

An Honest Crust Act

An outline of the Real Bread Campaign's proposals for updated and improved composition, labelling and marketing standards. We believe that ensuring such honesty and transparency is necessary to:

- reflect the huge changes in the bakery and retail sectors, as well as our society, that have taken place in more than quarter of a century since the Bread & Flour Regulations (1998) were enacted.
- give clarity to producers, retailers, shoppers and consumer protection bodies, helping people to make better-informed food buying choices with confidence.
- contribute to a more equitable marketplace, in which small businesses have a better chance of thriving.
- help build the reputation of British food.

Key policy recommendations

1. Reviewing and revising the regulatory definition of bread.
2. A review of compositional standards, with a view to increasing fibre and natural micronutritional levels in flour and, therefore, the national diet.
3. Mandatory, full ingredient and additive listing for every product. In the case of loose / non-prepacked products, this would be by means of point-of-sale signage.
4. Meaningful, legal definitions of 'fresh', 'freshly baked', 'baked in store', 'baked here today' and similar terms.
5. Mandatory labelling of the time, place and means of production of bake-off products (eg Manufactured in France on DATE. Re-baked in-store on DATE. Previously frozen.)
6. A legal definition of wholegrain, in support of existing healthy eating guidance. This would require at least 51% of the dry ingredients to be unrefined flour, flakes, meal or grain.
7. The addition of extra gluten, soya flour or other refined flours or meals not being permitted in products named or marketed using the word wholemeal.
8. Sourdough legally defined as bread (see above) leavened only using a live sourdough culture, without the addition of baker's yeast or other raising agents.
9. Meaningful, legal definitions of artisan, craft, ancient grains, heritage wheat and other terms commonly used to name and market flour and baked products.

Supporting the sector

Vibrant high streets, full of diverse local businesses, such as SME bakeries, are key to the UK's economic success.

- There are around 2,500 micro and small bakeries in the UK.
- They represent the majority of businesses (and are the key innovators) in the bakery sector.
- Through feeding people in their neighbourhoods, small bakeries create tens of thousands skilled, rewarding jobs for people in their communities, generating a high local economic multiplier effect and helping to keep our high streets alive.

Many, however, are under threat of closure. This is largely due to skyrocketing costs of energy, rent, ingredients and employing people. At the same time, tightening budgets on the other side of the counter are limiting customers' spending ability. Far too many of the UK's local bakeries are now facing financial crisis and at risk of following previously thriving businesses that have been forced to close in recent years.¹ Our Honest Crust Act proposals are a key piece in the jigsaw of supporting the sector.

Further details can be found in the Real Bread Campaign's 2021 submission to Defra:

www.sustainweb.org/news/sep21-defra-bread-flour-technical-working-group-submission

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¹ Sustaining small bakery businesses: Looking to the future in challenging times, the Open University, November 2022
www.sustainweb.org/reports/nov22-sustaining-small-bakery-businesses