

## **Targets for Health Star Rating Uptake Summary Paper**

Recommendation 9 of the Health Star Rating System Five Year Review was that:

*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 of a government decision on these recommendations, the HSR System should be mandated.*

At its December 2019 meeting, the Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation (the Forum) supported Recommendation 9 subject to agreeing interim and final target metrics. The Forum requested that both interim and five-year targets be considered by the Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC) to demonstrate the commitment to increasing use of the system and the potential need for a mandatory system.

If the HSR system continues to perform well, but the interim and final uptake targets are not met, consideration may be given to a mandatory system subject to a Regulation Impact Statement being undertaken.

### **What are the targets and timeframes?**

At its 17 July 2020 meeting, the Forum considered the additional work undertaken by FRSC and agreed to interim uptake targets of 50% at three years, 60% at four years and 70% at five years across all intended products.

- Implementation start date – 15 November 2020
- Interim target 1 (50%) – 15 November 2023
- Interim target 2 (60%) – 15 November 2024
- Interim target 3 (70%) – 15 November 2025

### **What are the intended foods?**

Foods intended to carry the HSR system are foods:

- permitted to use the system; and
- required to have a nutrition information panel (NIP) in the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code; and
- that can vary in nutritional composition. This includes foods with a nutrient composition can be altered (multi-ingredient processed packaged foods) or foods where similar products can vary in nutritional composition (for example foods such as flour and oils).

If the composition of a food can be varied, within regulatory constraints, to yield different foods, and a profiling mechanism exists within the HSR system to detect compositional variation in those foods and rank them nutritionally, they will be comparable and therefore should be included within the scope of the HSR system.

This definition excludes foods not eligible to carry the HSR such as alcohol, kava and most special purpose foods and aligns with the intention that the HSR is used to simplify the nutrition information provided on food labels.

### **What are the exempt foods?**

Foods that are exempt include:

- Foods deemed inappropriate to carry nutrition information (e.g. alcohol, kava); or
- Foods of minimal nutritional significance in the diet (herbs and spices, vinegar, salt, tea, coffee, food additives and processing aids, gelatine, water, jam setting compound); or
- Foods not standardised enough to provide accurate nutrition information (prepared filled rolls, sandwiches, bagels and similar products); or
- Foods in small packages; or
- Fruit, vegetables, meat, poultry, and fish that comprise a single ingredient or category of ingredients.

Based on this definition, foods such as flour and cooking oils are intended to carry the HSR as they are not exempt from carrying a NIP and can vary in nutritional content across similar products (e.g. wholemeal flour vs plain flour or sunflower vs olive oil vs coconut oil). Eggs, sugar and baking powder however are not intended to carry an HSR despite being required to carry a NIP, as their composition does not vary significantly across products. Plain packaged water, fresh and some packaged fruits and vegetables are also not required to carry a NIP so based on this definition, not intended to carry an HSR. These foods are able to use the system, but uptake in these categories would not count towards the established uptake target. Guidance materials for the HSR will provide further examples of foods intended and not intended to carry the HSR based on the above definition.

For further information please contact [frontofpack@health.gov.au](mailto:frontofpack@health.gov.au) or the Health Star Rating Hotline on 1800 099 658.