Impact of color-coded and warning nutrition labelling schemes: A systematic review and network meta-analysis

A systematic review and meta-analysis published by researchers at the Queen Mary University of London called for mandatory front-of-pack nutrition labelling to support consumers to make, and the food industry to provide, healthier choices. The research looked at the literature and peer-reviewed publications since 1990, randomised controlled trials.

From the 134 studies analysed it was clear that traffic light labelling systems, nutrient and health warnings were all effective measures to encourage consumers to purchase and consume healthier food products. This was due to a range of factors – an improved understanding of the nutritional content of products. It was found that colour-coded labels can be effective in encouraging consumers to purchase healthier food products, whilst warning labels can discourage the purchase of unhealthier food products high in salt, fat, and sugar. Future research should move from using computer simulations to monitoring and evaluating the impact of labelling in society. The study reiterates the urgency for the UK government to mandate front-of-pack nutrition labels.

You can read the blog and media coverage of the research paper here.