France Restricts Labeling for Plant-Based Proteins

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Beginning on October 1, 2022, plant-based meat alternative products in France will face new labeling challenges. The decree (in French) prohibits manufacturers of plant-based products from using “sector-specific terminology traditionally associated with meat and fish.” Notably, this law applies exclusively to products made in France and not to imports.

Under this decree, terms like “steak,” “sausage,” or “chicken” will not be allowed to describe meatless, plant-based products. However, terms like “burger” will remain permissible because it does not specifically refer to meat.

France is the first country in Europe to ban this “meaty” language for plant-based foods; although, the European Union has prohibited plant-based products from using labels like “milk,” “cheese,” and “butter” if they do not include dairy ingredients. On an international scale, South Africa recently passed a similar
restriction on the use of “meaty” language for plant-based products.

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