

Public health and consumer groups support mandatory implementation of the Health Star Rating system

Wednesday 29 July 2026

Members of the Food Ministers' Meeting

C/O Food Regulation Secretariat

Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

Via email: FoodRegulationSecretariat@health.gov.au

The undersigned organisations and experts write jointly to express our strong support for the mandatory implementation of the Health Star Rating system.

We welcome the Food Ministers' decision of 13 February 2026 to progress mandatory Health Star Ratings and the request to Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) to prepare a formal Proposal. This is a significant step towards improving Australia's front-of-pack nutrition labelling system.

After more than a decade of voluntary implementation, just 39% of packaged foods display a Health Star Rating — far short of the 70% government target. The voluntary model has demonstrably failed, and the case for mandating is clear.

Australians and New Zealanders deserve transparent, easy-to-understand information about the nutritional content of the food they buy. Right now, the voluntary system leaves consumers in the dark about how healthy most products really are. Mandatory Health Star Ratings will cut through selective labelling practices to provide clear, consistent information for all consumers so they can select healthier food options.

Mandating the system without delay is the single biggest improvement that could be made to strengthen Health Stars' public health impact. We have provided, and will continue to provide, detailed, evidence-based advice to FSANZ on additional improvements that could be considered in the future, including refinements to the algorithm to ensure it remains aligned with nutrition science. We support the decision by FSANZ and Food Ministers to prioritise mandating as the primary action.

This reform has overwhelming public backing, with more than 82% of Australians in support of putting Health Star Ratings on all packaged foods, and the policy is recommended by the World Health Organization as a 'best buy' for public health. By implementing this reform, Australia and New Zealand can join the 19 countries that have already mandated front-of-pack nutrition labelling and show genuine leadership on preventive health.

The evidence for stronger action is clear. Mandatory Health Stars represent a practical, proportionate measure that would benefit all Australians and New Zealanders.

We welcome the opportunity to engage further and to provide technical expertise or evidence to support the development and implementation of this important reform.

Statement endorsed by the following Australian and New Zealand organisations and individuals



INDIVIDUALS:

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