

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003262/25
to the Commission
Yvan Verougstraete (Renew)
(20 August 2025)**

Subject: Corn syrup Coca-Cola imports into Europe and public health risks

Coca-Cola sold on promotion or cheaper at discount shops sometimes comes from abroad. However, in some countries, the recipe is not quite the same and is poorer quality.

Aside from the fact that it is environmentally absurd to have Coca-Cola on our shelves from the other side of Europe or even from even further afield, those cut-price bottles also contain high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) rather than white sugar.

Many studies have shown that HFCS increases lipid and cholesterol levels in the blood, along with liver fat. In other words, its consumption promotes obesity, diabetes and bad cholesterol.

In view of the above:

1. Has the Commission, through the European Food Safety Authority, carried out a specific risk assessment in connection with the consumption of HFCS, including at moderate levels?
2. If the Commission reaches the same conclusion as all those studies — that HFCS is more harmful to health than ordinary sugar, will it consider taking steps to prevent or control its spread on the European market?

Submitted: 20.8.2025

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(20 October 2025)**

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has not conducted a specific risk assessment solely dedicated to high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS).

However, EFSA has assessed the health effects related to sugar intake, including HFCS, within broader evaluations of dietary sugars in 2022 ⁽¹⁾, confirming the links between the intake of dietary sugars and a range of health problems.

Regarding sugar types, EFSA concluded that there is evidence for a causal relationship between the intake of fructose and risk of some chronic metabolic diseases, although the external validity of the findings for European populations is unclear. In some trials, fructose appeared to increase hepatic insulin resistance and uric acid levels more than equivalent amounts of glucose.

The effects of fructose and glucose on body weight, liver fat, measures of glucose tolerance, blood lipids and blood pressure did not appear to be different.

As fructose is a component of added and free sugars in mixed diets, the conclusions for added and free sugars also apply, namely that their intake should be as low as possible in the context of a nutritionally adequate diet.

Public health protection is a top priority, and the Commission remains committed to facilitating the smooth functioning of the internal market, while ensuring food safety across the EU.

In line with these objectives, the Commission will continue to monitor scientific developments and take appropriate action, if necessary.

⁽¹⁾ European Food Safety Authority: Tolerable upper intake level for dietary sugars. EFSA Panel on Nutrition, Novel Foods and Food Allergens (NDA), 28 February 2022.