

# Healthy Food Environment Policy Index (Food-EPI) – Australia 2021

‘National’ policy actions

Summary of government policy action to 30 June 2021

**Policy details for rating**

## Definitions

- **Food:** refers to food and non-alcoholic beverages. It excludes breastmilk or breastmilk substitutes.
- **Food environments:** the collective physical, economic, policy and socio-cultural surrounding, opportunities and conditions that influence people's food and beverage choices and nutritional status.
- **Government:** includes any government departments and, where appropriate, other agencies (i.e. statutory bodies such as offices, commissions, authorities, boards, councils, etc). Plans, strategies or actions by local government should not be included, although relevant information can be noted in the 'context/comments' sections.
- **Government implementation:** refers to the intentions and plans of the government and actions and policies implemented by the government as well as government funding for implementation of actions undertaken by non-governmental organisations, academic institutions, private companies (including consultants), etc.
- **Healthy/unhealthy food:** Categorisation of foods as healthy / unhealthy are in accordance with the Australian Dietary Guidelines (i.e. core and discretionary foods). Where it is not clear which category to use, categorisation of foods should be informed by rigorous criteria or the use of a nutrient profiling model.
- **National:** For the purposes of the Food-EPI study, 'national' policy actions refers to Australian policy actions from the 'food regulation system' (<https://foodregulation.gov.au/>), including actions related to Food Ministers' Meeting and the Food Regulation Standing Committee. 'National' also includes relevant policies and actions (related to Australia) taken by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ). It also includes relevant Australian Government implementation and enforcement activities, noting that domestic implementation and enforcement activities are the responsibility of state and territory governments. Furthermore, the document also covers policy areas where a 'national' approach (e.g. guidelines for school food that apply across all states/territories) may be warranted or has been considered/adopted.
- **Nutrients of concern:** salt (sodium), saturated fat, *trans* fat, added sugar
- **Policy actions:** A broad view of "policy" is taken so as to include all government policies, plans, strategies and activities. Only current policy actions are considered, generally defined as policy activity of the previous 12 months (except where otherwise specified). Evidence of policy implementation takes consideration of the whole policy cycle, from agenda-setting, through to policy development, implementation and monitoring. A broad view of relevant evidence was taken, so as to include, *inter alia*:
  - Evidence of commitments from leadership to explore policy options
  - Allocation of responsibility to an individual/team (documented in a work plan, appointment of new position)
  - Establishment of a steering committee, working group, expert panel, etc.
  - Review, audit or scoping study undertaken
  - Consultation processes undertaken
  - Evidence of a policy brief/proposal that has been put forward for consideration
  - Preparation of a regulatory or economic impact assessment, health impact assessment, etc.

- Regulations / legislation / other published policy details
- Monitoring data
- Policy evaluation reports

# POLICY DOMAINS

## Policy area: Food Composition

Good practice statement for this domain: There are government systems implemented to ensure that, where practicable, processed foods and out-of-home meals minimise the energy density and the nutrients of concern (salt/sodium, saturated fat, trans fat, added sugar)

### Indicators in this domain by level of government:

Policy area: Food composition		
National	Federal	State/Territory
NAT_COMP1: Food composition standards/targets for added sugar		
NAT_COMP2: Food composition standards/targets for sodium		
NAT_COMP3: Food composition standards/targets for saturated fat		
NAT_COMP4: Food composition standards/targets for trans fats		

**Details on National-level indicators in this domain:**

**Indicators within this domain may include policies at both the National and Australian Government (Commonwealth) level. In instances where relevant Australian Government policies apply, these are noted as such.**

NAT_COMP1 Food composition targets/standards for added sugars	
<p><i>Good practice statement</i></p> <p>Food composition targets/standards have been established by the government in relation to <u>added sugars</u> in relevant foods or food categories*</p>	
<b>Definitions and scope</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes packaged foods manufactured in Australia or manufactured overseas and imported to Australia for sale</li> <li>• Includes packaged, ready-to-eat meals sold in supermarkets AND/OR out-of-home foods/meals</li> <li>• Includes mandatory or voluntary targets, standards or bans (e.g. reduce by X%, maximum g per 100g or per serving)</li> <li>• Excludes legislated restrictions related to other ingredients (e.g. additives)</li> <li>• Excludes mandatory food composition regulation related to other nutrients</li> </ul>
<b>Context</b>	<p><i>Food regulation mechanism</i></p> <p>All packaged foods sold in Australia must comply with the composition requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code ('Food Standards Code') which is enforced by States and Territory governments through their Food Acts and by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment for imported products. It is important to acknowledge that through national platforms, such as the Food Ministers' Meeting, State and Territory governments have the power to influence food regulation at the national level.</p> <p>Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is an independent statutory agency established by the Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991 (FSANZ Act). FSANZ is part of the Australian Government's Health portfolio.</p> <p>FSANZ develops standards under the Food Standards Code that regulate the use of ingredients, processing aids, colourings, additives, vitamins and minerals. The Food Standards Code also covers the composition of some foods, such as dairy, meat and beverages as well as foods developed by new technologies such as genetically modified foods. FSANZ are also responsible for some labelling requirements for packaged and unpackaged food, for example specific mandatory warnings or advisory labels. FSANZ also develops Australia-only primary production and processing standards (see <a href="#">Principles and Protocols for the Development of Food Regulation Policy Guidelines</a>).</p>
<b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b>	<p>Policy action in this area currently consists of activities at the national level as well as the Healthy Food Partnership (an Australian Government initiative).</p> <p><i>Mandatory food composition standards</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All food sold in Australia must comply with the requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code) (<a href="#">ref</a>). Chapter 2 of the Code sets out compositional requirements for certain foods for identity purposes, rather than for the purpose of reducing population intakes.</li> <li>• There are more specific composition regulations for infant foods. The following regulations were identified, related to sugar:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vegetable juice, fruit drink or a non-alcoholic beverages must contain no more than 4 g/100 g total sugars</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### Healthy Food Partnership (Australian Government Policy)

- On 8 November 2015, the Australian Government announced the 'Healthy Food Partnership', a partnership of the public health sector, food industry and government to progress voluntary initiatives to encourage healthy eating.
- The partnership aims to improve the dietary habits of Australians by making healthier food choices more accessible and by raising awareness of better food choices.
- Initiatives of the Partnership are voluntary and focus on the following areas:
  - Support industry to reformulate their foods, supported by the Health Star Rating (HSR) system
  - Support consumers to consume appropriate levels of core foods and appropriate levels of energy intake
  - Educating consumers on appropriate portion and serve sizes
  - Improving consumers' knowledge and awareness of healthier food choices, including through developing and publicising tools and resources to consumers and health professions

### Food Reformulation Working Group (now ceased)

- In July 2018, the Healthy Food Partnership's [Food Reformulation Working Group](#) initiated a consultation on draft voluntary reformulation targets across food categories identified as significant contributors to the intake of sodium, saturated fat and sugars in the Australian diet.
- Draft targets were proposed for 36 food categories. The group published an [evidence document](#) which outlines the process for determining draft targets up for consultation.
- The Food Reformulation Working Group identified one of its key activities as the development of reformulation targets for manufactured foods sold through retail.
- In 2019 the Reformulation Working Group provided details that further targeted consultations would be undertaken on the categories in which a significant change was proposed.

### Voluntary targets for sugar

- The Healthy Food Partnership has set voluntary food product reformulation targets for the food industry. The Partnership [Reformulation Program](#) has been implemented in two waves, with each wave having a four-year implementation period.
  - Wave 1 start date: 1 July 2020
  - Wave 2 start date: 1 July 2021
- In Wave 1, there are targets for 27 categories/subcategories. A further 14 categories/subcategories were added in Wave 2.
- Specific targets related to **sugar**, their food categories and target date include:
  - Breakfast cereals with fruit: A reduction in sugar across defined products to 22.5g/100g, and at least a 20% reduction for products containing over 28g sugar/100g, by 30 June 2026.
  - Breakfast cereals without fruit: A reduction in sugar across defined products to 20g/100g, and at least a 20% reduction for products containing over 25g sugar/100g, by 30 June 2026
  - Mammalian milk with added flavour(s): A reduction in sugar across defined products to 9g/100g by 30 June 2025.
  - Any dairy milk substitute with added flavour(s): A reduction in sugar across defined products to 5g/100g by 30 June 2025.
  - Muesli bars and Snack bars: A reduction in sugar across defined products to 25g/100g, or at least a 15% reduction for products containing over 28.5g/100g by 30 June 2025
  - Ready-to-drink, non-dairy beverages with caloric sweeteners, excluding soft drinks and energy drinks: A reduction in sugar across defined products to 5g/100mL by 30 June 2025

- Ready-to-drink, non-dairy, sweetened drinks marketed as soft drinks or energy drinks: A 10% reduction in sugar for defined products above 10g sugar/100mL by 30 June 2025
- Ready-to-drink fruit drink (carbonated or still), containing less than 96% fruit juice, with added sugar: A reduction in sugar across defined products to 9.5g/100ml by 30 June 2025
- Sweetened dairy-based yoghurts, liquid or semi-solid: A reduction in sugar across defined products to 12.5g/100g by 30 June 2024. This target will be reviewed in 2024, with the view to revising the target to 10.5g by 2025.
- Companies are encouraged to commit to the agreed targets and apply reformulation targets to 80% of the product category by sales volume for participating businesses and show efforts towards reformulating the remaining 20% of products. The Healthy Food Partnership website described that by companies committing to the reformulation targets that they are 'demonstrating their intent to work towards the targets for existing products as far as reasonably practicable'. Companies will not be penalised if they do not meet the targets ([ref](#)).
- Each target has a four-year implementation period. Progress updates are due at year 2 and 4 with companies asked to report on their progress on achieving the reformulation targets as well as a baseline report for each wave (July 2020 for wave 1 and July 2021 for wave 2) ([ref](#)).
- The data for each food category will be aggregated and not reported at a company level. As this is a voluntary program, enforcement actions are not under consideration.
- Companies will be provided with the *Reformulation Reporting Template* to report baseline nutrition content of their products.
  - Wave 1 monitoring reports are due June 2022 (end of year 2) and June 2024 (end of year 4)
  - Wave 2 monitoring reports are due June 2023 (end of year 2) and June 2025 (end of year 4). Reports for Breakfast Cereals will be due June 2023 (end of year 2) and June 2026 (end of year 5)
- All identifiable data provided will be kept confidential. Annualised unit volume of sales will be requested to allow the Department to calculate an estimate of the reduction of each nutrient in the Australian food supply compared to the baseline. However, it is noted that some businesses will not be in a position to provide this data. The Department will consider the purchase of sales data and nutrient data as appropriate.
- The Department will use the data to report on the progress of the PRP after year 2, and at the end of year 4. Final reporting for each Wave will be completed separately, with a comprehensive report prepared in 2027. Reporting will be at the category/sub-category level, and include analysis of nutrient changes at 2 and 4 years when compared to baseline. This analysis may be performed in-house, or out-sourced as appropriate.

#### Commercial foods for early childhood

- In July 2020, Food Ministers requested background research be undertaken to increase understanding of commercially available foods for infants and toddlers in Australia and New Zealand.
- In November 2020 Food Ministers considered a summary of evidence and analysis of commercially available foods for infants and toddlers; this included analysis of the sweet profile of foods amongst other issues.
- Ministers agreed for the Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC) to consider and determine what actions could be explored in the Food Regulation System to improve these foods. Ministers also noted the Healthy Food Partnership (Partnership) Executive Committee will consider this topic and opportunities for non-regulatory options to improve infant and toddler foods in Australia.
- Subsequently, the Partnership Executive Committee agreed to establish the Foods for Early Childhood (FECh) Reference Group to undertake work on improving commercial foods for infants and young children ([ref](#)).

- The role of the FECh Reference Group is to develop best practice guidance to industry for aligning the composition, labelling, packaging and marketing of commercial foods for infants and young children to the Australian Infant Feeding Guidelines, the Australian Dietary Guidelines and the more recent evidence base on early childhood feeding. The FECh Reference Group will seek a commitment from manufacturers to improve or redevelop commercial foods for infants and young children to meet the best practice guidance. The scope of work and prioritisation of issues is currently being determined.

#### Policy paper: Exploring options for improving the composition of the food supply

- In August 2019, Food Ministers agreed to a suite of activities under Priority 2 of the Food Regulation system to support public health objectives to reduce chronic disease related to obesity. One of these activities was to explore options to improve the healthfulness of the food supply.
- In November 2020 the then Australia and New Zealand Forum on Food Regulation were provided with the policy paper '*Exploring options for improving the composition of the food supply*' ([ref](#)).
- The Policy Paper considered food and nutrient intakes, the composition of the food supply, and current actions to improve food composition underway in Australia, New Zealand and internationally.
- The paper recognises that voluntary activities are in place in Australia and New Zealand to improve food composition to support public health objectives.
- The paper identified two topics where there are limitations in the current voluntary actions to improve food composition – sugary drinks and trans fats.
- Recommendations from this report include:
  - Time be allowed for the food industry to demonstrate achievements against voluntary reformulation targets for sodium, saturated fat and sugar (in foods) before regulatory options are pursued.
  - Additional voluntary reformulation targets be established for the quick service/fast food sector (sodium, saturated fat and sugar as appropriate), and for meat alternatives (sodium). If voluntary reformulation is not effective then further regulatory options could be considered.
  - Given there is currently limited voluntary reformulation for trans fats and sugary drinks, additional options should be explored to improve the composition of the food supply for these nutrients/food categories by progressing work through Food Regulation Policy Framework.
- Following consideration of the Policy Paper, Food Ministers agreed that sugar reformulation targets should be established for the quick service/fast food sector (in addition to sodium and saturated fat targets, and sodium targets for meat alternatives).
- The project has proceeded through Gateway 1 of the Food Regulation System Policy Framework with the next stage to develop a desired outcome, noting recommendation that sugar drinks and trans fats be progressed as case studies.

#### National Preventive Health Strategy

- The National Preventive Health Strategy (the Strategy) seeks to increase the consumption of healthy food and drinks, as well as decrease the consumption of discretionary foods that are currently contributing to the excessive proportion of Australian's energy intake.
- The Strategy includes the following target in the nutrition focus area:
  - *Increase the proportion of adults and children who are not exceeding the recommended intake of free sugars by 2030.*
  - *The Strategy includes the following policy achievement by 2030: Reduced sugar, saturated fat and sodium content of relevant packaged and processed foods through reformulation and serving size reduction, including consideration of tax reform.*



\*The determination of relevant foods and/or food categories considers major contributors to population intakes of this nutrient, including for particular population groups. Food and food categories may include packaged food and/or out-of-home foods/meal

## NAT\_COMP2 Food composition targets/standards for sodium

### *Good practice statement*

Food composition targets/standards have been established by the government in relation to sodium in relevant foods or food categories\*

### **Definitions and scope**

- Includes packaged foods manufactured in Australia or manufactured overseas and imported to Australia for sale
- Includes packaged, ready-to-eat meals sold in supermarkets AND/OR out-of-home foods/meals
- Includes mandatory or voluntary targets, standards or bans (e.g. reduce by X%, maximum g per 100g or per serving)
- Excludes legislated restrictions related to other ingredients (e.g. additives)
- Excludes mandatory food composition regulation related to other nutrients

### **Context**

#### *Food regulation mechanism*

All packaged foods sold in Australia must comply with the composition requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code ('Food Standards Code') which is enforced by States and Territory governments through their Food Acts and by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment for imported products. It is important to acknowledge that through national platforms, such as the Food Ministers' Meeting, State and Territory governments have the power to influence food regulation at the national level.

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is an independent statutory agency established by the Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991 (FSANZ Act). FSANZ is part of the Australian Government's Health portfolio.

FSANZ develops standards under the Food Standards Code that regulate the use of ingredients, processing aids, colourings, additives, vitamins and minerals. The Food Standards Code also covers the composition of some foods, such as dairy, meat and beverages as well as foods developed by new technologies such as genetically modified foods. FSANZ are also responsible for some labelling requirements for packaged and unpackaged food, for example specific mandatory warnings or advisory labels. FSANZ also develops Australia-only primary production and processing standards (see [Principles and Protocols for the Development of Food Regulation Policy Guidelines](#)).

#### *World Health Organization global benchmarks for sodium levels*

- In 2021 the WHO released the report *WHO global sodium benchmarks for different food categories* ([ref](#)).
- The WHO recommends that individuals consume less than 5 g of salt (i.e. <2 g of sodium) per day, meaning that the population average intake should be well below that level.
- Within this document the WHO establishes global benchmarks for sodium levels for the food and beverage categories that are the highest contributors to sodium intake.
- Food categories, subcategories and their recommended global benchmarks can be found at ([ref](#)).

**Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

Policy action in this area currently consists of activities at the national level as well as the Healthy Food Partnership (an Australian Government initiative).

**Mandatory food composition standards**

- All food sold in Australia must comply with the requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code) ([ref](#)). Chapter 2 of the Code sets out compositional requirements for certain foods for identity purposes, rather than for the purpose of reducing population intakes.
- There are more specific composition regulations for infant foods. The following regulations were identified, related to salt:
- Maximum sodium levels for specific food types and no added salt, in the case of ready-to-eat fruit-based foods, fruit drink and vegetable juice.

