interested parties for the creation and revision of standards and to identify subjects that could provide material for developing new ones. Launched at the initiative of market players, the voluntary standard is a reference framework which aims to provide guidelines, technical or qualitative requirements for products, services or practices serving the general interest. Anyone can participate in its creation and any organization may or may not use and refer to it.

This is why the standard is called voluntary. As coordinator of standardization in France, AFNOR has one ambition: to contribute to the dissemination of good practices and effective solutions, for the benefit of all. standardization.afnor.org

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