To: Ms Maria Iglesia, DG-SANTE, Head of Unit E2  
CC: Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis  
Vice-President Frans Timmermans  
Vice-President Jyrki Katainen  
Xavier Prats Monné, Director-General of DG SANTÉ (Health and Food Safety) 

8 November 2016

Dear Ms Iglesia,

Thank you for your letter dated 24 October on the topic of acrylamide in food.

We are pleased to hear that Commissioner Andriukaitis agrees that it is of major importance that the presence of acrylamide in food is reduced. The prevalence of acrylamide amongst everyday foods has been identified as a public health concern for consumer of all ages, in particular to infants and young children.¹,²

However, we are disappointed that your proposal continues to overlook the call from the over 160,000 signatories of our petition³ to introduce ambitious legally binding maximum levels for acrylamide in foodstuffs. Only the imposition of such requirements will guarantee that foods with high levels of acrylamide cannot be placed on the market and as such will require food business operators to make real efforts to keep the levels of acrylamide as low as possible. It remains unclear why the Commission continues to shy away from such regulatory approach in this instance, when that same approach is believed to have been effective in reducing exposure to acrylamide from non-food sources⁴ and from other contaminants in food.⁵

Instead, the weak legislative requirements included in your proposal prolong our reliance on the goodwill of food business operators, who have failed consumers to date, to choose which measures, if any, may be adopted to reduce the presence of acrylamide in foods and to largely self-monitor on the effectiveness of their application. In addition, it fails to provide a clear legal framework under which irresponsible food operators that fail to effectively reduce the presence of acrylamide can be penalised, particularly for non-EU food business operators which seem to be completely excluded from the proposed requirements.

We will publish your letter to us on our website as per your request, and this response to your comments alongside it. We sincerely hope that you give due consideration to our comments and the health of EU consumers in order to address major shortcomings of your proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Ferris  
Campaign Director, SumOfUs

³ https://actions.sumofus.org/a/eu-protect-our-food-safety?sp_ref=236065758.99.175768.t.556598.2&source=tw  
⁵ EC/1881/2006