**Healthy Food Partnership (Australian Government Policy)**

**Food Reformulation Working Group (now ceased)**

- In July 2018, the Healthy Food Partnership's [Food Reformulation Working Group](#) initiated a consultation on draft voluntary reformulation targets across food categories identified as significant contributors to the intake of sodium, saturated fat and sugars in the Australian diet.
- Draft targets were proposed for 36 food categories. The group published an [evidence document](#) which outlines the process for determining draft targets up for consultation.
- The food Reformulation Working Group identified one of its key activities as the development of reformulation targets for manufactured food's sold through retail and food service.
- In 2019 the Reformulation Working Group provided details that further targeted consultation on the categories in which a significant change is proposed would be undertaken.

**Voluntary targets for sodium**

- The Healthy Food Partnership has set voluntary food product reformulation targets for the food industry. The [reformulation program](#) will be implemented in two waves, with each wave having a four-year implementation period.
  - Wave 1 start date: 1 July 2020
  - Wave 2 start date: 1 July 2021
- In Wave 1, there are targets for 27 categories/subcategories. A further 14 categories/subcategories were added in Wave 2.
- Specific targets related to **sodium**, their food categories and target date include:
  - Leavened Bread: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 380mg/100g by June 2024.
  - Flat Bread: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 450mg/100g by June 2024.
  - Plain cereal biscuits: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 300mg/100g by 30 June 2026.
  - Plain puffed or flaked or extruded breakfast cereals: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 450mg/100g by 30 June 2026.
  - All other ready-to-eat cereals: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 270mg/100g by 30 June 2026
  - Cheddar and cheddar style variety cheese products: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 710mg/100g by June 2024.
  - Processed cheeses: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 1270mg/100g by June 2024.
  - Crumbed and battered proteins – meat and poultry: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 450mg/100g by June 2024.
  - Seafood which has been coated with a crumb or batter: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 270mg/100g by June 2024.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gravies and finishing sauces: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 450mg per 100g/ml by June 2024.</li> <li>- Pesto: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 720mg/100g by June 2024</li> <li>- Asian-style cooking sauces: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 680mg per 100g/ml by June 2024</li> <li>- Other savoury sauces: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 360mg per 100g/ml by June 2024</li> <li>- Pizza: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 450mg/100g by June 2024</li> <li>- Processed meat-ham: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 1005mg/100g by June 2024</li> <li>- Processed meat-bacon: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 1005mg/100g June 2024</li> <li>- Processed meat–processed deli meats: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 720mg/100g by June 2024</li> <li>- Processed meat-frankfurts and saveloys: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 900mg/100g by June 2024</li> <li>- Ready meals: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 250mg/100g by 30 June 2025.</li> <li>- Sausages: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 540mg/100g by June 2024</li> <li>- Savoury biscuits-plain savoury crackers and biscuits: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 630mg/100g by June 2024</li> <li>- Savoury biscuits-plain corn, rice and other ‘grain-cake’ biscuits: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 270mg/100g by June 2024</li> <li>- Savoury biscuits – Flavoured savoury biscuits, crackers and ‘grain-cake’ biscuits: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 720mg/100g by June 2024</li> <li>- Savoury pastries – dry pastries: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 500mg/100g by June 2024</li> <li>- Savoury pastries – wet pastries: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 400mg/100g by June 2024</li> <li>- Savoury snacks – potato snacks: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 500mg/100g by June 2024</li> <li>- Savoury snacks – salt and vinegar snacks: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 810mg/100g by June 2024</li> <li>- Savoury snacks – extruded and pelleted snacks: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 720mg/100g by June 2024</li> <li>- Savoury snacks – vegetable, grains and other snacks: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 450mg/100g by June 2024</li> <li>- Savoury snacks – Popcorn: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 360mg/100g by 30 June 2025.</li> <li>- Soups: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 280mg per 100g/ml by June 2024</li> <li>- Sweet bakery – cakes, muffins and slices: A reduction in sodium across defined products to 360mg/100g by June 2024</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Companies are encouraged to commit to the agreed targets and apply reformulation targets to 80% of the product category by sales volume for participating businesses and show efforts towards reformulating the remaining 20% of products. The Healthy Food Partnership website described that by companies committing to the reformulation targets that they are ‘demonstrating their intent to work towards the targets for existing products as far as reasonably practicable’. Companies will not be penalised if they do not meet the targets (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> <li>• Each target has a four-year implementation period. Progress updates are due at year 2 and 4 with companies asked to report on their progress on achieving the reformulation targets as well as a baseline report for 2020 (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> </ul>
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- The data for each food category will be aggregated and not reported at a company level. As this is a voluntary program, enforcement actions are not under consideration.
- Companies will be provided with the *Reformulation Reporting Template* and asked to use this template to report baseline nutrition content of their products.
  - Wave 1 monitoring reports are due June 2022 (end of year 2) and June 2024 (end of year 4)
  - Wave 2 monitoring reports are due June 2023 (end of year 2) and June 2025 (end of year 4). Reports for Breakfast Cereals will be due June 2023 (end of year 2) and June 2026 (end of year 5)
- All identifiable data provided will be kept confidential. Annualised unit volume of sales will be requested to allow the Department to calculate an estimate of the reduction of each nutrient in the Australian food supply compared to the baseline. However, it is noted that some businesses will not be in a position to provide this data. The Department will consider the purchase of sales data and nutrient data as appropriate.
- The Department will use the data to report on the progress of the PRP after year 2, and at the end of year 4. Final reporting for each Wave will be completed separately, with a comprehensive report prepared in 2027. Reporting will be at the category/sub-category level, and include analysis of nutrient changes at 2 and 4 years when compared to baseline. This analysis may be performed in-house, or out-sourced as appropriate.

#### Food Service Working Group (now ceased)

- The Healthy [Food Partnership's Food Service Working Group](#) recommended nine pledges as a part of their May 2018 document *The Final rationale and recommendations of the Food Service Working Group*.
- Relevant pledge(s) included:
  - *We will support and enable our customers to further reduce their sodium (salt) intake by continuing to review and lower levels of salt in food.*

#### Policy paper: Exploring options for improving the composition of the food supply

- In August 2019, Food Ministers agreed to a suite of activities under Priority 2 of the Food Regulation system to support public health objectives to reduce chronic disease related to obesity. One of these activities was to explore options to improve the healthfulness of the food supply.
- In November 2020 the then Australia and New Zealand Forum on Food Regulation were provided with the policy paper *'Exploring options for improving the composition of the food supply'* ([ref](#)).
- The Policy Paper considered food and nutrient intakes, the composition of the food supply, and current actions to improve food composition underway in Australia, New Zealand and internationally.
- The paper recognises that voluntary activities are in place in Australia and New Zealand to improve food composition to support public health objectives.
- The paper identified two topics where there are limitations in the current voluntary actions to improve food composition – sugary drinks and trans fats.
- Recommendations from this report include:
  - Time be allowed for the food industry to demonstrate achievements against voluntary reformulation targets for sodium, saturated fat and sugar (in foods) before regulatory options are pursued.
  - Additional voluntary reformulation targets be established for the quick service/fast food sector (sodium, saturated fat and sugar as appropriate), and for meat alternatives (sodium). If voluntary reformulation is not effective then further regulatory options could be considered.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Given there is currently limited voluntary reformulation for trans fats and sugary drinks, additional options should be explored to improve the composition of the food supply for these nutrients/food categories by progressing work through Food Regulation Policy Framework.</li> <li>• Following consideration of the Policy Paper, Food Ministers agreed that sodium reformulation targets should be established for the quick service/fast food sector (in addition to sugar and saturated fat) and for meat alternatives.</li> <li>• The project has proceeded through Gateway 1 of the Food Regulation System Policy Framework with the next stage to develop a desired outcome.</li> </ul> <p>National Preventive Health Strategy (Strategy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Strategy seeks to increase the consumption of healthy food and drinks, as well as decrease the consumption of discretionary foods that are currently contributing to the excessive proportion of Australian’s energy intake.</li> <li>• The Strategy includes the following target by 2030: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Reduce the average population sodium intake by at least 30% by 2030</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Strategy includes the following policy achievement by 2030: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Reduced sugar, saturated fat and sodium content of relevant packaged and processed foods through reformulation and serving size reduction, including consideration of tax reform.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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\*The determination of relevant foods and/or food categories considers major contributors to population intakes of this nutrient, including for particular population groups. Food and food categories may include packaged food and/or out-of-home foods/meals

## NAT\_COMP3 Food composition targets/standards for saturated fat

### *Good practice statement*

Food composition targets/standards have been established by the government in relation to saturated fat in relevant foods or food categories\*

#### **Definitions and scope**

- Includes packaged foods manufactured in Australia or manufactured overseas and imported to Australia for sale
- Includes packaged, ready-to-eat meals sold in supermarkets AND/OR out-of-home foods/meals
- Includes mandatory or voluntary targets, standards or bans (e.g. reduce by X%, maximum g per 100g or per serving)
- Excludes legislated restrictions related to other ingredients (e.g. additives)
- Excludes mandatory food composition regulation related to other nutrients

#### **Context**

##### *Food regulation mechanism*

All packaged foods sold in Australia must comply with the composition requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code ('Food Standards Code') which is enforced by States and Territory governments through their Food Acts and by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment for imported products. It is important to acknowledge that through national platforms, such as the Food Ministers' Meeting, State and Territory governments have the power to influence food regulation at the national level.

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is an independent statutory agency established by the Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991 (FSANZ Act). FSANZ is part of the Australian Government's Health portfolio.

FSANZ develops standards under the Food Standards Code that regulate the use of ingredients, processing aids, colourings, additives, vitamins and minerals. The Food Standards Code also covers the composition of some foods, such as dairy, meat and beverages as well as foods developed by new technologies such as genetically modified foods. FSANZ are also responsible for some labelling requirements for packaged and unpackaged food, for example specific mandatory warnings or advisory labels. FSANZ also develops Australia-only primary production and processing standards (see [Principles and Protocols for the Development of Food Regulation Policy Guidelines](#)).

#### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

Policy action in this area currently consists of activities at the national level as well as the Healthy Food Partnership (an Australian Government initiative).

##### *Mandatory food composition standards*

- All food sold in Australia must comply with the requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code) ([ref](#)). Chapter 2 of the Code sets out compositional requirements for certain foods for identity purposes, rather than for the purpose of reducing population intakes.

##### *Healthy Food Partnership (Australian Government Policy)*

##### *Food Reformulation Working Group (now ceased)*

- In July 2018, the Healthy Food Partnership's [Food Reformulation Working Group](#) initiated a consultation on draft voluntary reformulation targets across food categories identified as significant contributors to the intake of sodium, saturated fat and sugars in the Australian diet.
- Draft targets were proposed for 36 food categories. The group published an [evidence document](#) which outlines the process for determining draft targets up for consultation.

- The food Reformulation Working Group identified one of its key activities as the development of reformulation targets for manufactured food's sold through retail and food service.
- In 2019 the Reformulation Working Group provided details that further targeted consultation on the categories in which a significant change is proposed would be undertaken.

#### Voluntary targets for saturated fat

- The Healthy Food Partnership has set voluntary food product reformulation targets for the food industry. The [reformulation program](#) will be implemented in two waves, with each wave having a four-year implementation period.
  - Wave 1 start date: 1 July 2020
  - Wave 2 start date: 1 July 2021
- In Wave 1, there are targets for 27 categories/subcategories. A further 14 categories/subcategories were added in Wave 2.
- Specific targets related to **saturated fat**, their food categories and target date include:
  - Pizza: A reduction in saturated fat across defined products to 4g/100g by June 2024
  - Processed meat – frankfurts and saveloys: A 10% reduction in saturated fat across defined products with saturated fat levels exceeding 6.5g/100g by June 2024
  - Sausages: A reduction in saturated fat across defined products to 7g/100g June 2024
  - Savoury pastries – dry pastries: A reduction in saturated fat across defined products to 7g/100g by June 2024
  - Savoury pastries – wet pastries: A reduction in saturated fat across defined products to 7g/100g June 2024
- Companies are encouraged to commit to the agreed targets and apply reformulation targets to 80% of the product category by sales volume for participating businesses and show efforts towards reformulating the remaining 20% of products. The Healthy Food Partnership website described that by companies committing to the reformulation targets that they are 'demonstrating their intent to work towards the targets for existing products as far as reasonably practicable'. Companies will not be penalised if they do not meet the targets ([ref](#)).
- Each target has a four-year implementation period. Progress updates are due at year 2 and 4 with companies asked to report on their progress on achieving the reformulation targets as well as a baseline report for 2020 ([ref](#)).
- The data for each food category will be aggregated and not reported at a company level. As this is a voluntary program, enforcement actions are not under consideration.
- Companies will be provided with the *Reformulation Reporting Template* and asked to use this template to report baseline nutrition content of their products.
  - Wave 1 monitoring reports are due June 2022 (end of year 2) and June 2024 (end of year 4)
  - Wave 2 monitoring reports are due June 2023 (end of year 2) and June 2025 (end of year 4). Reports for Breakfast Cereals will be due June 2023 (end of year 2) and June 2026 (end of year 5)

#### Food Service Working Group (now ceased)

- The Healthy [Food Partnership's Food Service Working Group](#) recommended nine pledges as a part of their May 2018 document *The Final rationale and recommendations of the Food Service Working Group*.
- Relevant pledge(s) included:



- *We will support and enable our customers to consume less saturated fat and trans-fat through actions such as product/menu reformulation, using healthier fats and oils in our processes, and incentivising customers to choose healthier options.*

#### Policy paper: Exploring options for improving the composition of the food supply

- In August 2019, Food Ministers agreed to a suite of activities under Priority 2 of the Food Regulation system to support public health objectives to reduce chronic disease related to obesity. One of these activities was to explore options to improve the healthfulness of the food supply.
- In November 2020 the then Australia and New Zealand Forum on Food Regulation were provided with the policy paper '*Exploring options for improving the composition of the food supply*' ([ref](#)).
- The Policy Paper considered food and nutrient intakes, the composition of the food supply, and current actions to improve food composition underway in Australia, New Zealand and internationally.
- The paper recognises that voluntary activities are in place in Australia and New Zealand to improve food composition to support public health objectives.
- The paper identified two topics where there are limitations in the current voluntary actions to improve food composition – sugary drinks and trans fats.
- Recommendations from this report include:
  - Time be allowed for the food industry to demonstrate achievements against voluntary reformulation targets for sodium, saturated fat and sugar (in foods) before regulatory options are pursued.
  - Additional voluntary reformulation targets be established for the quick service/fast food sector (sodium, saturated fat and sugar as appropriate), and for meat alternatives (sodium). If voluntary reformulation is not effective then further regulatory options could be considered.
  - Given there is currently limited voluntary reformulation for trans fats and sugary drinks, additional options should be explored to improve the composition of the food supply for these nutrients/food categories by progressing work through Food Regulation Policy Framework.
- Following consideration of the Policy Paper, Food Ministers agreed that saturated fat reformulation targets be established for the quick service/fast food sector (in addition to sugar and sodium targets, and sodium targets for meat alternatives).
- The project has proceeded through Gateway 1 of the Food Regulation System Policy Framework with the next stage to develop a desired outcome.

#### National Preventive Health Strategy

- This Strategy seeks to increase the consumption of healthy food and drinks, as well as decrease the consumption of discretionary foods that are currently contributing to the excessive proportion of Australian's energy intake.
- The Strategy includes the following policy achievement by 2030:
  - *Reduced sugar, saturated fat and sodium content of relevant packaged and processed foods through reformulation and serving size reduction, including consideration of tax reform.*

\*The determination of relevant foods and/or food categories considers major contributors to population intakes of this nutrient, including for particular population groups. Food and food categories may include packaged food and/or out-of-home foods/meals

## NAT\_COMP4 Food composition targets/standards for trans fat

### *Good practice statement*

Food composition targets/standards have been established by the government in relation to trans fats in relevant foods or food categories\*

### **Definitions and scope**

- Includes packaged foods manufactured in Australia or manufactured overseas and imported to Australia for sale
- Includes packaged, ready-to-eat meals sold in supermarkets AND/OR out-of-home foods/meals
- Includes mandatory or voluntary targets, standards or bans (e.g. reduce by X%, maximum g per 100g or per serving)
- Excludes legislated restrictions related to other ingredients (e.g. additives)
- Excludes mandatory food composition regulation related to other nutrients

### **Context**

#### *Food regulation mechanism*

All packaged foods sold in Australia must comply with the composition requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code ('Food Standards Code') which is enforced by States and Territory governments through their Food Acts and by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment for imported products. It is important to acknowledge that through national platforms, such as the Food Ministers' Meeting, State and Territory governments have the power to influence food regulation at the national level.

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is an independent statutory agency established by the Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991 (FSANZ Act). FSANZ is part of the Australian Government's Health portfolio.

FSANZ develops standards under the Food Standards Code that regulate the use of ingredients, processing aids, colourings, additives, vitamins and minerals. The Food Standards Code also covers the composition of some foods, such as dairy, meat and beverages as well as foods developed by new technologies such as genetically modified foods. FSANZ are also responsible for some labelling requirements for packaged and unpackaged food, for example specific mandatory warnings or advisory labels. FSANZ also develops Australia-only primary production and processing standards (see [Principles and Protocols for the Development of Food Regulation Policy Guidelines](#)).

