

# **AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND MINISTERIAL FORUM ON FOOD REGULATION**

## **COMMUNIQUÉ**

12 February 2021

The Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation (the Forum) met on Friday 12 February 2021 via video conference to consider food regulation and policy matters. The Forum comprises all Australian and New Zealand Ministers responsible for food and is chaired by Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck. It was noted that Western Australia is operating under caretaker conventions and did not participate in decision making at this meeting.

Key outcomes from the meeting include:

### **Health Star Rating Matters**

#### **Treatment of Fruit and Vegetable Juices under the Health Star Rating (HSR) system**

The Australian Government Department of Health provided further advice in relation to adjusting the HSR calculator for 100 per cent fruit and vegetable juices (no added sugars).

The Forum agreed to maintain the status quo, supporting the implementation of the HSR review calculator for 100 per cent fruit and vegetable juices with no added sugar. The Forum noted the system adequately reflects the variation in sugar content for juices which is important for consumers in assisting in their choice of beverages.

#### **Application A1186 – Soy Leghemoglobin in meat analogue products**

In July 2019, Impossible Foods Inc. submitted an application to Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) to permit the voluntary use of soy leghemoglobin in meat analogue products. On 1 December 2020, the FSANZ Board approved a draft variation to the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code to allow this permission.

Today the Forum did not request a review of the draft variation to the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code for Application A1186. The Forum noted that following FSANZ's health and safety risk assessment using an internationally recognised risk analysis framework, there are no health and safety risks associated with the application. Approval to permit soy leghemoglobin supports greater consumer choice for meat analogue products with a source of iron which may benefit consumers wanting to reduce or eliminate animal products from their diet. Approval of the application also supports greater consistency with international food regulations, industry innovation and creates trade opportunities for Australia and New Zealand. The variation will now be gazetted and included in the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code.

## **Review of COAG Councils and Ministerial Forums (the Conran Review)**

On 23 October 2020, National Cabinet accepted the [Conran Review recommendations](#) that include reducing the number of ministerial forums and ensuring that those that remain are more agile and responsive.

The Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation was identified as 'time limited and when needed'. Ministers with responsibility for food will meet as required to make decisions on food regulatory matters. Ministers remain committed to the three priorities of the Food Regulation System:

- Reducing foodborne illness, particularly related to *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella*.
- Supporting the public health objectives to reduce chronic disease related to overweight and obesity.
- Maintaining a strong, robust and agile Food Regulation System through an ambitious reform agenda, to be progressed in conjunction with the review of the *Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991*.

The Forum will now be known as the 'Food Ministers' Meeting'.

Visit the Food Regulation website for further information on food regulation activities – [www.foodregulation.gov.au](http://www.foodregulation.gov.au)