

**March 2021**

## **Updates on our European project to fight dual food quality**

*The ECO-"Empowering Consumer Organisations: towards a harmonised approach tackling dual quality in food products" project was launched in September 2020 and is funded under the Consumer Programme of the DG Justice. Together with the project partners ADOC (Italy) and InfoCons (Romania) this European project aims to provide tools to consumer organisations for testing products for possible dual food quality practices. The project consortium has developed two written outputs and is launching a common online platform for disseminating the testing results. Please don't hesitate to follow us on Social Media on [Twitter](#) and on [Facebook](#) for regular updates on the project!*

### **WRITTEN OUTPUTS: GUIDANCE AND MANUAL ON TESTING PRODUCTS FOR DUAL FOOD QUALITY**

Since the project aims at empowering consumer organisations, both for identifying and testing dual food quality related practices, but also for strengthening their advocacy capacities, the project consortium has produced two different written outputs to this effect. These will be made freely available on [the project website](#).

This first written output is a Guidance on Testing Products for Dual Food Quality. This Guidance includes an explanation of what the issue of Dual Food quality entails, shortly presents the project and its goals and briefly introduces the relevant EU laws connected to the issue. Furthermore, the core of the Guidance is made of a Methodology on Testing products which explains all the different aspects and principles to be considered when conducting tests and presents the practicalities of doing so.

The second written output takes the form of a Manual on Testing Products for Dual Food Quality. The Manual aims to provide support to consumer organisations in using the Guidance. It presents a visual step-by-step guide for performing tests on food products for dual food quality. Furthermore, the Manual includes a list of European accredited laboratories that Consumer Organisations can use for their testing campaigns.

These written outputs will be available in four languages; namely English, Italian, French and Romanian . They will also be completed by two audio-visual outputs, a short video about product testing and a longer recorded online course which should answer any questions organisations may encounter while using the other outputs.



## **A COMMON PLATFORM FOR DISSEMINATING TESTING RESULTS**

The ECO- project has its own dedicated website at [www.fighdualfood.eu](http://www.fighdualfood.eu). The website includes a presentation of the project and its partners and hosts all the project materials, which are freely downloadable. Furthermore, the website includes an interactive platform for reporting testing results for food products regarding dual food quality.

The interactive platform lets users view all the tested products that can be filtered either by countries or by the category or products. For each product, information is given on the methodology of testing, the countries of sampling, the composition and the front of pack appearances. The project consortium will also reach out to the brand owners for comments in case significant differences in ingredients and nutritional values are found.

## **NEXT PROJECT STEPS**

The project partners will proceed with disseminating the written and audio-visual inputs to as many European Consumer Organisations as possible, and try to convince them to join the consortium in fighting dual food quality in Europe. An information session will be held online on the 14<sup>th</sup> of April to answer any questions consumer organisations might have in relation to the issue. The consumer organisations will be valuable assets in providing data for the product testing campaign.

Indeed, another aim of the project is to test food products for dual food quality. The project partners have mapped out products they will test and are currently launching the first phase of the testing campaign, namely collecting data for the comparison of ingredients lists and the packaging of food products. Should the compared products present clear differences, these will further be studied through sensory analysis and laboratory tests.

Finally, the three partners are developing a certification system aimed at companies who wish to show their commitment against dual food quality practices. Companies will obtain a certificate after having proven their product does not present any issues of the kind.