#### *Trans fatty acid intake in Australia*

- To reduce heart disease risk, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that no more than 1% of total energy intake should come from trans fats, and trans fats should be replaced with unsaturated fats ([ref](#)).
- In Australia, the 2011-12 National Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey reported that the average consumption of trans fats (for people aged 2 years and over) was 0.6 % of energy intake, below the WHO recommended limit.
- Further monitoring of trans fats in the Australian and New Zealand food supply by FSANZ has found that Australians obtain on average 0.5 per cent of their daily energy intake from trans fats. This is also well below the WHO recommendation of no more than 1 per cent ([ref](#)).
- It has been acknowledged there is evidence suggesting certain sub populations in Australia may exceed the WHO limit, including low socio-economic populations ([ref](#)).

#### *World Health Organization's recommendation*

- In April 2019, the Director-General of the WHO (Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus) issued a statement calling on the food industry to reformulate foods to eliminate industrially produced trans fatty acids and increase replacement with alternatives low in saturated fatty acids ([ref](#)).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In May 2019, member companies of the International Food and Beverage Alliance committed to not exceeding 2g of industrially produced trans fatty acids per 100 g of oils and fats in their products worldwide by 2021.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b></p>	<p>Policy action in this area currently consists of activities at the national level as well as the Healthy Food Partnership (an Australian Government initiative).</p> <p><a href="#">Mandatory food composition standards</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All food sold in Australia must comply with the requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code) (<a href="#">ref</a>). Chapter 2 of the Code sets out compositional requirements for certain foods for identity purposes, rather than for the purpose of reducing population intakes.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Healthy Food Partnership (Australian Government policy)</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On 8 November 2015, the Australian Government announced the ‘Healthy Food Partnership’, a partnership of preventative health groups, food industry bodies and government to progress voluntary initiatives to encourage healthy eating.</li> <li>The partnership aims to improve the dietary habits of Australians by making healthier food choices more accessible and by raising awareness of better food choices.</li> <li>Initiatives of the Partnership are voluntary and focus on the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue support industry to reformulate their foods, supported by the Health Star Rating system</li> <li>Support consumers to eat appropriate levels of core foods and appropriate levels of energy intake</li> <li>Educating consumers on appropriate portion and serve sizes</li> </ul> </li> <li>Improving consumers’ knowledge and awareness of healthier food choices, including through developing and publicising tools and resources to consumers and health professions</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Food Service Working Group (now ceased)</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Healthy <a href="#">Food Partnership’s Food Service Working Group</a> recommended nine pledges as a part of their May 2018 document <i>The Final rationale and recommendations of the Food Service Working Group</i>.</li> <li>Relevant pledge(s) included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>We will support and enable our customers to consume less saturated fat and trans-fat through actions such as product/menu reformulation, using healthier fats and oils in our processes, and incentivising customers to choose healthier options.</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>The Scheme was piloted in the ACT in 2019 and ceased in February 2020 due to poor uptake.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Policy paper: Exploring options for improving the composition of the food supply</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In August 2019, Food Ministers agreed to a suite of activities under Priority 2 of the Food Regulation system to support public health objectives to reduce chronic disease related to obesity. One of these activities was to explore options to improve the healthfulness of the food supply.</li> <li>In November 2020 the then Australia and New Zealand Forum on Food Regulation were provided with the policy paper ‘<i>Exploring options for improving the composition of the food supply</i>’ (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> <li>The Policy Paper considered food and nutrient intakes, the composition of the food supply, and current actions to improve food composition underway in Australia, New Zealand and internationally.</li> <li>The paper recognises that voluntary activities are in place in Australia and New Zealand to improve food composition to support public health objectives.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The paper identified two topics where there are limitations in the current voluntary actions to improve food composition – sugary drinks and trans fats.</li> <li>• Recommendations from this report include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time be allowed for the food industry to demonstrate achievements against voluntary reformulation targets for sodium, saturated fat and sugar (in foods) before regulatory options are pursued.</li> <li>- Additional voluntary reformulation targets be established for the quick service/fast food sector (sodium, saturated fat and sugar as appropriate), and for meat alternatives (sodium). If voluntary reformulation is not effective then further regulatory options could be considered.</li> <li>- Given there is currently limited voluntary reformulation for trans fats and sugary drinks, additional options should be explored to improve the composition of the food supply for these nutrients/food categories by progressing work through Food Regulation Policy Framework.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The project has proceeded through Gateway 1 of the Food Regulation System Policy Framework with the next stage to develop a desired outcome, noting recommendation to progress work on trans fats as a case study.</li> </ul>
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\*The determination of relevant foods and/or food categories considers major contributors to population intakes of this nutrient, including for particular population groups. Food and food categories may include packaged food and/or out-of-home foods/meals.

## Policy area: Food Labelling

Good practice statement for this domain: There is a regulatory system implemented by the government for consumer-oriented labelling on food packaging and menu boards in restaurants to enable consumers to easily make informed food choices and to prevent misleading claims

### Indicators in this domain by level of government:

Policy area: Food labelling		
National	Federal	State/Territory
NAT_LABEL1: Ingredient lists/declarations on back of pack		ST_LABEL1: Nutrition labelling in fast food outlets
NAT_LABEL2: Labelling added sugars		
NAT_LABEL3: Labelling fats and oils		
NAT_LABEL4: Regulatory system for health claims		
NAT_LABEL5: Regulatory system for nutrition content claims		
NAT_LABEL6: Front-of-pack nutrition labelling: healthiness indicator		
NAT_LABEL7: Front-of-pack nutrition labelling: health warnings		
NAT_LABEL8: Nutrition information on alcoholic beverages		
NAT_LABEL9: Nutrition labelling in fast food outlets		

**Details on National-level indicators in this domain:**

<p><b>NAT_LABEL1</b> Ingredient lists/nutrient declarations on back of pack</p>	
<p><i>Good practice statement</i>                  Regulations ensure that ingredient lists and nutrient declarations in line with Codex recommendations are present on the labels of all packaged foods</p>	
<p><b>Definitions and scope</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Includes packaged foods manufactured in Australia or manufactured overseas and imported to Australia for sale</li> <li>● Nutrient declaration means a standardized statement or listing of the nutrient content of a food</li> <li>● Excludes ‘added sugar’ labelling as it is assessed in a separate indicator (see NAT_LABEL2)</li> <li>● Excludes ‘added fats’ and trans-fat labelling as it is assessed in a separate indicator (see NAT_LABEL3)</li> <li>● Excludes health and nutrition claims (see NAT_LABEL4 &amp; NAT_LABEL5)</li> <li>● Excludes front-of-pack nutrition labelling (see NAT_LABEL6 &amp; NAT_LABEL7)</li> <li>● Excludes nutrition labelling of alcohol products (see NAT_LABEL8)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Context</b></p>	<p><i>Food regulation mechanism</i></p> <p>All packaged foods sold in Australia must comply with the composition requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (‘Food Standards Code’) which is enforced by States and Territory governments through their Food Acts and by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment for imported products. It is important to acknowledge that through national platforms, such as the Food Ministers’ Meeting, State and Territory governments have the power to influence food regulation at the national level.</p> <p>Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is an independent statutory agency established by the Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991 (FSANZ Act). FSANZ is part of the Australian Government’s Health portfolio.</p> <p>FSANZ develops standards under the Food Standards Code that regulate the use of ingredients, processing aids, colourings, additives, vitamins and minerals. The Food Standards Code also covers the composition of some foods, such as dairy, meat and beverages as well as foods developed by new technologies such as genetically modified foods. FSANZ are also responsible for some labelling requirements for packaged and unpackaged food, for example specific mandatory warnings or advisory labels. FSANZ also develops Australia-only primary production and processing standards (see <a href="#">Principles and Protocols for the Development of Food Regulation Policy Guidelines</a>).</p> <p><i>Background</i></p> <p>Australia has been a member of Codex Alimentarius since 1963. Codex standards are recognised by the World Trade Organization (WTO) of which Australia is a member country. In Australia, Codex input is coordinated by Codex Australia within in the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (<a href="#">ref</a>). Australia is obliged, where possible, to harmonise its domestic regulations with Codex standards <a href="#">and Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ)</a> will consider Codex standards when developing or revising domestic food standards (<a href="#">ref</a>). <a href="#">This is reiterated in the Food Regulation Agreement (FRA)</a>: the Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation is responsible for “<i>the promotion of harmonised food standards within Australia...and consistency with Codex Alimentarius (consistency of domestic and export standards with international food standards set by Codex Alimentarius)</i>” (<a href="#">ref</a>).</p>

	<p><i>Recommendations of the Labelling Logic report</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2009, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and the then Australia and New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council (Ministerial Council) (now the Food Ministers' Meeting) agreed to undertake a review of food labelling law and policy.</li> <li>• An expert panel, chaired by Dr Neal Blewett, AC, was appointed and the report Labelling Logic was released in January 2011 (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> <li>• The following recommendations are relevant to this assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recommendation 14: That the declaration of total and naturally occurring dietary fibre content be considered as a mandatory requirement in the Nutrition Information Panel.</li> <li>- Recommendation 17: The declaration in the Nutrition Information Panel of amount of nutrients per serve be no longer mandatory unless a daily intake claim is made.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The response of the Ministerial Council to each of these recommendations is outlined in a report (<a href="#">ref</a>) and progress updates on the implementation of the Government's response are published online.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b></p>	<p><i>Food standards conditions of labelling</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Australia, food standards related to ingredient lists and nutrient declarations (Standards 1.2.4 and 1.2.8) are in line with Codex Alimentarius standards. The standards apply to all foods with some exceptions* outlined in Standard 1.2.1, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Foods sold unpackaged</li> <li>- Foods made and packaged at the point of sale, e.g. bread made and sold in a local bakery</li> <li>- Food packaged in front of the purchaser, or delivered packaged and ready for consumption at the order of the purchaser (excluding vending machines)</li> <li>- Whole or cut fresh fruits and vegetables</li> <li>- Foods in a small package</li> </ul> </li> <li>• However, if a nutrition content or health claim is made about any of these foods (for example, 'good source of calcium', 'low fat') nutrition information must be provided.</li> </ul> <p><i>Ingredient lists</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ingredients must be declared in the statement of ingredients in descending order of ingoing weight</li> <li>• Ingredients must be listed by their common name, a name that describes the true nature of the ingredient or a generic name that is specified in the Code (e.g. white sugar, caster sugar, can be listed as 'sugar')</li> <li>• Where the specific source name of an oil is used, the label on the package containing that oil must include a statement that describes the nature of any process which has been used to alter the fatty acid composition of the edible oil (i.e. hydrogenation)</li> </ul> <p><i>Nutrient declarations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A nutrition information panel (NIP) is required on packaged food products (with some exceptions*)</li> <li>• The NIP must declare the average amount of energy, protein, total fat and saturated fat, carbohydrate and sugars, sodium and any other nutrients or biologically active substances about which a nutrition content or health claim is made.</li> <li>• This is declared per serving and per 100 g or 100 ml (or other appropriate unit) of the food, the average quantity of food in a serving and the number of servings of the food in the package must also be declared. More detailed specifications are set out in Standard 1.2.8.</li> <li>• Serving sizes are set by food manufacturers and are not standardised through the regulations</li> <li>• Percentage daily intake information may be voluntarily provided in the nutrition information panel but the Code sets out mandatory requirements for how it is to be presented, if used.</li> </ul>

- The NIP must be set out in the following format:

<b>NUTRITION INFORMATION</b>		
Servings per package: (insert number of servings)		
Serving size: g (or mL or other units as appropriate)		
	Quantity per Serving	Quantity per 100 g (or 100 mL)
Energy	kJ (Cal)	kJ (Cal)
Protein	g	g
Fat, total	g	g
– saturated	g	g
Carbohydrate	g	g
sugars	g	g
Sodium	mg (mmol)	mg (mmol)
(insert any other nutrient or biologically active substance to be declared)	g, mg, µg (or other units as appropriate)	g, mg, µg (or other units as appropriate)

\*Exceptions include foods such as a herb or spice, mineral water, tea and coffee because they have no significant nutritional value, or fruit, vegetables, meat, poultry, and fish that comprise a single ingredient or category of ingredients or prepared filled rolls, sandwiches, bagels and similar products (noting that if a nutrition content or health claim is made about these foods, a nutrition information panel must be provided).

There are different food standards related to infant foods ([Standard 2.9.2](#)) and infant formula products ([Standard 2.9.1](#)).

**National Preventive Health Strategy**

- This Strategy recognises the important of nutrition labelling and transparency to aid consumer choice about purchasing food products.
- The Strategy includes the following policy achievement:
  - Consumer choice is guided by the Health Star Rating system which is displayed on all multi ingredient packaged food products.*



## NAT\_LABEL2 Labelling added sugars

### *Good practice statement*

Regulations ensure that information concerning the type and quantity of added sugars within a food product is clearly presented in the nutrition information panel and ingredient list of all relevant packaged foods

### **Definitions and scope**

- Includes packaged foods manufactured in Australia or manufactured overseas and imported to Australia for sale
- Nutrient declaration means a standardized statement or listing of the nutrient content of a food
- Excludes health and nutrition claims (see NAT\_LABEL4 & NAT\_LABEL5)

### **Context**

**See NAT\_LABEL1 for information concerning ingredient lists and nutrient declarations.**

#### *Recommendations of the Labelling Logic report*

- In 2009, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and the then Australia and New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council (Ministerial Council) (now the FMM) agreed to undertake a review of food labelling law and policy.
- An expert panel, chaired by Dr Neal Blewett, AC, was appointed and the report Labelling Logic was released in January 2011 ([ref](#)).
- The following recommendations are relevant to this assessment:
  - Recommendation 12: That where sugars, fats or vegetable oils are added as separate ingredients in a food, the terms 'added sugars' and 'added fats' and/or 'added vegetable oils' be used in the ingredient list as the generic term, followed by a bracketed list e.g., added sugars (fructose, glucose syrup, honey), added fats (palm oil, milk fat) or added vegetable oils (sunflower oil, palm oil).
- The response of the Ministerial Council to this recommendation is outlined in a report and progress updates on the implementation of the Government's response are published online.

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

#### *Ingredient lists*

- In response to Recommendation 12 of the Labelling Logic report, FSANZ has been asked to undertake a technical evaluation and provide advice on proposed changes to the ingredient list (particularly regarding "added sugars" and "added fats") ([ref](#)). The evaluation is expected to be provided to the Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC) in the third quarter of 2016. Following its consideration, FRSC will forward the technical evaluation and advice to the Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation.

#### *Labelling sugars*

- In November 2017, the then Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation (Forum) concluded that current information about sugars on labels is inadequate. Between July - September 2018, the Food Regulation Standing Committee undertook a public consultation on policy options in relation to the labelling of sugars on food and drinks. This includes consultation on a number of policy options for labelling of sugars, including:
  - Status Quo
  - Education on how to read and interpret labelling information about sugars
  - Changes to the statement of ingredients
  - Added sugars quantified in the nutrition information panel (NIP)
  - Advisory labels for foods high in added sugars
  - Pictorial approaches to convey the amount or types of sugars in a serving of food

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Digital linking to off label web-based information about added sugars content</li><li>• Taking into account submitter comments, in June 2019 FRSC completed the Policy paper: Labelling of sugars on packaged foods and drinks.</li><li>• In August 2019, when considering the FRSC policy paper, Ministers agreed to request FSANZ to review nutrition labelling for added sugars, noting the option of quantifying added sugars in the NIP best met the desired outcome of enabling consumers to make informed food choices in support of dietary guidelines. Ministers also agreed that a pictorial approach applied to sugary beverages/sugar-sweetened beverages warrants further consideration, along with other options, pending the response to the Health Star Rating five-year review.</li><li>• In May 2021 FSANZ completed the review of nutrition labelling for added sugars. As requested by Ministers, FSANZ considered the following three options:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- quantifying added sugars in the NIP</li><li>- a pictorial about sugar applied to sugary beverages/sugar-sweetened beverages</li><li>- changing the statement of ingredients to identify sugars-based ingredients.</li></ul></li><li>• In June 2021, the FSANZ Board agreed a proposal be prepared to consider amending the Code with regard to added sugars information in the NIP. FSANZ's report is published online although (<a href="#">ref</a>) timelines for a proposal are yet to be made public.</li></ul>
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## NAT\_LABEL3 Labelling fats and oils

### *Good practice statement*

Regulations ensure that information concerning the type and quantity of all fats and oils within a food product is presented in the nutrition information panel and ingredient list of all relevant packaged foods

### **Definitions and scope**

- Includes packaged foods manufactured in Australia or manufactured overseas and imported to Australia for sale
- Nutrient declaration means a standardized statement or listing of the nutrient content of a food
- Excludes health and nutrition claims (see NAT\_LABEL4 & NAT\_LABEL5)

### **Context**

**See NAT\_LABEL1 for information concerning ingredient lists and nutrient declarations.**

### *Recommendations of the Labelling Logic report*

- In 2009, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and the then Australia and New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council (Ministerial Council) (now the FMM) agreed to undertake a review of food labelling law and policy.
- An expert panel, chaired by Dr Neal Blewett, AC, was appointed and the report Labelling Logic was released in January 2011 ([ref](#)).
- The following recommendations are relevant to this assessment:
  - Recommendation 12: That where sugars, fats or vegetable oils are added as separate ingredients in a food, the terms 'added sugars' and 'added fats' and/or 'added vegetable oils' be used in the ingredient list as the generic term, followed by a bracketed list e.g., added sugars (fructose, glucose syrup, honey), added fats (palm oil, milk fat) or added vegetable oils (sunflower oil, palm oil).
  - Recommendation 13: That the mandatory declaration of all trans fatty acids above an agreed threshold be introduced into the Nutrition Information Panel if manufactured trans fatty acids have not been phased out of the food supply by January 2013.
- The response of the Ministerial Council to this recommendation is outlined in a report and progress updates on the implementation of the Government's response are published online.

