

How food labels are deceptive essays example

[Environment](#), [Animals](#)



The main purpose of food labels, especially front of the package (FOP) labels is to provide information about the product. Labels are also a way of advertising products and this is where the deception comes in. These labels are made to fit the current health fads in the country such as free range, made with real fruit, all natural ingredient and misleading information about serving sizes. Most of these claims are however not true mainly due to lack of information on the part of consumers and loopholes in the FDA food labeling policies which manufacturers take advantage of.

When a label says that the product contains real fruit, most consumers think that it a healthier option. The labels of these juices and yoghurts normally have pictures of fruits that are bursting with goodness and their prices are normally higher because they are 'healthier'. However The Huffington Post recently reported that a certain juice "claim to be made of real fruit, but contain no strawberries whatsoever, and are actually made from pear concentrate, red no. 40 dye, and are almost half sugar by weight." (Robert, 1) This is a perfect example of how labels can be misleading because consumers end up paying more for a product that is very unhealthy.

Food labels about serving sizes are also deceptive, most snacks such as chips and fries are marketed as single servings yet a closer look at the fine print most reveals that they contain two or three servings. Besides the deception, most consumers end up consuming about 4 to 6 servings when they think that they have consumed 2 servings. The number of calories stated is allowed a 10% margin of error which manufacturers take advantage of. (Robert, 1) This is dangerous because most snacks contain artificial sugars, flavors and colors that are unhealthy.

Most animal products such as beef, pork and poultry have labels that claim that they are free range, organic or cage free. This implies that these animals are free to roam outside and feed on grass and other natural foods instead of hormones and animal feeds. This labeling is a marketing gimmick that seeks to take advantage of the natural living trend that advocates for organic living. Gunther reports that most of these animals are raised in cages and CAFOs and have little or no access to the outdoors which is not what free range rearing entails. He attributes this to the fact that these free range claims are not regulated and manufactures therefore have a leeway to label the products in which ever manner they think is best.(1) This is again another deception that makes consumers pay more for regular products. There has also been an influx of products that claim to contain ' all natural' ingredients which are ostensibly healthier. However Kandil reports that FDA regulations are not very specific about the meaning of this claim only that the product " does not contain added color, artificial flavors, or synthetic substances."(2) This ambiguous definition gives manufactures the carte blanche to label any product as all natural even when it contains little or no natural products.

REFERENCES

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