EU rules on environmental claims for products

Published by AGRINFO on 13 Jul 2026; Revised 05 Oct 2026

Directive (EU) 2024/825 as regards empowering consumers for the green transition through better protection against unfair practices and through better information

Regulation (EU) 2025/40 on packaging and packaging waste

What is changing and why?

To protect consumers from misleading claims about the environmental or social benefits of products, the European Union (EU) has now prohibited the following:

- Unevidenced and generic claims. Only make environmental or sustainability claims if they are supported by evidence and third-party verification (certification), and avoid vague or unsubstantiated claims such as “eco-friendly” or “climate neutral”.
- Claims not related to the product. Do not advertise benefits that are irrelevant to the product, such as “gluten-free” water or “plastic-free” paper.
- Unjustified product comparison. Only compare a product’s environmental, social, or circularity benefits with others if the comparison is supported by evidence.
- Use of unregulated sustainability labels. Only use sustainability labels that are based on recognised certification schemes or are established by public authorities.
- Extending environmental claims to the entire product. Ensure environmental claims apply only to the part of the product that provides the benefit (e.g. if only the packaging is “made with recycled material”, do not suggest that claim applies to the whole product).
- Claiming something that is required by law. Do not present legal or mandatory product requirements as unique advantages or sustainability benefits (e.g. a bottle cannot be advertised as not including a specific chemical substance if that substance is forbidden in food packaging).

In September 2026, the European Commission published answers to frequently asked questions raised by stakeholders on the Directive on Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition (Directive 2024/825). These answers are not legally binding (only the Directive itself is legally binding). They are intended to help stakeholders comply with the new rules. The document is available in English and French.

Copyright © **COLEAD 2026,** *AGRINFO is funded by the European Union and implemented by COLEAD.*

Actions

The Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) Network has published a "Common understanding" providing guidance on how the new rules will be applied to "old stock" products placed on the market before 27 September 2026 that do not comply with the new rules.

Timeline

Directive 2024/825 applies from **27 September 2026**.

For more information see the full record on the AGRINFO website – where you can also view the latest AGRINFO Update newsletters and search the database.

Disclaimer: *Under no circumstances shall COLEAD be liable for any loss, damage, liability or expense incurred or suffered that is claimed to have resulted from the use of information available on this website or any link to external sites. The use of the website is at the user's sole risk and responsibility. This information platform was created and maintained with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents do not, however, reflect the views of the European Union.*

Copyright © **COLEAD 2026,** *AGRINFO is funded by the European Union and implemented by COLEAD.*