### *Trans fatty acid declaration*

- Codex guidelines state that: *Countries where the level of intake of trans-fatty acids is a public health concern should consider the declaration of trans-fatty acids in nutrition labelling.*
- A general definition of trans fatty acids is in Standard 1.1.2 of the Code.
- Manufacturers are not required to declare TFAs on the label, although they can provide this information voluntarily. However, TFAs must be declared on a label if the manufacturer makes a nutrition content claim about cholesterol or saturated, trans, polyunsaturated, monounsaturated, omega-3, omega-6 or omega-9 fatty acids. TFAs would also need to be declared when certain health claims are made.
- The level of TFAs in the Australian population is well below the at-risk level. In 2015, ministers accepted the advice of FSANZ that, given the low level of TFAs in the foods sampled in Australia and New Zealand, mandatory labelling does not appear warranted. In 2009 the average total trans-fat intakes from both ruminant and manufactured sources in Australia and New Zealand were below the WHO population goal of contributing less than 1% of total energy intake ([ref](#)).
- In Australia, the 2011-12 National Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey reported that the average consumption of trans fats (people aged 2 years and over) was 0.6 % of energy intake, below the WHO recommended limit ([ref](#)).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further monitoring of TFAs in the Australian and New Zealand food supply by FSANZ has found that Australians obtain on average 0.5 per cent of their daily energy intake from trans fats. This is also well below the World Health Organization recommendation of no more than 1 per cent (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> <li>• It has been acknowledged there is evidence suggesting certain sub populations in Australia may exceed the WHO limit, including low socio-economic populations (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b></p>	<p><i>Ingredient lists</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In response to Recommendation 12 of the Labelling Logic report, FSANZ has been asked to undertake a technical evaluation and provide advice on proposed changes to the ingredient list (particularly regarding “added sugars” and “added fats”) (<a href="#">ref</a>). The evaluation is expected to be provided to the Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC) in the third quarter of 2016. Following its consideration, FRSC will forward the technical evaluation and advice to the Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation</li> </ul> <p><i>Food regulation labelling of sources of fats and oils</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In November 2016, the then Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation (the Forum) authorised work to clarify the labelling of sources of fats and oils.</li> <li>• In April 2017, the Forum agreed to extend the scope of this project to cover all parts of the food label, including the identification of all fats and oils (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> <li>• In June 2017, the Australian Government Department of Health commissioned the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) to commission research in Australia that included identifying consumers’ knowledge, attitudes and behaviours relating to the labelling of fats and oils. This work was part of wider consumer study on food labelling.</li> <li>• The final report was delivered in March 2020 and provided advice on current consumer messaging and understanding of fats and oils, and opportunities to promote better understanding and healthier eating patterns.</li> <li>• A number of the recommendations will be considered as part of the review of the Australian Dietary Guidelines (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> </ul> <p><i>Trans fatty acids in oils report</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In November 2017 FSANZ and New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) provided a report to ministers responsible for food regulation on the level of TFAs in imported oils.</li> <li>• The report includes the findings of a detailed assessment of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- import statistics for vegetable fats and oils including those with potential to contain manufactured TFAs</li> <li>- a supermarket and online retail survey of TFA levels specified on product labels; and</li> <li>- an industry survey of importers of fats and oils to gather information on product specifications including TFA content.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The key conclusions of the assessment are that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in recent years there has been a significant decline in the importation of vegetable fats and oils with potential to contain TFAs into Australia and New Zealand</li> <li>- reported levels of TFAs from product labels and industry product specifications indicate that levels are consistent with results from recent analytical surveys from 2006 – 2013</li> <li>- analytical survey activity from 2006 – 2013 and the current assessment of imported fats and oils indicate that dietary intakes of TFAs have continued to reduce over time</li> <li>- further analytical survey work for imported fats and oils does not appear warranted at this point in time</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## NAT\_LABEL4 Regulatory systems for health claims

### *Good practice statement*

Robust, evidence-based regulatory systems are in place for approving/reviewing health claims made in relation to foods, so that consumers are clearly informed regarding a product's healthiness and protected against unsubstantiated and misleading claims

### **Definitions and scope**

- Health claims include general level (i.e. nutrient function, such as 'calcium strengthens bones') and high level (i.e. disease risk reduction, such as 'dietary fibre reduces your risk of bowel cancer') claims that relate to the relationship between food or a property of a food and a health effect
- Includes recognised endorsement symbols that are associated with healthy products
- 'Evidence-informed refers to systems that utilise robust criteria (based on an extensive review of up-to-date research and expert input) or a validated nutrient profiling model to inform decision-making about nutrition or health claims

### **Context**

#### *Food regulation mechanism*

All packaged foods sold in Australia must comply with the composition requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code ('Food Standards Code') which is enforced by States and Territory governments through their Food Acts and by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment for imported products. It is important to acknowledge that through national platforms, such as the Food Ministers' Meeting, State and Territory governments have the power to influence food regulation at the national level.

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is an independent statutory agency established by the Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991 (FSANZ Act). FSANZ is part of the Australian Government's Health portfolio.

FSANZ develops standards under the Food Standards Code that regulate the use of ingredients, processing aids, colourings, additives, vitamins and minerals. The Food Standards Code also covers the composition of some foods, such as dairy, meat and beverages as well as foods developed by new technologies such as genetically modified foods. FSANZ are also responsible for some labelling requirements for packaged and unpackaged food, for example specific mandatory warnings or advisory labels. FSANZ also develops Australia-only primary production and processing standards (see [Principles and Protocols for the Development of Food Regulation Policy Guidelines](#)).

#### *Australian consumer law*

The Australian Consumer Law (ACL) is a national law that aims to protect consumers and ensure fair trading in Australia. In addition to the Food Standards Code, the ACL requires that food suppliers not mislead or deceive in the representations they make on food packaging or when selling food ([ref](#)).

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

#### *Food Standard 1.2.7 Nutrition Health and Related Claims*

- A Standard to regulate nutrition content claims and health claims on food labels and in advertisements became law on 18 January 2013. Food businesses had to comply with the new standard ([Standard 1.2.7](#)) from 18 January 2016.
- The Standard sets out the claims that can be made on labels or in advertisements about the nutritional content of food (including nutrient comparative claims) or the relationship between a food or a property of a food (such as a vitamin or mineral), and a health effect (general or high level health claims). The Standard establishes the conditions under which claims can be made. It also provides exemptions for the use of 'endorsements' on labels or in advertisements if the endorsement and the endorsing body meet certain requirements set out in the Standard.

- The requirements for nutrition content and health claims apply to the form of the food as prepared if the food is required to be prepared and consumed according to directions (including reconstitution with water or draining before consumption).
- Claims cannot be made for infant formula products.
- Claims cannot refer to the prevention, diagnosis, cure or alleviation of a disease, disorder or condition; or compare a food with a good that is represented in any way to be for therapeutic use.

#### *General and high level health claims*

- A general or high level health claim can be made in accordance with the requirements set out in the Standard. These requirements include provisions for the substantiation of food-health relationships, which underpin health claims.
- The Standard requires that to use a general or high level health claim, the food to which the claim relates must meet Nutrient Profile Scoring Criteria set out in the Standard. These criteria take into account energy, sodium, saturated fat and total sugar content of foods, as well as protein, fibre, fruit, vegetable, nut and legume content of foods. FSANZ has developed an online calculator to help food businesses to calculate a food's nutrient profiling score.
- Under the Standard, food businesses wanting to make general level health claims are able to base their claims on one of the more than 200 pre-approved food-health relationships in the Standard or self-substantiate a food-health relationship in accordance with detailed requirements set out in the Standard (including evidence from a systematic review that concludes a causal relationship has been established between the food or property of food and the health effect).
- Sections S4—4 and S4—5 of Schedule 4 in the Code outline the specific conditions required for pre-approved high level and general level health claims, respectively (e.g. 'Calcium reduces risk of osteoporosis': food must contain no less than 290mg of calcium).
- When self-substantiating a food-health relationship for the purposes of making a general level health claim on food labels (or in advertisements for food), FSANZ must be notified of the established food-health relationship before a food business makes the claim and the company is required to retain records of the evidence that substantiates this claim.
- Notified food-health relationships are published on the FSANZ website but FSANZ do not approve or evaluate these relationships ([ref](#)). A Health Claims Scientific Advisory Group and High Level Health Claims Committee have been established to provide scientific and technical advice to FSANZ as required.

#### *Monitoring of compliance and potential breaches*

- Responsibility for enforcement of the code sits with State/Territory Authorities or the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment for imported food.
- The Food Minister's meeting's 'Policy Guideline on nutrition, health and related claims', establishes a role for the Implementation Sub-committee for Food Regulation (ISFR) as a 'watchdog' for the claims system, including assisting FSANZ with the creation of guidelines, providing recommendations on proposed amendments and dealing with complaints ([Policy Guideline on Nutrition, Health and Related Claims](#))
- ISFR is made up of representatives from government agencies and departments in Australia and New Zealand that are responsible for monitoring the implementation of food laws and enforcing those laws. These agencies and departments work together through ISFR to ensure food laws are implemented and enforced consistently.

*Other notes*

- [Standard 1.2.7](#) also applies to advertising materials and endorsement schemes where applicable claims are made
- In Australia, fair trading laws require that goods sold do not misinform the consumer through false, misleading or deceptive representations. Australian Consumer Law is enforced by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) and state and territory consumer authorities.

## NAT\_LABEL5 Regulatory systems for nutrition content claims

### *Good practice statement*

Robust, evidence-based regulatory systems are in place for approving/reviewing nutrition content claims made in relation to foods, so that consumers are clearly informed regarding a product's healthiness and protected against unsubstantiated and misleading claims

### **Definitions and scope**

- Nutrition claims include references to the nutritional content on food (e.g. low in fat)
- Includes recognised endorsement symbols that are associated with healthy products
- 'Evidence-informed refers to systems that utilise robust criteria (based on an extensive review of up-to-date research and expert input) or a validated nutrient profiling model to inform decision-making about nutrition or health claims

### **Context**

#### *Food regulation mechanism*

All packaged foods sold in Australia must comply with the composition requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code ('Food Standards Code') which is enforced by States and Territory governments through their Food Acts and by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment for imported products. It is important to acknowledge that through national platforms, such as the Food Ministers' Meeting, State and Territory governments have the power to influence food regulation at the national level.

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is an independent statutory agency established by the Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991 (FSANZ Act). FSANZ is part of the Australian Government's Health portfolio.

FSANZ develops standards under the Food Standards Code that regulate the use of ingredients, processing aids, colourings, additives, vitamins and minerals. The Food Standards Code also covers the composition of some foods, such as dairy, meat and beverages as well as foods developed by new technologies such as genetically modified foods. FSANZ are also responsible for some labelling requirements for packaged and unpackaged food, for example specific mandatory warnings or advisory labels. FSANZ also develops Australia-only primary production and processing standards (see [Principles and Protocols for the Development of Food Regulation Policy Guidelines](#)).

#### *Australian consumer law*

The Australian Consumer Law (ACL) is a national law that aims to protect consumers and ensure fair trading in Australia. In addition to the Food Standards Code, the ACL requires that food suppliers not mislead or deceive in the representations they make on food packaging or when selling food ([ref](#)).

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

#### *Food Standard 1.2.7 Nutrition Health and Related Claims*

- A Standard to regulate nutrition content claims and health claims on food labels and in advertisements became law on 18 January 2013. Food businesses had to comply with the new standard ([Standard 1.2.7](#)) from 18 January 2016.
- The Standard sets out the claims that can be made on labels or in advertisements about the nutritional content of food (including nutrient comparative claims) or the relationship between a food or a property of a food (such as a vitamin or mineral), and a health effect (general or high level health claims). The Standard establishes the conditions under which claims can be made. It also provides exemptions for the use of 'endorsements' on labels or in advertisements if the endorsement and the endorsing body meet certain requirements set out in the Standard.
- The requirements for nutrition content and health claims apply to the form of the food as prepared if the food is required to be prepared and consumed according to directions (including reconstitution with water or draining before consumption).
- Claims cannot be made for infant formula products.



- Claims cannot refer to the prevention, diagnosis, cure or alleviation of a disease, disorder or condition; or compare a food with a good that is represented in any way to be for therapeutic use.

#### *Nutrition content and comparative nutrition content claims*

- A nutrition content claim (including comparative claim) can be made in accordance with the requirements set out in the Standard.
- Comparative claims must meet minimum standards relating to the difference between the nutrient content of that food and a comparative food (e.g. at least 25% less fat than the same quantity of reference food).
- Section S4-3 of Schedule 4 outlines the specific conditions required for a nutrition content claim (e.g. to claim 'low fat' the food contains no more fat than 1.5g/ 100 mL for liquid food; or 3g/ 100 g for solid food).
- For claims about properties of food not listed in section S4—3 of Schedule 4, the claim can only state that the food contains or does not contain the property of food or contains a specified amount.
- Unlike health claims, a product carrying a nutrition content claim (including a comparative claim) doesn't need to meet Nutrient Profiling Scoring Criteria (see below). In practice this means that a product may claim to be low (or lower) in one nutrient of concern but be high in others (e.g. low in fat but high in salt and sugar).

#### *Monitoring of compliance and potential breaches*

- Responsibility for enforcement of the code sits with State/Territory Authorities (domestic) or the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (imported food).
- The FMM's 'Policy Guideline on nutrition, health and related claims', establishes a role for the Implementation Sub-committee for Food Regulation (ISFR) as a 'watchdog' for the claims system, including assisting FSANZ with the creation of guidelines, providing recommendations on proposed amendments and dealing with complaints ([Policy Guideline on Nutrition, Health and Related Claims](#)).
- ISFR is made up of representatives from government agencies and departments in Australia and New Zealand that are responsible for monitoring the implementation of food laws and enforcing those laws. These agencies and departments work together through ISFR to ensure food laws are implemented and enforced consistently.

#### *Other notes*

- [Standard 1.2.7](#) also applies to advertising materials and endorsement schemes where applicable claims are made
- In Australia, fair trading laws require that goods sold do not misinform the consumer through false, misleading or deceptive representations. Australian Consumer Law is enforced by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) and state and territory consumer authorities.

#### *Health Star Rating*

- In addition to the Nutrition Information Panel (NIP) and Nutrition, Health and Related Claims, the Health Star Rating (HSR) system is a front of pack labelling system designed to provide a quick and easy way to compare the nutritional profile of similar packaged foods. Standard 1.2.8 of the Code already requires most packaged food to display a NIP and the HSR system complements the NIP by providing interpretive information on the front-of-packaged products.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For most products the HSR Calculator is based on the nutrient content and ingredient information used for the Nutrient Profiling Scoring Criterion (NPSC) developed by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) for the regulation of health claims in Australia and New Zealand. The NPSC is prescribed in Schedule 5 of the Code. The selection of nutrients and ingredients in the nutrient profiling system used in the HSR Calculator are consistent with the 2013 Australian Dietary Guidelines and 2015 New Zealand Eating and Activity Guidelines for Healthy Adults.</li><li>• There are five HSR graphic options available to display on products. HSR optional nutrient icons are considered a nutrient content claim. Where nutrient icons are displayed as part of the HSR system graphic, these are considered a nutrition content claim under Standard 1.2.7 of the Code. This means use of HSR system nutrient icons may trigger the need to include NIP labelling if it is used in relation to a food that otherwise would be exempt from NIP requirements, or require the inclusion of additional information in the NIP.</li></ul>
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## NAT\_LABEL6 Front-of-pack nutrition labelling: healthiness indicator

### *Good practice statement*

Regulations ensure that there is a simple, easy-to-understand indicator of the product's healthiness shown on the front of the packaging of all relevant packaged foods

### **Definitions and scope**

- A healthiness indicator refers to an interpretive indicator (overall or for specific nutrients/food components) that provides summary information about healthiness using stars, points rating, traffic lights or similar mechanism
- 'Evidence-informed' refers to systems that utilise robust criteria (based on an extensive review of up-to-date research and expert input) or a validated nutrient profiling model to inform decision-making about the product's healthiness

### **Context**

#### *Food regulation mechanism*

All packaged foods sold in Australia must comply with the composition requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code ('Food Standards Code') which is enforced by States and Territory governments through their Food Acts and by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment for imported products. It is important to acknowledge that through national platforms, such as the Food Ministers' Meeting, State and Territory governments have the power to influence food regulation at the national level.

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### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

#### *Background*

- In December 2011, the then Legislative and Governance Forum on Food Regulation (FoFR) agreed to support Recommendation 50 of Labelling Logic: Review of Food Labelling Law and Policy (the Blewett Review) to develop an interpretive Front-of-Pack Labelling (FoPL) system.
- In 2013, the government approved a FoPL, the Health Star Rating (HSR) system as a voluntary scheme for the packaged food industry. It provides a quick, easy, standard way for consumers to compare similar packaged foods. The system was developed by the state and territory, Australian and New Zealand governments in collaboration with the food industry, public health and consumer groups ([ref](#)).

