

## **Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation (Forum) – Addendum to 17 July 2020 Communiqué – Health Star Rating (HSR) outcomes**

### **Peer Review**

**Forum Request (November 2019):** The Forum requested that Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) undertake a peer review of the modelling that underpinned the HSR Five Year Review Report (Review Report), and provide advice on impacts of all recommendations combined.

**Forum Decision, July 2020:** The Forum noted FSANZ's advice that the modelling presented in the Review Report was accurate.

**Recommendation 4A:** That fruits and vegetables that are fresh, frozen or canned (with no additions of sugar, salt or fat) should automatically receive a HSR of 5.

**Forum Request (November 2019):** The Forum requested that the Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC) provide advice on a suitable definition for minimally processed fruits and vegetables to support implementation of this recommendation.

**Forum Decision, July 2020:** For the purposes of the HSR system only, the following definition be adopted (subject to consideration of regulatory implications and stakeholder engagement):

*Minimally processed fruit and vegetables:* Fruit (except coconut), vegetables, fungi and legumes (except peanuts) that have only been peeled, cut and/or surface treated and/or blanched and/or frozen, or canned without the addition of fat, sugars/sweeteners or salt.

**Recommendation 4B:** That total sugars should be more strongly penalised (by changing the existing 22 point table to a 25 point table), lowering the HSRs of 5% of products (including breakfast cereals, snack bars, sweetened milks, ice creams and sugar-based confectionery).

**Forum Request (November 2019):** The Forum requested that FRSC provide advice on whether an even stronger approach (30 point scale) may achieve an outcome that more closely aligns the HSR system with Dietary Guidelines. The Forum requested that FSANZ undertake further modelling to provide advice on the combined impact of both the 25 point and 30 point scale scenarios required to support a conclusion with respect to sugar scaling.

**Forum Decision, July 2020:** The Forum considered the advice of both FRSC and FSANZ and an announcement by the Australian Government of a review of the 2013 Australian Dietary Guidelines. The Forum agreed Review recommendation 4b would be supported as proposed in the Review Report ('Calculator 1'), noting future opportunities to re-assess alignment with dietary guidelines will occur following their review and update in Australia.

**Recommendation 4C:** That sodium sensitivity should be improved for products high in sodium (by reducing the upper limit of the sodium table), reducing the HSR of 1% of products (all with sodium in excess of 900mg/100g).

**Forum Request (November 2019):** The Forum requested that FRSC provide advice on whether the alternative approach considered in the draft review report (a further reduction in the upper limit and amendment of the baseline increments) achieves an outcome that more closely aligns the HSR system with Dietary Guidelines. The Forum requested that FSANZ provide advice on the combined impact of both the recommended scenario and the alternative scenario to support a conclusion with respect to sodium.

**Forum Decision, July 2020:** The Forum considered the advice of both FRSC and FSANZ and an announcement by the Australian Government of a review of the 2013 Australian Dietary Guidelines. The Forum agreed Review recommendation 4c would be supported as proposed in the Review Report ('Calculator 1'), noting future opportunities to re-assess alignment with dietary guidelines will occur following their review and update in Australia.

**Recommendation 4D:** Dairy categories<sup>1</sup> be redefined (Category 2D to include dairy desserts and other chilled dairy products and Category 3D to include surface ripened cheeses) and rescaled to ensure healthier five food group options receive higher HSRs and improve comparability between dairy products.

**Forum Request (November 2019):** The Forum requested that FSANZ undertake further modelling in order to establish whether recategorisation is the most appropriate approach when combined with other enhancements, and whether it is appropriate and/or necessary to rescale whole categories in combination with the proposed adjustments to individual nutrients (i.e. sugar and sodium). The Forum requested that FSANZ provide advice on the combined impact of all relevant scenarios required to support a conclusion with respect to recategorisation and rescaling.

**Forum Decision, July 2020:** The Forum considered the modelling and advice from FSANZ, and additional advice provided by FRSC and agreed Review recommendation 4d would be supported as proposed in the Review Report. However, as proposed by the Australian Government the cheese category will be re-assessed for alignment with dietary guidelines following their review and update in Australia.

**Recommendation 5:** Changes be made to the way the HSR is calculated for non-dairy beverages to better discern water from high energy drinks, including that unsweetened flavoured waters should automatically receive a HSR of 4.5.

**Forum Request (November 2019):** The Forum requested that the Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC) provide advice on a suitable definition for unsweetened flavoured waters to support implementation of this recommendation.

**Forum Decision, July 2020:** For the purposes of the HSR system only, the following definition be adopted (subject to consideration of regulatory implications and stakeholder engagement):

*Unsweetened flavoured waters:* Packaged beverages similar in nutritional profile to water that: may contain carbon dioxide, whether added or naturally

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<sup>1</sup> HSR categories are described in the [Guide for Industry to the Health Star Rating Calculator](#)

Category 2D: Dairy foods other than those included in category 1D or 3D; Category 3DL Cheese and processed cheese as defined in Standard 2.5.4 (with calcium content >320 mg/100 g)

occurring; and contain no added sugars, sweeteners or salt; and contain only the following additives: permitted flavouring substances, excluding quinine and caffeine and flavouring substances that can also be used as sweeteners.

**Recommendation 9**: The HSR system remain voluntary but with clear uptake targets set and all stakeholders working together to drive uptake. If the HSR system continues to perform well but the HSR is not displayed on 70% of target products within five years consideration be given to a mandatory system subject to a Regulation Impact Statement being undertaken.

**Forum Request (November 2019)**: The Forum requested that FRSC consider interim targets, and the target metrics to be used to measure successful uptake.

**Forum Decision, July 2020**: The Forum considered the advice from FRSC and agreed to interim uptake targets of 50% at three years and 60% at four years across all intended products.

### **Edible oils**

**Forum Request (November 2019)**: The Forum requested that FRSC consider the way edible oils are treated under the HSR system and provide technical advice on oils to the Forum in early 2020.

**Forum Decision, July 2020**: The Forum considered the advice from FRSC and agreed that in relation to the treatment of edible oils under the HSR system, the status quo would be retained.