

**French baguette faces pinch from anti-salt lawmakers**

<p><b>Notes &amp; Cues:</b></p>	<p><b>Article:</b></p> <p>France’s beloved bread loaf, the baguette, may be about to lose some of its bite, with politicians looking into the health risks of additives set to propose legislation forcing bakers and processed food makers more generally to slash salt content.</p> <p>After months of investigation and hearings, a parliamentary committee has come to the conclusion that voluntary agreements on the reduction of high salt levels have not been respected and that it is time to impose healthier norms via legislation.</p> <p>”It’s a real public health problem, ” said Loic Prud’homme, one of a 20-member parliamentary committee looking into the matter. Michele Crouzet, another committee member, said the daily intake of salt in France, at about 10 to 12 grams, is still double the limit recommended by the World Health Organization.</p> <p>Excessive salt levels are linked to cardiovascular trouble, which in France is the second-biggest killer among health problems.</p> <p>Crouzet said the committee could propose a tax on salt like one already introduced in France on the sugar content of fizzy drinks. But some say that levy has been ineffective because manufacturers are shifting to other forms of sweetener.</p> <p>”What we can now say is that voluntary agreements do not work and it’s now time to switch to binding constraints, ” Prud’homme told Reuters.</p> <p>In the case of the baguette, and bread more generally, voluntary agreements struck in 2002 had sought to limit the salt level to 18 grams per kilo of flour within five years, he said. Some 16 years later, that goal had still not been met.</p>
<p><b>Summary:</b></p>	