#### *HSR System*

- The HSR system takes into account four aspects of a food associated with increasing risk for chronic diseases; energy, saturated fat, total sugars and sodium content along with certain 'positive' aspects of a food such as fibre, protein fruit, vegetables, nuts and legumes content, and for some products, calcium.
- A Nutrient Profile Scoring algorithm is used to determine a product's star rating with a range from ½ star (least healthy) to 5 stars (most healthy) to enable consumer comparison between similar packaged products. Star ratings are scaled differently in the six HSR categories. This is presented on the label with a 'slider' to indicate the number of stars.

- The algorithm was developed in consultation with FSANZ and other technical and nutrition experts. A style guide provides guidance on the display of the HSR label on food packages.
- Additional nutrient information icons display the kilojoule, saturated fat, sugar and sodium content of products per 100g or per 100ml. Food companies can also choose to display a single positive nutrient icon (e.g. fibre or calcium) or use the words 'high' to describe the positive nutrients or 'low' to describe negative nutrients (i.e. saturated fat, sugar or sodium).
- The percentage daily intake (%DI) for energy may be shown as part of the HSR label in certain circumstances. The Daily Intake Guide and other logos or certifications may co-exist on packs with the HSR system graphic, but they should not be placed in a way that may lead consumers to believe they are linked or two parts of a single system.
- Details about the method for calculating a star rating, and of the six categories used to calibrate the star ratings, is in the Guide for Industry to the HSR Calculator. Guidance about consistent presentation of the HSR system graphics on pack is in the HSR Style Guide. Both documents are available online at [www.healthstarrating.gov.au](http://www.healthstarrating.gov.au).
- Implementation of the HSR system began in June 2014, overseen by the Health Star Rating Advisory Committee.

*Five-year review of the Health Star Rating system:*

The Five-year review of the Health Star Rating system was released in May 2019. Key results from this review included ([ref](#)):

- As of June 2018, approximately one-third of products in Australia and NZ were displaying the HSR.
- 90% of products were displaying the correct HSR
- Consumers viewed the HSR system easy to understand and use
- 83% of Australian consumers and 76% of New Zealand consumers were aware of the HSR system when prompted
- 77% of Australians and 63% in New Zealand find it easy to understand and 70% easy to use
- 58% of Australian consumers and 40% of New Zealand consumers trust the HSR system
- 70% of Australian consumers had purchased a product with the HSR in the last three months. With almost two thirds indicating that the HSR influenced their decision.
- Products in Australia that display the HSR had reductions in energy and saturated fat content compared to those that do not display the HSR over the four years since implementation of the system
- Several proposed changes to the algorithm to better align with the Dietary Guidelines were suggested:
  - Ensuring that fruits and vegetables that are fresh, frozen or canned without added fat, sugars or sodium receive a HSR of 5
  - Increasing the HSRs of the five food group of dairy foods, while reducing the HSRs for less healthy alternatives
  - Strengthening the negative impact of total sugars and high levels of sodium in the HSR calculator, consistent with Dietary Guidelines recommendations to limit intake of foods containing added salt and sugars
  - Providing a more nuanced way of calculating the HSRs for non-dairy beverages, such that products high in sugars have lower HSRs than water and similar products
- Since June 2019, the number eligible products displaying the HSR has increased to 41.2% (as of May 2020).

In December 2019 the 'Forum' published a response to the recommendation of the HSR five-year review ([ref](#)). Key recommendations from this report include:

- 'the HSR system continue as a voluntary system with the addition of some specific industry uptake targets and that the Australian, state and territory and New Zealand governments support the system with funding for a further four years;' Specific industry uptake targets include:
  - 50% uptake across intended products by 14 November 2021
  - 60% uptake across intended products by 14 November 2024
  - 70% uptake across intended products by 14 November 2025
- 'that changes are made to the way the HSR is calculated to encourage dietary intake that is consistent with the Dietary Guidelines, and include minimally processed foods such as canned and frozen fruits and vegetables into the system; and'
- 'that some minor changes are made to the governance of the system, including transfer of the HSR calculator to Food Standards Australia New Zealand.'
- Key recommendations related to the calculation of HSR's include:
  - Recommendation 4a - Fruits and vegetables that are fresh, frozen or canned (with no additions of sugar, salt or fat) should automatically receive an HSR of 5
  - Recommendation 4b - Total sugars should be more strongly penalised
  - Recommendation 4c - Sodium sensitivity should be improved for products high in sodium
  - Recommendation 4d - Dairy categories should be redefined
  - Recommendation 4e - Jellies and water-based ice confections should be re-categorised
  - Recommendation 5 - Changes be made to the way the HSR is calculated for non-dairy beverages to better discern water (and drinks similar in nutritional profile) from high energy drinks.
- The oversight of the implementation and day to day running of the HSR system is currently provided by the newly established Health Star Rating Advisory Committee, the Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC) and its Health Star Rating Implementation Working Group subgroup – The Health Star Rating Advisory Committee (HSRAC) and the Health Star Rating Review Implementation Working Group.
- The Forum (now Food Ministers' Meeting, FMM) originally established the HSRAC for a term of five years from 30 June 2014 to progress the implementation of the HSR system.
- In October 2019, FRSC agreed to suspend the HSRAC pending consideration of the Forum's response to the Review.
- In August 2021, a refreshed HSRAC was established with revised Terms of Reference (TORs). The TORs will reflect agreed changes to the HSRAC following the Review and will apply until the implementation of changes resulting from the Review is complete.

#### **National Preventive Health Strategy (Strategy)**

- The Strategy recognises the importance of Australians understanding the link between consuming a poor diet and the negative health implications this can cause.
- This Strategy seeks to increase consumption of healthy food and drinks, through working alongside a number of initiatives currently underway.
- The Strategy includes the following policy achievement by 2030:
  - *Consumer choice is guided by the Health Star system which is displayed on all multi-ingredient packaged food products.*

## NAT\_LABEL7 Front-of-pack nutrition labelling: health warnings

### *Good practice statement*

Regulations ensure that foods that are especially high in added sugar, saturated fat, sodium and/or energy content have prominent health warnings on the front of the packaging

### **Definitions and scope**

- Clearly visible, easy to understand front-of-package warning labels are applied to packaging of all food and beverages that exceed limits for foods that are high in added sugar, saturated fat, sodium and/or energy content by product category
- Regulatory norms include specifications on type, colour, size and placement of warning labels on products
- Does not include interpretative front of pack labelling signalling the healthiness of a product (see NAT\_LABEL6)

### **Context**

#### *Food regulation mechanism*

All packaged foods sold in Australia must comply with the composition requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code ('Food Standards Code') which is enforced by States and Territory governments through their Food Acts and by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment for imported products. It is important to acknowledge that through national platforms, such as the Food Ministers' Meeting, State and Territory governments have the power to influence food regulation at the national level.

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See NAT\_LABEL6 for details on Health Star Rating system.

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

#### *Labelling sugars*

- In April 2017, the then Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation (Forum) agreed to a stage 1 workplan on sugars labelling that included:
  - Further evidence gathering activities on consumer understanding and behaviours by FSANZ;
  - International approaches to sugar labelling; and
  - An update on the policy context
- In November 2017, the Forum considered three reports, including:
  - FSANZ literature review on sugars and food labelling
  - FSANZ report on international sugar labelling approaches
  - Sugars in Australia and New Zealand policy context developed by the Australian Government Department of Health ([ref](#)).
- Following consideration of these reports, the Forum concluded that current information about sugars does not provide adequate contextual information to enable consumers to make informed choices in support of dietary guidelines and agreed to explore regulatory and non-regulatory options to address the issue.

- Between July - September 2018, the Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC) undertook a public consultation on policy options in relation to the labelling of sugars on food and drinks. FRSC identified seven policy options to achieve the desired outcome including advisory labels for foods high in added sugars ([ref](#)).
- One policy option was to apply advisory labels for foods high in added sugars. This option proposed to place advisory labels (shape or symbol, or text box, advising the food is high in added sugars) on foods that exceeded a predetermined threshold of added sugars. The advisory labels would indicate that the food is high in added sugars, and/or include advice to consumers on the negative health consequences of consuming too much added sugars.
- In 2019, a policy paper on labelling of sugars was developed that included analysis of responses to the consultation ([ref](#)).
- Stakeholder views on the option to apply an advisory label for foods high in added sugars included:
  - A majority of the food industry were not supportive of this option. Concerns outlined include that this option applied a disproportionate focus on added sugars relative to available evidence. Impacts to trade, the Health Star System and consumer information.
  - Mixed views from public health stakeholders, including concerns of unintended consequences due to the narrow focus on added sugars.
  - Some concerns from government stakeholders including undermining the Health Star Rating, overemphasis on added sugars and the limited space on a food label.
  - Mixed views from the general public including support for simplicity and concerns that the option does not provide adequate information to understand.
- The analysis of options against the status quo identified that the advisory label option provided limited support for consumers to make healthy food choices, did not support whole of diet approaches, risked implying added sugars are a more concerning nutrient than other risk nutrients, may impact the Health Star Rating uptake and has limited ability to compare between products. It was identified as an option that supported consumer understanding as it was simple and did not require numerical calculations, as well as another positive in comparison to status quo by providing new information about foods.
- In August 2019, the then Forum considered the Policy Paper and agreed to request that FSANZ review nutrition labelling for added sugars. Noting that the option to quantify added sugars in the nutrition information panel best met the desired outcome. Additionally, the forum agreed that a pictorial approach applied to sugary beverages/SSB warrants further consideration, along with other options, pending the response to the HSR five-year review. ([ref](#)).
- In May 2021 FSANZ completed the review of nutrition labelling for added sugars. As requested by Ministers, FSANZ considered the following three options:
  - quantifying added sugars in the NIP
  - a pictorial about sugar applied to sugary beverages/sugar-sweetened beverages
  - changing the statement of ingredients to identify sugars-based ingredients.
- In June 2021, the FSANZ Board agreed a proposal be prepared to consider amending the Code with regard to added sugars information in the NIP. FSANZ's report and timelines for a proposal are yet to be made public.

## NAT\_LABEL8 Nutrition information on alcoholic beverages

### *Good practice statement*

Regulations ensure that ingredient lists, energy content, and other relevant nutrient-related information is present on the labels of all alcoholic beverages, in consistent ways to labelling requirements for other food products (as appropriate)

### **Definitions and scope**

- Includes alcoholic beverages manufactured in Australia or manufactured overseas and imported to Australia for sale
- Includes provisions that require companies to put 'warnings' on foods that are high in nutrients of concern and/or energy
- Nutrient declaration means a standardised statement or listing of the nutrient content of a drink
- Nutrition claims include references to the nutritional content on drink (e.g. low in sugar)

### **Context**

#### *Food regulation mechanism*

All packaged foods sold in Australia must comply with the composition requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code ('Food Standards Code') which is enforced by States and Territory governments through their Food Acts and by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment for imported products. It is important to acknowledge that through national platforms, such as the Food Ministers' Meeting, State and Territory governments have the power to influence food regulation at the national level.

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FSANZ develops standards under the Food Standards Code that regulate the use of ingredients, processing aids, colourings, additives, vitamins and minerals. The Food Standards Code also covers the composition of some foods, such as dairy, meat and beverages as well as foods developed by new technologies such as genetically modified foods. FSANZ are also responsible for some labelling requirements for packaged and unpackaged food, for example specific mandatory warnings or advisory labels. FSANZ also develops Australia-only primary production and processing standards (see [Principles and Protocols for the Development of Food Regulation Policy Guidelines](#)).

#### *Australian consumer law*

The Australian Consumer Law (ACL) is a national law that aims to protect consumers and ensure fair trading in Australia. In addition to the Food Standards Code, the ACL requires that food suppliers not mislead or deceive in the representations they make on food packaging or when selling food ([ref](#)).

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

#### *Food standards conditions of labelling*

Specific information for requirements of labelling of alcoholic beverages is provided by FSANZ including ([ref](#)):

- As per the food regulation standards the Statement of alcohol content:
  - All beverages containing 0.5% or more alcohol by volume (ABV) must include information on the label about the alcohol content (Standard 2.7.1)
  - For alcoholic beverages containing more than 1.15% ABV, the label must include the alcohol content as a percentage of ABV or mL/100 ml
  - For alcoholic beverages containing 1.15% ABV or less, the alcohol content must be written in words to the effect 'contains not more than X% alcohol by volume'.
- Standard drinks:



- All beverages with more than 0.5% ABV must also include on the label a statement of the number of standard drinks (Standard 2.7.1).
- Statement of alcohol content and standard drinks must be legible, in accordance with the general legibility requirements in the Code (Standard 1.2.1).
- Nutrition information and claims:
  - A [Nutrition Information Panel](#) (NIP) is not required on alcoholic beverages, unless a [claim](#) requiring nutrition information is made. Alcoholic beverages may voluntarily include an NIP. The inclusion of an NIP does not constitute a nutrition content claim.
  - All alcoholic beverages that contain more than 1.15% ABV:
    - can only make nutrition content claims about energy content, carbohydrate content (for example 'low carbohydrate') or gluten content. Health claims are not permitted.
    - must not be represented as a low alcohol beverage.

#### *Labelling Logic Review*

- In 2009, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and the then Australia and New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council (Ministerial Council) (now the FMM) agreed to undertake a review of food labelling law and policy.
- An expert panel, chaired by Dr Neal Blewett, AC, was appointed and the report *Labelling Logic* was released in January 2011 ([ref](#)).
  - Recommendation 26: That energy content be displayed on the labels of all alcoholic beverages, consistent with the requirements for other food products.
- In response to the 2011 Labelling Logic Review recommendation 'That energy content should be displayed on the labels of all alcoholic beverages, consistent with the requirements for other food products', the Forum requested further work into the [energy labelling of alcoholic beverages](#). Two pieces of work were prepared a Cost Benefit Analysis and a paper on broader policy issues regarding energy labelling of alcoholic drinks. *The net benefits of energy labelling on alcoholic beverages* report was published on the FSANZ website in 2015 ([ref](#)). This report led to further work to be undertaken by the Committee to consider a range of regulatory and non-regulatory approaches.
- The Food Regulation Standing Committee released a consultation paper on the issue in June 2017 and held a number of stakeholder roundtables in mid-2017, the results of which were published.
- FSANZ was referred work on energy labelling of alcoholic beverages by the Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum in August 2019 ([ref](#)).
- Labelling of carbohydrate content and sugar claims on alcoholic beverages (P1049) is currently under consideration by FSANZ ([ref](#)). Work on P1049 has been temporarily paused and work is expected to recommence in 2022.

#### *Energy Labelling on Alcoholic Beverages*

- In 2019, Food Ministers noted that currently consumers' ability to understand the energy contribution that alcohol makes to their diet is severely limited, as alcoholic beverages are exempt from providing nutrition information on the label.
- Ministers considered preliminary analysis on potential regulatory and non-regulatory policy options to address this issue and support consumers to make informed purchasing choices and consumption decisions. Subsequently, Ministers requested work on potential options for energy labelling of alcoholic beverages to be undertaken by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ).

- FSANZ is completing this work in two stages. The first stage was completed in June 2021 and involved an initial evidence assessment. Through this evidence assessment, FSANZ has concluded that ‘unlike most other packaged food and beverages, labels on most packaged alcoholic beverages do not provide information about energy content to enable consumers to make informed choices in line with dietary guidelines’. Further details including the evidence assessment and literature review can be found on the FSANZ website ([ref](#)).
- Based on the evidence and with consideration of the Australian and New Zealand dietary recommendations and ministerial policy guidance, FSANZ is developing options for energy labelling of alcoholic beverages to assist consumers to make informed choices. This includes regulatory and non-regulatory options, including on and off label approaches.
- Targeted consultation on preliminary options was completed in September and October 2021. It is anticipated FSANZ will complete their work in December 2021 and report to Ministers in 2022. FSANZ is aiming to align any changes in labelling requirements with the transition period for pregnancy warning labels.
- FSANZ will consider linkages between this work and P1049 - Carbohydrate and sugar claims on alcoholic beverages and other work to review added sugar labelling.

#### *Pregnancy warning labels on alcoholic beverages*

- On 31 July 2020, the Food Standards Code was amended to include new requirements for pregnancy warning labels on packaged alcoholic beverages. Pregnancy warning labels inform the community of the risks to an unborn child developing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder by consuming alcohol during pregnancy.
- The prescribed pregnancy warning label will be required on packaged alcoholic beverages with more than 1.15 per cent alcohol by volume for sale. The pregnancy warning label must include a pictogram, signal words (“PREGNANCY WARNING”) and warning statement (“Alcohol can cause lifelong harm to your baby”).
- Businesses have three years from 31 July 2020 to comply with the new requirements.

#### *National Preventive Health Strategy*

- The Strategy recognises the importance of Australians understanding the link between alcohol consumption and consuming a poor diet, and the negative health implications this can cause.
- The Strategy includes the following policy achievements by 2030:
  - *Consumer choice is guided by energy and ingredient labelling on all packaged alcohol products.*

## NAT\_LABEL9 Nutrition labelling in fast food outlets

### *Good practice statement*

Consistent, interpretive, evidence-informed nutrition labelling at point-of-purchase is applied by all major quick service restaurant chains, which clearly informs consumers regarding the energy content and nutrient quality of foods and meals on sale

### **Definitions and scope**

- Quick service restaurants: In the Australian context this definition includes fast food chains as well as coffee, bakery and snack food chains. It may also include supermarkets where ready-to-eat foods are sold.
- Labelling systems: Includes any point-of-sale (POS) nutrition information such as total kilojoules; percent daily intake; traffic light labelling; star rating, or specific amounts of nutrients of concern
- Menu board includes menu information at various points of purchase, including in-store, drive-through and online purchasing
- Includes endorsement schemes (e.g., accredited healthy choice symbol) on approved menu items

### **Context**

#### *Labelling Logic recommendation*

One of the recommendations of the Labelling Logic report related to menu board labelling as follows ([ref](#)):

Recommendation 18: *That declaration of energy content of standardised food items on the menu/menu boards or in close proximity to the food display or menu be mandatory in chain food service outlets and on vending machines. Further, information equivalent to that provided by the Nutrition Information Panel should be available in a readily accessible form in chain food service outlets.*

#### *State and Territory regulation*

In each State or Territory where regulations currently apply (ACT, NSW, SA, VIC, QLD), food companies (with minimum number of outlets in the state/nationally) must display the kJ content of each standard menu item on all menus, drive through menu boards, tags and labels that display the name or price of menu items. The display must be clear and legible. Average adult daily energy intake of 8700kJ must also be prominently featured. In these jurisdictions, other chains/food outlets are allowed to provide this information on a voluntary basis, but must follow the provisions of the legislation.

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

#### *Australian Government legislation*

There is no Australian legislation in place to regulate point-of-sale information for quick service restaurants (i.e. labelling of menu boards).

#### *Coordinated State legislation*

The then Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation endorsed (2011) a set of Principles for Introducing POS Nutrition Information at Standard Food Outlets to help to achieve a consistent approach to the adoption of POS information across jurisdictions ([ref](#)).

A summary of the principles is as follows:

1. Recognise that any change should contribute to improving public health outcomes.
2. Be consistent with the nationally agreed approach (details of this approach and terms and definition are outlined).
3. Be supported by a communication strategy that engages and informs appropriate stakeholders.
4. Include an evaluation strategy to assess the impacts of any POS approach introduced.

5. Not preclude jurisdictions from expanding POS nutrition information at a later date to also include disclosure of other information such as sugar, sodium and fat content.

*Review of fast-food menu labelling schemes*

- In April 2017, the then Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation (the Forum) identified that one of its priority areas for 2017-21 is to support public health objectives to reduce chronic disease related to overweight and obesity; and that this would include evaluating the effectiveness of existing initiatives, such as menu labelling schemes.
- In June 2018, the Forum agreed for further targeted consultation to be undertaken to develop policy options that aim to improve and strengthen fast food menu labelling in Australia.
- A review of the fast-food menu labelling schemes was conducted in 2018 and included 2 roundtable discussions with stakeholders. The summary report for this work is available at the Food Regulation website ([ref](#)). Views on additional information and interpretative information were sought as part of the consultation.
- In June 2018, the Forum agreed for further targeted consultation to be undertaken to develop policy options that aim to improve and strengthen fast food menu labelling in Australia.
- Between October and December 2018, a co-design process was used to work with public health and industry stakeholders on possible solutions for five key issues: legibility; business coverage and equity; electronic menus; combination meals; multiple serve items.
- In August 2019, the Forum agreed that nationally consistent menu labelling is desirable for food industry, public health organisations and government. The Forum agreed the most effective way would be to develop a food regulatory measure under the Food Standards Code, with the development of a Ministerial policy guideline (in line with the best practice regulation) as a first step.
- Australian and New Zealand stakeholders were invited to respond to the Public Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement to inform the development of policy guidance and effective policy framework for consistent menu labelling ([ref](#)) (consultation opened 8 April and closed 3 June 2021). Following analysis of stakeholder submissions, it is intended that a Decision RIS will be presented to Food Ministers with the preferred option for decision.

## Policy area: Food Provision

Good practice statement for this domain: The government ensures that there are healthy food service policies implemented in government-funded settings to ensure that food provision encourages healthy food choices, and the government actively encourages and supports private companies to implement similar policies

### Indicators in this domain by level of government:

Policy area: Food Provision		
National	Federal	State/Territory
NAT_PROV1: Healthy food policies in early childhood settings	AUD_PROV1: Healthy food policies in public sector workplaces	ST_PROV1: Healthy food policies in schools
NAT_PROV2: Healthy food policies in schools	AUD_PROV2: Support and training systems for private companies	ST_PROV2: Healthy food policies in health services (visitors and staff)
NAT_PROV3: Healthy food policies in care settings (resident/in-patient food provision)		ST_PROV3: Healthy food policies in care settings (resident/in-patient food provision)
		ST_PROV4: Healthy food policies in public sector workplaces
		ST_PROV5: Healthy food policies in community settings
		ST_PROV6: Support and training systems for public sector settings

**Details on National-level indicators in this domain:**

<p><b>NAT_PROV1 Healthy food policies in early childhood settings</b></p>	
<p><i>Good practice statement</i>                  The government ensures implementation of clear, consistent policies to provide and promote healthy food choices in <u>early childhood education and care services</u>, inclusive of all food service activities (foods provided, food at events, fundraising, promotions, etc.)</p>	
<p><b>Definitions and scope</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early childhood education and care services (0-5): includes all early childhood services which may be regulated and required to operate under the National Quality Framework</li> <li>• Includes policies and nutrition standards to provide and promote healthy food choices or to limit or restrict the provision or promotion of unhealthy food choices</li> <li>• Includes policies that relate to school breakfast programs, where the program is partly or fully funded, managed or overseen by the government</li> <li>• Excludes training, resources and systems that support the implementation of these policies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Context</b></p>	<p><i>Early childhood education and care service regulation</i></p> <p>In Australia, early childhood education and care services/programs are offered by government, community and private providers. They may be stand-alone services, or provided in school or early childhood care settings. Early childhood education and care is the responsibility of the States and Territories. The Australian Government contributes additional funding to Indigenous preschool services and supports the participation of children in quality early childhood education programmes in the year before full time school through a series of National Partnership Agreements on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education.</p> <p>A National Quality Framework was agreed by the COAG and includes National Law and Regulations that apply in all States and Territories. The National Quality Standard is a key element of the Regulations and apply to most long day care, family day care, preschool/ kindergarten and outside schools hours care services. Compliance with the National Quality Standard is supported by the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) and regulated by each state and territory, which has a regulatory authority with monitoring, compliance and quality assessment roles, usually undertaken by the Department of Education (<a href="#">ref</a>).</p>
<p><b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b></p>	<p><i>Early Childhood Education Services</i></p> <p><i>National regulations</i></p> <p>In relation to the provision of food, the <a href="#">Education and Care Services National Regulations</a> that apply in all States and Territories set out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that children being educated and cared for by the service—                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a) have access to safe drinking water at all times; and</li> <li>- b) are offered food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day (s78(1))</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The approved provider of an education and care service that provides food or a beverage to children being educated and cared for by the service must ensure that—                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a) the food or beverage provided is nutritious and adequate in quantity; and</li> <li>- b) the food or beverage provided is chosen having regard to the dietary requirements of individual children taking into account—                                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- i) each child’s growth and development needs; and</li> <li>- ii) any specific cultural, religious or health requirements (s79(1)).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Policies and procedures are required in relation to health and safety, including matters relating to: (i) nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements (s168(2a)).

#### National Quality Standards

- National Quality [Standard 2.1](#) stipulates that '*Healthy eating and physical activity are embedded in the program for children*'.
- There are five rating levels within the quality rating and assessment process. Element 2.1.3 specifies that to meet the Standard '*Healthy eating is promoted and food and drinks provided by the service are nutritious and appropriate for each child*'. To exceed the Standard '*Food and drinks provided by the service are nutritious and appropriate for each child. Healthy eating is consistently and actively promoted and embedded in the everyday program*'.
- The ACECQA Guide to the National Quality Framework provides information and advice to services on how to meet Standard 2.1 ([ref](#)). As one aspect of Element 2.1.3, assessors report whether children are being provided with food that is consistent with the Australian Government resources Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood, and/or Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia. This includes foods provided by the service, and steps taken to encourage parents bringing foods from home to ensure they are healthy options. It also includes written service policies around food provision.
- Compliance with the law and the National Quality Standard is managed by State and Territory regulatory authorities (usually Departments of Education).
- The latest National Quality Framework snapshot data published on the ACECQA website shows 2% of services have been assessed as not meeting Element 2.1.3. In a ranking of the 40 elements of the NQS from most commonly not met, to least commonly not met, Element 2.1.3 ranks 26th.

#### 'Get Up and Grow' resources

- The 'Get Up and Grow - Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood' resources provide practical information and advice to support staff and carers in early childhood settings and families of young children with information on breastfeeding, infant formula, introducing first foods, healthy foods and drinks, and physical activity ([ref](#)). The resources have been developed in a number of languages and include:
  - handbooks tailored for early childhood directors/coordinators; staff and carers and families
  - cooking for children book with information and advice on early childhood nutrition, menu planning, recipes and food safety
  - brochures, posters and stickers.
- Specific 'Get Up and Grow' resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander childcare educators, families and carers have also been developed.

#### FeedAustralia

- The Australian Government funded Healthy Australia Ltd over three years from 2016 to implement an online menu planning tool (feedAustralia) to support childcare services to provide healthy meals in line with the Australian Dietary Guidelines ([ref](#)).
- The feedAustralia program includes an app for childcare services and their families to use. feedAustralia uses a nutritional database of over 200 recipes and more than 2,000 ingredients with established nutrient profiles and serve recommendations to support services to menu plan to meet the recommended number of serves of food groups to meet children's nutritional needs.

## NAT\_PROV2 Healthy food policies in schools

### *Good practice statement*

The government ensures implementation of clear, consistent policies to provide and promote healthy food choices in schools, inclusive of all food service activities (canteens, food at events, fundraising, promotions, vending machines etc.)

### **Definitions and scope**

- Schools include government and non-government primary and secondary schools (up to year 12)
- Includes policies and nutrition standards to provide and promote healthy food choices or to limit or restrict the provision or promotion of unhealthy food choices
- Includes policies that relate to school breakfast programs, where the program is partly or fully funded, managed or overseen by the government
- Excludes training, resources and systems that support the implementation of these policies

### **Context**

#### *Government and non-government schools*

The operation of government schools is the responsibility of the relevant State/Territory Education Minister, while non-government schools (i.e. Catholic and Independent schools) are established and operate under conditions set by State/Territory government registration authorities.

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

#### *Primary and secondary schools*

#### *National Healthy School Canteen guidelines*

- The National Healthy School Canteen (NHSC) guidelines are underpinned by the ADG and encourage a nationally consistent approach to the provision and sale of healthy food and drinks throughout Australian schools ([ref](#)). Given that school operation is the responsibility of states and territory governments, the guidelines are not mandatory but implementation is at the discretion of each government. Some States/Territories have implemented the guidelines in full, while others include components of the guidelines within their own system.
- The NHSC guidelines use a traffic light categorisation system for foods to guide canteen managers to:
  - Make healthier food and ingredient choices and to use healthier food preparation and cooking techniques when making dishes from 'scratch' and preparing or cooking packaged food;
  - make healthier packaged food choices using specified Nutrient Criteria thresholds against the NIP on products; and
  - provide guidance on how to modify/change recipes and or cooking techniques to improve the nutritional value of the food, potentially into the 'green' category in the traffic light system.
- The NHSC guidelines are also promoted as useful for other school activities where food is provided or sold, including fundraisers, school camps, school fetes, sporting carnivals and social events.

#### *Joint statement*

- In October 2016, the former COAG Health Council (CHC) agreed actions to limit the impact of unhealthy food and drink on children include collaborating with the former COAG Education Council (CEC) to strengthen and increase the impact of school-based efforts to encourage and support health eating through two initiatives in:
  - support to teachers to integrate food and nutrition into classroom learning; and
  - development of good practice standards for healthy eating that take a whole school approach, building on the successes of health school canteens ([ref](#)).



- In July 2019, the then CHC and CEC published 'The Good Practice Guide – Supporting healthy eating and drinking at school' and a joint statement and call to action developed in collaboration with education stakeholders ([ref](#)). These documents will support school communities to create environments where students are enabled and supported to make informed healthy food and drink choices.
- To limit the impact of unhealthy food and drinks in children's sport and recreation, a joint statement by Health Ministers and the Meeting of Sport and Recreation Ministers was endorsed by the then CHC in September 2019. The statement indicates Government commitment to support Australian children to develop healthy habits by keeping kids active and ahead of the game ([ref](#)).

*National interim guide to reduce children's exposure to unhealthy food and drink promotion (Interim Guide)*

- In 2018, the then Council of Australian Government's Health Council endorsed the Interim Guide for voluntary use by governments in their settings to reduce children's exposure to unhealthy food and drink promotion. The Interim Guide is based on the Australian Dietary Guidelines and aims to support improved health of Australian children by reducing consumption of discretionary foods and drinks.
- The Interim Guide provides categories and examples of foods that are not recommended for promotion to children. The Interim Guide acknowledges that children can be vulnerable to the persuasive intent of master branding and includes advice that the specific overarching corporate brand name should not be the predominant feature of an advertisement and should be accompanied with images of a health food or drink.

*Food Regulation System activity*

- In August 2019, Food Ministers agreed to a suite of activities to support public health objectives to reduce chronic disease related to overweight and obesity. One of these activities was for the Food Regulation Standing Committee to explore options to reduce children's exposure to unhealthy food and drink advertising and marketing.
- The work is in the early phases and a range of regulatory and non-regulatory options will be considered as part of the process. This may include options to strengthen restrictions of unhealthy food advertising on television.
- Stakeholders will be consulted as the work progresses.

**NAT\_PROV3** Healthy food policies in care settings (resident/in-patient food provision)

*Good practice statement*

The government ensures implementation of clear, consistent policies to provide and promote healthy food choices in health services, aged, disability, custodial and community care settings (resident/in-patient food provision)

**Definitions and scope**

- Include government-funded or managed services where the government is responsible for the provision of food, including public hospitals and other in-patient health services (acute and sub-acute, including mental health services), residential care homes, aged and disability care settings, custodial care facilities, prisons and home/community care services
- Includes private businesses that are under contract by the government to provide food
- Includes policies and nutrition standards to provide and promote healthy food choices or to limit or restrict the provision or promotion of unhealthy food choices
- Includes modifying ingredients to make foods and drinks healthier, or changing the menu to offer healthier options

**Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

*National Standards – Health services*

- The Australasian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) is responsible for maintaining and implementing the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards ([ref](#)). They outline the broad, minimum standards required for accreditation; the purpose is not to prescribe the specific best practice.
- The Standards provide a nationally consistent and uniform set of measures of safety and quality for application across a wide variety of health care services. They provide a quality assurance mechanism that tests whether relevant systems are in place to ensure minimum standards of safety and quality are met.
- Action 5.27 relates to nutrition and hydration to ensure that health service organisations that admit patients overnight has systems for the preparation and distribution of food and fluids that include nutrition care plans based on evidence and best practice ([ref](#)).
- Action 5.28 relates to nutrition and hydration to meet patients' nutritional needs and requirements; monitor the nutritional care of patients at risk; identify, and provide access to, nutritional support for patients who cannot meet either nutritional requirements with food alone; and support patients who require assistance with eating and drinking ([ref](#)).

*National Standards – Aged, disability and community care services*

- The Department of Health is responsible for the development and review of quality standards for aged care including home care, home support, flexible care and residential services. The Australian Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission is responsible for assessing aged care services against the Aged Care Quality Standards.
- The new Aged Care Quality Standards were introduced in July 2019.
- The Aged Care Quality Standards are now being reviewed, with one of the focus areas being food and nutrition.

*2021 Basic Daily Fee supplement for residential aged care*

- An extra \$10 per resident per day has been provided from 1 July 2021 to residential aged care providers who undertake to deliver good quality and quantity goods and services to meet the living needs of residents, with a focus on food and nutrition, and to report quarterly on the quality and quantity of daily living services with a focus on food and nutrition.

*National Congress on food, nutrition and the dining experience in aged care*

- The National Congress was held in February 2021 to bring together a diverse range of stakeholders and provide policy options for the Department of Health in relation to improving food, nutrition and the dining experience in aged care.

*Grant for the production of online training modules for cooks and chefs in aged care*

- The Department of Health has provided a grant to the Maggie Beer Foundation to develop training modules for cooks and chefs in aged care, to help upskill the workforce.

*National Preventive Health Strategy*

- The Strategy outlines a collaborative approach with key prevention partners to achieve the aims and visions of the Strategy, one partner being aged care.
- The Strategy also recognises the malnutrition as a prominent issue in older Australians, especially in care settings.
- The Strategy includes the following policy achievement by 2030:
  - Ongoing access to adequate and affordable healthy food options are available to all Australians, including older Australians

*National Standards – Prison and custodial facilities*

- Australian prisons, youth detention and custody/remand facilities are operated by the relevant State/Territory departments or bodies. Standard Guidelines for Corrections in Australia were published by the Australian Institute of Criminology (updated in 2012) and endorsed by all States and Territories ([ref](#)).
- The Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators 'Juvenile Justice Standards 2009' have been developed to support jurisdictions to deliver services in accordance with the relevant jurisdictional legislation ([ref](#)). These standards are broadly used by jurisdictions to monitor service quality and performance.

# INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

Policy area: Leadership

Good practice statement for this domain: The political leadership ensures that there is strong support for the vision, planning, communication, implementation and evaluation of policies and actions to create healthy food environments, improve population nutrition, and reduce diet-related inequalities

**Indicators in this domain by level of government:**

<b>Policy area: Leadership</b>		
<b>National</b>	<b>Federal</b>	<b>State/Territory</b>
NAT_LEAD1: Government strategy and related implementation plan for addressing nutrition and obesity	AUD_LEAD1: Political support for population nutrition	ST_LEAD1: Political support for population nutrition
NAT_LEAD2: Government taskforce dedicated to addressing nutrition and obesity	AUD_LEAD2: Population intake targets established	ST_LEAD2: Government strategy and related implementation plan for addressing nutrition and obesity
	AUD_LEAD3: Evidence-based dietary guidelines implemented	

**Details on National-level indicators in this domain:**

<p><b>NAT_LEAD1</b> Government strategy and related implementation plan for addressing nutrition and obesity</p>	
<p><i>Good practice statement</i></p> <p>There is a long-term government strategy for addressing diet, nutrition, obesity and related NCDs, including prioritisation for reducing inequalities and protecting vulnerable populations. There is also a corresponding comprehensive, transparent, adequately resourced implementation plan, with annual performance and process targets, linked to state/national needs and priorities.</p>	
<p><b>Definitions and scope</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The focus of this indicator is National strategies and plans. State/Territory and Federal specific strategies and plans are covered by other indicators.</li> <li>• Frameworks strategies or implementation plans specify aims, objectives or targets for addressing diet, nutrition, obesity and NCDs and to reduce inequalities and protecting vulnerable populations including taking a preventive approach that addresses the social and environmental determinants of health</li> <li>• Includes specific priorities for reducing inequalities for specific population groups</li> <li>• Excludes priorities to reduce inequalities in secondary or tertiary prevention</li> <li>• Implementation plans should be current (i.e. maintain endorsement by the current government and/or are being reported against)</li> <li>• Plans should refer to actions to improve food environments (as defined in the policy domains above) and should include both policy and program strategies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Context</b></p>	<p><i>Aboriginal health: Commonwealth and State Government context</i></p> <p>The then Council of Australian Governments (COAG) established the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA) in 2008 and committed to a range of targets to Close The Gap in Indigenous disadvantage, including two targets specifically related to health. Underpinning NIRA are a series of national Health Plans for priority health areas including chronic disease, mental health, and social and emotional wellbeing.</p> <p><i>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework report</i></p> <p>The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework monitors progress in Indigenous Australian health outcomes, health system performance and broader determinants of health (<a href="#">ref</a>).</p> <p><i>The People of Australia – Australia’s Multicultural Policy</i></p> <p>Australia’s multicultural policy acknowledges that government services and programs must be responsive to the needs of our culturally diverse communities. It commits to an access and equity framework to ensure that the onus is on government to provide equitable services to Australians from all backgrounds. The policy aims to strengthen social cohesion through promoting belonging, respecting diversity and fostering engagement with Australian values, identity and citizenship, within the framework of Australian law (<a href="#">ref</a>).</p>
<p><b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b></p>	<p><i>National Diabetes Strategy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Australian National Diabetes Strategy 2021–2030 was released on 12 November 2021 and identifies actions under Goal 1 ‘Prevent people developing type 2 diabetes’ to reduce modifiable risk factors (including poor nutrition and obesity).</li> </ul>

#### *National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions*

- The National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions, released in May 2017 following endorsement by all health ministers, provides a national approach to guide planning, design and delivery of policies, strategies, actions and services to better address the prevention and management of chronic conditions in Australia. It recognises overweight/obesity as a biomedical risk factor for chronic conditions ([ref](#)).

#### *National Preventive Health Strategy (Strategy)*

- The Australian Government has now developed the Strategy, which provides the overarching, long-term approach to prevention in Australia over the next 10 years.
- One of the seven focus areas outlined in the Strategy is dedicated to '*Improving access to and the consumption of a healthy diet*' which recognises the pivotal role that nutrition plays at every stage of life, from pre-conception to older age.
- In the 2021-22 Budget, an early commitment of \$1.9 million was made to the Strategy to fund the creation of a platform to support a stronger and more effective prevention system in Australia.
- This Budget measure will develop a number of governance and system integration activities, including the Blueprint for Action which will guide the implementation of the Strategy.

#### *National Obesity Strategy*

- In 2018, all Health Ministers agreed to the development of a National Obesity Strategy (Strategy) to formulate a more collaborative and comprehensive national approach to obesity in Australia. Queensland Health has led the development of the Strategy in collaboration with all jurisdictions.
- The Strategy will include a focus on priority population groups or regions where the prevalence of overweight and obesity is higher.
- A national consultation process to inform the Strategy development occurred in late 2019 and early 2020 with a wide variety of stakeholders and included face-to-face sessions and online surveys.
- It is expected the Strategy will complement the National Preventive Health Strategy. The Strategy is expected to be finalised in 2022.

## NAT\_LEAD2 Government taskforce dedicated to addressing nutrition and obesity

### *Good practice statement*

There is a government taskforce dedicated to addressing diet, nutrition, obesity and related NCDs

#### **Definitions and scope**

- A centrally coordinated national government taskforce responsible for overseeing and executing the implementation of any government strategy(ies) and related implementation plan(s) for addressing nutrition and obesity (as described in NAT\_LEAD1)
- Members of the national taskforce would need to include experts from a range of fields and a broad knowledge base that engages all relevant sectors of industry, civil society, and the wider community
- The taskforce would need to be appropriately resourced, with a long-term (5-10 years +) commitment of funding
- Taskforce should work at all levels of government in Australia

#### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

##### *Health and Food Collaboration*

- In 2018, a time limited Health and Food Collaboration (the Collaboration) was established between Health Ministers, Food Ministers, and their subordinate committees to explore to explore opportunities for the Food Regulation System to support obesity prevention objectives.
- This collaboration is part of a series of collaborative efforts being established by the Council of Australian Government's (COAG) Health Council to improve children's health by limiting the promotion and availability of unhealthy food and drinks.
- As part of this collaboration, a *Rapid Review of food regulatory approaches to address childhood obesity* was commissioned on food regulatory approaches to address childhood obesity ([ref](#)).
- The rapid review was prepared to inform discussions on a public health 'Policy Think Tank' held in March 2018.
- The Policy Think Tank resulted in a number of recommendations which have been, or are being actioned, through current actions, including:
  - food labelling work within the Food Regulatory System
  - the 5 year review of the Health Star Rating System
  - the COAG Health Council's actions on limiting the impact of unhealthy food and drink on children
  - the Australian Government's Healthy Food Partnership

##### *Australian National Diabetes Strategy 2021–2030*

- The Australian National Diabetes Strategy 2021–2030 (the Strategy) has been developed as an update to the recently expired Australian National Diabetes Strategy 2016–2020.
- The Strategy contains guidance and direction around key goals and priorities for diabetes, including items from the previous Strategy, as well as additional information such as COVID-19 considerations. The Strategy was released on 21 November 2021 ([ref](#)).

## Policy area: Platforms for Interaction

Good practice statement for this domain: There are coordination platforms and opportunities for synergies across government departments, levels of government, and other sectors (NGOs, private sector, and academia) such that policies and actions in food and nutrition are coherent, efficient and effective in improving food environments, population nutrition, diet-related NCDs and their related inequalities

### Indicators in this domain by level of government:

Policy area: Platforms for interaction		
National	Federal	State/Territory
NAT_PLAT1: Government coordination mechanisms		
NAT_PLAT2: Platforms for government and food sector interaction		
NAT_PLAT3: Platforms for government and civil society interaction		



## Details on National-level indicators in this domain:

<h3>NAT_PLATF1 Government coordination mechanisms</h3>	
<p><i>Good practice statement</i></p> <p>There are robust coordination mechanisms across departments and levels of government (national, state/territory and local) to ensure policy coherence, alignment, and integration of food, obesity and diet-related NCD prevention policies across governments</p>	
<p><b>Definitions and scope</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes cross-government or cross-departmental governance structures, committees or working groups (at multiple levels of seniority), agreements, memoranda of understanding, etc.</li> <li>• Includes cross-government or cross-departmental shared priorities, targets or objectives</li> <li>• Includes strategic plans or frameworks that map the integration and alignment of multiple policies or programs across governments and across departments</li> <li>• Includes cross-government or cross-departmental collaborative planning, implementation or reporting processes, consultation processes for the development of new policy or review of existing policy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Context</b></p>	<p><i>Food Regulation Agreement (FRA)</i></p> <p>The FRA, including the Model Food Provisions contained in Annex A and Annex B, was signed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in November 2000 (and has been amended several times since). The FRA is an agreement between the Australian Government and all States and Territories to maintain a co-operative national system of food regulation. One of the key objectives of the agreement is to: <i>‘provide a consistent regulatory approach across Australia through nationally agreed policy, standards and enforcement procedures’</i>.</p> <p>Under the FRA, it is stipulated that States’ and Territories’ Food Acts and other food-related legislation should <i>‘provide for the effective and consistent administration and enforcement of the Food Standards Code’</i> and details the requirements to maintain national consistency.</p>
<p><b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b></p>	<p><i>Food Ministers’ Meeting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The joint food regulation system is overseen by the Food Ministers’ Meeting (FMM). The FMM is primarily responsible for the development of domestic food regulatory policy and the development of policy guidelines for setting domestic food standards. FMM also has the capacity to adopt, amend or reject standards and to request that these be reviewed (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> <li>• Membership of the FMM comprises a Minister from New Zealand and the Health Ministers from Australian States and Territories, the Australian Government Ministers responsible for food and agriculture. This ensures a whole-of-food chain approach to food regulation. Each jurisdiction has a Lead Minister for voting purposes. The FMM is currently chaired by the Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services, and Minister for Sport, Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck MP.</li> </ul> <p><i>Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FRSC is the sub-committee of the FMM (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> <li>• Membership of FRSC comprises senior officials of Departments for which the Ministers represented on the Forum have portfolio responsibility.</li> <li>• FRSC is responsible for coordinating policy advice to FMM and ensuring a nationally consistent approach to the implementation and enforcement of food standards. It also advises the Forum on the initiation, review and development of FRSC activities.</li> </ul>

#### *Implementation Sub-Committee for Food Regulation (ISFR)*

- ISFR was set up by the FRSC to foster a consistent approach across jurisdictions to implementing and enforcing food regulation ([ref](#)).
- ISFR members are either heads of agencies or senior operational experts who can make and implement decisions about compliance and enforcement issues in their jurisdictions.

#### *FSANZ Jurisdictional Technical Forum*

- This forum was established by FSANZ to provide jurisdictions with the opportunity to discuss issues related to standards development work before standards are finalised and to provide FSANZ with the opportunity to seek comment on possible issues of concern.

#### *State and Territory nutrition network*

- The Australian Government also participates in regular teleconferences with state and territory Government nutrition staff to update each other on work and identify opportunities to share information and to collaborate.

#### *Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Health Council*

- In October 2016, the then Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Health Council agreed to actions to limit the impact of unhealthy food and drink on children. One of these actions was strengthened collaboration between health and food regulation relating to obesity prevention initiatives.
- In 2018, a time limited Health and Food Collaboration (the Collaboration) was established between Health Ministers, Food Ministers, and their subordinate committees to explore opportunities for the Food Regulation System to support obesity prevention objectives.
- This collaboration is part of a series of collaborative efforts being established by the Council of Australian Government's (COAG) Health Council to improve children's health by limiting the promotion and availability of unhealthy food and drinks.
- As part of this collaboration, a *Rapid Review of food regulatory approaches to address childhood obesity* was commissioned to identify and explore food regulatory approaches to address childhood obesity. ([ref](#))
- The rapid review was prepared to inform discussions on a public health 'Policy Think Tank' held in March 2018.
- The Policy Think Tank resulted in a number of recommendations which have been, or are being actioned, through current actions, including:
  - food labelling work within the Food Regulatory System
  - the 5 year review of the Health Star Rating System
  - the COAG Health Council's actions on limiting the impact of unhealthy food and drink on children
  - the Australian Government's Healthy Food Partnership

#### *Policy-specific platforms*

Other platforms for national coordination of specific food policies are established as required. For example, a number of coordination structures were established to support the development and implementation of the HSR system:

#### *Front-of-Pack Labelling Steering Committee (Steering Committee)*

- This group includes senior representatives from the Australian, state and territory governments, New Zealand government and a representative from the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council. The Steering Committee was responsible for

leading the process for developing the system with industry, public health and consumer groups, through a Project Committee, and reports to the Forum.

- The Project Committee also had two working groups, on technical design and on implementation. These three committees have now ceased and the HSRAC reports through the Food Regulation Standing Committee.

#### *Health Star Rating committees and groups*

##### Health Star Rating Advisory Committee (HSRAC)

- The Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation (the Forum, now Food Ministers' Meeting, FMM) originally established the Health Star Rating Advisory Committee (HSRAC) for a term of five years from 30 June 2014 to progress the implementation of the HSR system.
- In October 2019 the Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC) agreed to suspend the HSRAC pending consideration of the Forum's response to the HSR Five Year Review Report (the Review).
- On 17 July 2020, the then Forum, approved updated Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the refreshed HSR Advisory Committee (HSRAC). The ToRs reflect agreed changes to the role and membership of the HSRAC following the Review and will apply until the implementation of changes resulting from the Review is complete. The role and purpose of the HSRAC has shifted. The new focus is on overseeing the implementation of changes to the system, addressing queries or complaints referred to by the Front-of-Pack Labelling (FoPL) Secretariat, assessment of potential anomalies, approaches to non-compliance and communicating with stakeholders.
- The new HSRAC convened for their first meeting on 5 August 2021.
- The Advisory Committee may establish sub-committees, in addition to the existing Social Marketing Advisory Group (SMAG), to assist it in overseeing the continued implementation of the HSR system during its term.

##### Social Marketing Advisory Group (SMAG)

- The SMAG was a previously assembled group to support the development of the social marketing campaign. In the event the advisory group is reconvened, the SMAG will consist of members with specific expertise in communications and social marketing from relevant industry and consumer/public health groups, and must have jurisdictional representation. The SMAG will be chaired by a representative of the Australian Government Department of Health.

##### HSR Implementation Working Group (IWG)

- The IWG closely works to the Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC) and provides a conduit for information sharing between government officials and the FRSC representative on the HSRAC. The IWG is largely comprised of jurisdiction representatives. The IWG is responsible for supporting the HSRAC (via FRSC) in the role to oversee the day to day implementation of the system.

##### Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

- The Technical Advisory Group's (TAG) role is to analyse and review the performance of the HSR Calculator and respond to technical issues and related matters referred to it by the HSRAC. The TAG was primarily convened to support the five-year formal review of the HSR system.

##### National Diabetes Strategy

- The Australian National Diabetes Strategy 2016-2020 was supported by all Australian jurisdictions through endorsement by Australian Health Ministers. The Strategy recognises the importance of a coordinated approach to managing diabetes – one which spans all levels of government and the healthcare industry.

- A cross-jurisdictional Implementation Working Group was established to operationalise each of the Strategy’s goals through the development of an Implementation Plan to recommend ways to direct funding in a cost-effective and sustainable way to agreed actions over the life of the Strategy. \*The implementation plan was published in 2017.

#### *National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions*

- The National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions (released in 2017) was developed in partnership with State and Territory Governments, under the auspice of the Australian Health Minister’s Advisory Council (AHMAC) (ref).
- A Jurisdictional Working Group was established under the Community Care and Population Health Principal Committee of the AHMAC, to work with the Commonwealth throughout this project. This group includes representatives from each state and territory, as well as representatives from New Zealand and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Standing Committee (ref).

#### *National Coordination Mechanism*

- As part of the COVID-19 response the Australian Government works in close collaboration with states and territories through the National Coordination Mechanism.
- Groceries and food security is one of the priority groups under this mechanism.

#### *COVID-19 Food Security Working group*

- In April 2020 in response to the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on food availability, the Australian Government convened a Food Security Working Group (FSWG) to support food security for remote Indigenous communities across Australia.
- The FSWG brings together community store management companies, manufacturers, suppliers, freight companies and Western Australian, South Australian, Queensland and Northern Territory Governments to identify issues impacting remote food security and develop solutions or escalate issues for resolution to the appropriate state, territory or national forums. The Group is convened by the National Indigenous Australians Agency.
- As of 1 August 2021, the Working Group has met 27 times.

#### *National Preventive Health Strategy*

- The Strategy recognises the importance of government leadership, and that enhanced governance structures are required to create a more resilient prevention system.
- One of the seven key enablers in the Strategy is ‘Leadership, governance and funding’. This enabler recognises that enhanced governance structures are required to create a more resilient prevention system.

## NAT\_PLATF2 Platforms for government and food sector interaction

### *Good practice statement*

There are formal platforms (with clearly defined mandates, roles and structures) for regular interactions between government and the commercial food sector on the implementation of healthy food policies and other related strategies

### **Definitions and scope**

- The commercial food sector includes food production, food technology, manufacturing and processing, marketing, distribution, retail and food service, etc. For the purpose of this indicator, this extends to commercial non-food sectors (e.g. advertising and media, sports organisations, land/housing developers, private childcare, education and training institutes) that are indirectly related to food
- Includes established groups, forums or committees active within the last 12 months for the purpose of information sharing, collaboration, seeking advice on healthy food policies
- Includes platforms to support, manage or monitor private sector pledges, commitments or agreements
- Includes platforms for open consultation
- Includes platforms for the government to provide resources or expert support to the commercial food sector to implement policy
- Excludes joint partnerships on projects or co-funding schemes

### **Policy details (to 30 June 2021)**

#### *The Healthy Food Partnership (Australian Government initiative)*

- The Healthy Food Partnership has established [several working groups](#) to address aspects of healthy eating and obesity: the Implementation and Evaluation Working Group (now ceased), the Portion Size Working Group (now ceased), the Food Service Working Group (now ceased), the Communication and Education Working Group (now ceased), the Reformulation Working Group, the Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Reference Group, the State and Territory Liaison Group, the Industry Best Practice Guide for Serving Size Working Group, and the Foods for Early Childhood Reference Group. The Executive Committee has regular meetings, the [minutes](#) of which are published on the Healthy Food Partnership website (currently 12 dated the 19 March 2021).
- The Reformulation Working Group in 2019 conducted a [public consultation](#) on draft voluntary reformulation targets set for key products that contribute to the intake of sodium, saturated fat and sugars. See indicators NAT\_COMP1-NAT\_COMP4 for details.

#### *Health Star Rating System collaboration*

- The government collaborated with food industry representatives for the purpose of developing the HSR System including the technical design, Style Guide and implementation framework. This included the following peak bodies representing a range of commercial food industry stakeholders ([ref](#)):
  - Australian Beverages Council
  - Australian Food and Grocery Council
  - Australian Industry Group
  - Australian National Retail Association
- The Australian Government provided the following response requesting more information about the role of industry and how their commercial interests were managed:

- *Food industry was consulted during the development of the HSR Calculator, through industry workshops, opportunity to try and provide feedback on the Calculator and guidance documentation, and direct consultation as part of the independent development of the a cost benefit analysis prepared by PricewaterhouseCoopers which explores the cost borne by industry, governments and non-government organisations and the potential benefits to public health with the voluntary introduction of the HSR. Consideration of this report by Ministers was one of the factor that underpins the five year voluntary implementation, so as to allow for cost-effective implementation in line with other packaging cycles and changes.*
- *Food industry was also instrumental in the development of the current HSR graphic, as the 'square' design originally agreed by food Ministers was considered too large and onerous to implement.*
- *A direct email address to the Front of Pack Labelling Secretariat and a free call phone number provide access for industry to make enquiries of the department about the HSR system.*
- *The previous HSRAC committee facilitated workshops (funded through the HSR budget, which is cost shared by all Australian governments) to continue to inform and educate food industry and health stakeholders about the HSR system.*

#### *FSANZ Platforms ([ref](#))*

##### *Retailers and Manufacturers Liaison Committee*

- The Retailers and Manufacturers Liaison Committee (RMLC) provides an opportunity for ongoing dialogue between FSANZ and industry. The purpose of the committee is members to engage in informed discussion about specific issues relating to standards development and standards setting processes and other issues. This committee does not provide any scientific advice to FSANZ.
- The RMLC has representatives across a range of commercial food companies and industry bodies representing the interests of primary producers, food manufacturers, and retailers ([ref](#)).

##### *National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions*

- The *National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions* (the Framework) was released on 22 May 2017 following endorsement by all Health Ministers. It provides a national approach to guide planning, design and delivery of policies, strategies, actions and services to better address the prevention and management of chronic conditions in Australia.
- The Framework was developed in partnership with State and Territory Governments, under the auspice of the then Australian Health Minister's Advisory Council (AHMAC).
- National Targeted Consultations seeking the views of stakeholders from across Australia were conducted during September and November 2015. Stakeholders included representatives from the states and territories, relevant peak bodies, key stakeholders, clinical experts, health professionals, academics and consumer representatives ([ref](#)).
-

## NAT\_PLATF3 Platforms for government and civil society interaction

### *Good practice statement*

There are formal platforms (with clearly defined mandates, roles and structures) for regular interactions between government and civil society on the development, implementation and evaluation of healthy food policies and other related strategies

### Definitions and scope

- Civil society includes community groups and consumer representatives, NGOs, academia, professional associations, etc.
- Includes established groups, forums or committees active within the last 12 months for the purpose of information sharing, collaboration, seeking advice
- Includes platforms for consultation on proposed plans, policy or public inquiries
- Excludes policies or procedures that guide consultation in the development of food policy

### Policy details (to 30 June 2021)

The Australian Government engages with different groups within civil society on food policies and other strategies to improve population nutrition as required, including academia, NGOs, professional associations, consumer representatives and the general public. In relation to the development of chronic disease policy activities, a Key Performance Indicator for the Department of Health is: *Experts and the public are consulted through a variety of means, including: working groups, focused workshops, and online processes (budget 2015-16 DoH outcome).*

Recent examples highlight the role of these stakeholders in the development and implementation of government policy and programs.

#### National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions

- The *National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions* (the Framework) was released on 22 May 2017 following endorsement by all Health Ministers. It provides a national approach to guide planning, design and delivery of policies, strategies, actions and services to better address the prevention and management of chronic conditions in Australia.
- The Framework was developed in partnership with State and Territory Governments, under the auspice of the then Australian Health Minister's Advisory Council (AHMAC).
- National Targeted Consultations seeking the views of stakeholders from across Australia were conducted during September and November 2015. Stakeholders included representatives from the states and territories, relevant peak bodies, key stakeholders, clinical experts, health professionals, academics and consumer representatives ([ref](#)).

#### FSANZ Platforms ([ref](#))

##### Consumer and Public Health Dialogue

- The Consumer and Public Health Dialogue is a consultative forum, which aims to build stronger relationships between consumer and public health groups and FSANZ and support FSANZ's understanding of key consumer and public health issues relating to food. The forum is made up of representatives from peak consumer and public health bodies and public health academics including CHOICE, Australian Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance, several universities, Dietitians Australia, PHAA and the Country Women's Association of Australia ([ref](#)).

##### Engaging scientific advice

- As required, FSANZ seeks scientific advice from experts working in research agencies, universities and other organisations to provide expert knowledge or technical advice to inform specific projects or as members of scientific advisory groups (e.g. Health Claims Scientific Advisory Group).



*Policy Think Tank: exploring opportunities for the food regulation system to support obesity prevention*

- A Policy Think Tank was held to explore opportunities for the food regulation system to support obesity prevention on 22 March 2018 ([ref](#)).
- It was undertaken as part of a time-limited collaboration established between Health Ministers, Food Ministers, and their subordinate committees.
- The Think Tank was attended by 69 participants from government, academic and non-government sectors.
- Four key themes emerged from the Policy Think Tank and included:
  - Clearer definitions of unhealthy (discretionary) food
  - Food reformulation and portion sizes
  - Health Star Rating (HSR) system improvements
  - Marketing restrictions for unhealthy (discretionary) foods

*Health Star Rating System Governance*

- The HSR system is a joint Australian Government, Australian state and territory governments and New Zealand Government initiative. The system was developed in collaboration with industry, public health and consumer groups.
- Several committees are involved in overseeing the implementation of the HSR system:
  - The Food Minister's Meeting (FMM) is ultimately responsible for all decisions relating to the system. The FMM includes Ministers responsible for food regulation from across Australia and New Zealand and is chaired by the Australian Government Minister responsible for the *Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) Act 1991*.
  - The Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC) is comprised of senior officials in relevant departments supporting the members of the FMM and is responsible for coordinating the provision of policy advice on the HSR. FRSC is also responsible for ensuring a consistent approach to the implementation of the system across Australia and New Zealand.
  - The HSR Advisory Committee (HSRAC) is responsible for overseeing the day to day implementation of the system and providing governance support.
  - The HSR Implementation Working Group (IWG) reports to FRSC and closely supports the HSRAC via FRSC.
  - The Social Marketing Advisory Group (SMAG) was a previously assembled group to support the development of the social marketing campaign. Members of the SMAG held specific expertise in communications and social marketing. If required, this group may be re-established for future campaigns
  - In September 2016, the HSRAC established a [Technical Advisory Group \(TAG\)](#) to analyse the performance of the HSR Calculator and respond to technical issues and related matters referred to it by the HSRAC. TAG conducted in-depth reviews of the technical components of the system and developed a range of technical papers on various issues identified by stakeholders. The TAG was primarily engaged during the process of the HSR Five-Year Review.
- Representation from these committees is diverse, including: Ministers, New Zealand government, Australian state and territory governments, FSANZ, representatives from the food industry, public health and consumer groups in Australia and New Zealand.



*National Diabetes Strategy Advisory Group*

- The Department of Health met with members of the former National Diabetes Strategy Advisory Group, the Hon Judi Moylan AO, and Professor Paul Zimmet AO, on 16 June 2020 to discuss updating the Strategy and the supporting Implementation Plan.
- Between September 2020 and April 2021, the Department consulted with experts (EAG) and jurisdictions (JAG) on an update to the Strategy.

*National Preventive Health Strategy (Strategy)*

- To inform the development of the Strategy, the Department undertook extensive consultation activities to ensure the views of public health experts, key stakeholder groups and consumers were represented.
- The Government has allocated \$1.9 million in funding to build the foundations of the Strategy, some of the preliminary work of this upfront investment includes the development of a national consumer engagement strategy.
- This activity will involve developing a national consumer engagement strategy in order to strengthen partnerships, including between health policy makers and the community.

## Policy area: Support for Communities

Good practice statement for this domain: The government provides coordinated support mechanisms and resources for community-based interventions to create healthy food environments, improved population nutrition, reductions in obesity, diet-related NCDs and their related inequalities

### Indicators in this domain by level of government:

Policy area: Support for communities		
National	Federal	State/Territory
NAT_COMM1: Coordinated support for multi-faceted community-based interventions	AUD_COMM1: Implementation of social marketing campaigns	ST_COMM1: Coordinated support for multi-faceted community-based interventions
NAT_COMM2: Food and nutrition in education curricula		ST_COMM2: Implementation of social marketing campaigns
		ST_COMM3: Food and nutrition in education curricula

**Details on National-level indicators in this domain:**

<p><b>NAT_COMM1</b> Coordinated support for multi-faceted community-based interventions</p>	
<p><i>Good practice statement</i></p> <p>The government has put in place mechanisms to provide broad and coordinated support for creating and maintaining healthy food environments at the community level across multiple settings</p>	
<p><b>Definitions and scope</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community settings include workplaces, sporting clubs, recreation centres and groups (e.g. art, music, dance and drama; scouts and guides), youth groups, cultural and religious community groups, community centres and neighbourhood houses, service clubs, men’s sheds, community groups involved in gardens or sustainable living, community markets and events, church and other nongovernment groups who provide support to others</li> <li>• Includes comprehensive and flexible resources, guidelines and frameworks, expertise and workforce training to support implementation of community-based interventions</li> <li>• Includes the establishment of workforce networks for collaboration, shared learning and support across settings</li> <li>• Includes recognition or award-based programs to encourage implementation</li> <li>• Excludes specific support for healthy food provision in schools, hospitals and other government settings (this is covered in the Food Provision and Food Retail domains at the State/Territory level)</li> <li>• Excludes the implementation of programs that focus on one-on-one or group-based nutrition education or health promotion</li> </ul>
<p><b>Context</b></p>	<p><i>National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NPAPH was announced by the COAG in November 2008 with the aim of supporting State and Territory initiatives to improve health behaviours to reduce lifestyle-related chronic diseases (<a href="#">ref</a>). The NPAPH committed to provide \$872 million over six years from 2009-10, later extended to 2018 - the largest commitment to preventive health ever made by an Australian Government (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> <li>• The NPAPH funding was allocated to settings based interventions in pre-schools, schools, workplaces and communities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to support behavioural changes in the social contexts of everyday lives and focussing on poor nutrition, physical inactivity, smoking and excessive alcohol consumption (including binge drinking);</li> <li>- social marketing aimed at obesity and tobacco; and</li> <li>- the enabling infrastructure to monitor and evaluate progress made by these interventions, and to establish the Australian National Preventive Health Agency (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• However, in the 2014-15 Federal budget, the NPAPH was abolished along with the Australian National Preventive Health Agency. Some States continued to support community-based initiatives established under the NPAPH, but this varied between jurisdictions (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> </ul> <p><b>The Collaboration of Community-based Obesity Prevention Sites (CO-OPS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CO-OPS was an initiative funded by the Australian Government Department of Health in 2007 as a community-based initiative (<a href="#">ref</a>)</li> <li>• Additional funding in 2012-2015 provided by the Australian Government enabled the expansion of CO-OPS’ reach and scope adopting a broader platform of interactive knowledge translation and exchange strategies with members.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CO-OPS aims were to support best practice and to contribute to quality and effectiveness of community-based practice in the promotion of healthy eating, regular physical activity and healthy weight as key factors to help prevent chronic disease (<a href="#">ref</a>).</li> </ul>
<b>Policy details (to 30 June 2021)</b>	<p><i>National Preventive Health Strategy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Strategy recognises the importance of partnerships and community engagement.</li> <li>• The Strategy aims to tackle health inequities and strengthen the prevention system for all Australians with a focus on priority populations.</li> <li>• The Strategy includes the policy achievement by 2030: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Preventive health partnerships with priority population communities and organisations are established and strengthened.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## NAT\_COMM2 Food and nutrition in education curricula

### *Good practice statement*

The government provides guidance and support to educators for the inclusion of food and nutrition curricula for preschool, primary and secondary school children

### Definitions and scope

- Includes food and nutrition as a priority/focus area of the curriculum as a stand-alone component or embedded within other curriculum areas
- Includes the provision of training, resources, guidelines or expert support to educators to support them in educating students
- Includes government-funded education programs on healthy eating or growing and preparing food (e.g. kitchen garden programs)
- Includes government-supported programs that encourage healthy eating in the education setting (e.g. fruit and vegetable snack and water breaks)

### Policy details (to 30 June 2021)

#### *Australian Curriculum*

- On 18 September 2015 all Education Ministers endorsed the revised Australian Curriculum Foundation to Year 10 to which each State/Territory is currently transitioning
- The Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority is responsible for the development of the national curriculum and national assessment of student progress.
- Implementation of the national curriculum is a matter for States and Territories and their curriculum authorities.
- The Australian Curriculum addresses learning about food and wellbeing in two ways:
  - in content descriptions as in Health and Physical Education (HPE), Science and Technologies, noting that in HPE there is a food and nutrition focus area; and
  - in Design and Technologies there is a technologies context (food specialisations) where it is identified in content elaborations in other learning areas, such as Mathematics.
- The *Australian Curriculum Connection: Food and wellbeing* provides a framework for all young Australians to understand and value the importance of good nutrition for health and wellbeing both across learning areas and specifically within the Technologies learning area as a technologies context in core learning across Foundation to Year 8 and as additional learning opportunities offered by states and territories in Years 9–10 ([ref](#)).
- The HPE Learning Area: Addresses the role of food and nutrition in enhancing health and wellbeing. The content supports students to develop knowledge, understanding and skills to make healthy, informed food choices and to explore the contextual factors that influence eating habits and food choices.
- It is expected that all students at appropriate intervals across the continuum of learning from Foundation to Year 10 will learn about the following:
  - food groups and recommendations for healthy eating (including The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating)
  - nutritional requirements and dietary needs (including The Australian Dietary Guidelines)
  - food labelling and packaging
  - food advertising
  - personal, social, economic and cultural influences on food choices and eating habits
  - strategies for planning and maintaining a healthy, balanced diet
  - healthy options for snacks, meals and drinks
  - sustainable food choices ([ref](#))

- In Design and Technologies Foundation to Year 8, through the technologies context Food specialisation students learn how to apply nutrition principles (as described in Health and Physical Education) and knowledge about the characteristics and properties of food to food selection and preparation; and contemporary technology-related food issues. Students will progressively develop knowledge and understanding about the nature of food and food safety, and how to make informed and appropriate food preparation choices when experimenting with and preparing foods in a sustainable manner ([ref](#)).
- Beyond Year 8 students may elect to study further in subjects specialising in food.
- In Design and Technologies students also learn about food and fibre production. Students will progressively develop knowledge and understanding about the managed systems that produce food and fibre through creating designed solutions.

#### *The COAG Health Council*

- The former COAG Health Council (CHC)'s agreed actions to limit the impact of unhealthy food and drink on children include collaborating with the former COAG Education Council (CEC) to strengthen and increase the impact of school-based efforts to encourage and support health eating through two initiatives in:
  - support to teachers to integrate food and nutrition into classroom learning; and
  - development of good practice standards for healthy eating that take a whole school approach, building on the successes of health school canteens.
- In July 2019, the then CHC and CEC published 'The Good Practice Guide – Supporting healthy eating and drinking at school' and a joint statement and call to action developed in collaboration with education stakeholders ([ref](#)). These documents will support school communities to create environments where students are enabled and supported to make informed healthy food and drink choices.