

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2013-14, 20 November 2013**

**Question: E13-169**

**OUTCOME:** 1 – Population Health

**Topic:** Front-of-Package Labelling

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** McKenzie

**Question:**

- a) Can you please provide a list of products assessed by the Department's star system for front of package labelling?
- b) Can you please provide details of how these products ranked under system, in order from highest to lowest ranking

**Answer:**

- a) The algorithm that is used to calculate the star rating for the proposed front of pack labelling system is known as the Health Star Rating Calculator (HSRC). Through the course of refining the HSRC, over 3,500 products were tested, both by the technical experts refining the HSRC, and by industry using their own product data. This included a wide range of food and beverage products from the following categories:
  - breakfast cereals;
  - pre-prepared convenience meals;
  - snacks (e.g. potato chips/crisps);
  - biscuits;
  - juices and drinks;
  - canned products;
  - dairy products (including whole milk and reduced fat varieties, beverages, custards, indulgent deserts, hard and soft cheeses);
  - meat and chicken based products;
  - muesli bars and other 'lunch box fillers';
  - breads;
  - fruits and vegetables (including fresh, frozen, tinned and dried); and
  - nuts.

Specific product and brand details have not been made publicly available as the ingredient/product formulation information is commercial in confidence.

- b) The HSRC uses six categories of food, with star ratings are distributed across products in each of these categories:
- Category 1, beverages other than dairy beverages
  - Category 1D, dairy beverages (including dairy analogues)
  - Category 2, all other food than those included in Category 1, 1D, 2D, 3 or 3D
  - Category 2D, dairy foods other than those included in Category 1D or 3D (including dairy analogues)
  - Category 3, oils/spreads:
    - edible oil as defined in Standard 2.4.1;
    - edible oil spreads as defined in Standard 2.4.2;
    - margarine as defined in Standard 2.4.2 ;
    - butter as defined in Standard 2.5.5; and
  - Category 3D, cheeses (including dairy analogues):
    - cheese and processed cheese as defined in Standard 2.5.4 (with calcium content >320 mg/100 g).

Star ratings are positioned optimally, to provide maximum differentiation within each food category, with 'reference foods' in each category typically achieving four or more stars at the healthy end, ½ -1 star at the less healthy end. A table showing example reference foods for each category is attached.

The Health Star Rating score range extends from the most healthy score at 5 stars, downwards by half star increments. The least healthy score is usually half a star (depending on the category).

<b>Reference food</b>	<b>High rating</b>	<b>Low rating</b>
Beverages, non-dairy	Whole fruit juices, typically > 67% FVNL*, <13.6% total sugars	Beverages typically 0% FVNL*, sugars >13.6%
Core Cereals	Whole grain foods, high fibre and/or protein increased	Typically refined, high sugar, low fibre cereal foods
Dairy - beverages	Low fat milks and alternatives (typically <2.1% sat fat and/or > 3.1% protein)	Full fat, sweetened, flavoured milks, typically with protein <3.2%, sugar >9.1%
Cheese	Reduced fat cheese, reduced sodium	High sodium, high saturated fat cheese
Yoghurt, soft cheese	Lite yoghurt, cottage cheese	Regular fat yoghurt, sugar typically > 9.1%
Fats, spreads	Extra lite spreads, canola, olive oils	Salted butter, copha, coconut oil
Fruit	Unprocessed fruit, processed fruit >90% FVNL*	Jams, 0% FVNL* fruit pastes & spreads
Non-core foods	Typically whole grain biscuits and snacks, occasional foods low in saturated fat, sugar and sodium	White sugar, table salt, some chocolates, choc biscuits
Protein	Trimmed meat, fish, whole legumes, raw nuts	Highly seasoned, untrimmed and/or manufactured meats
Vegetables	Unprocessed vegetables	Salted (in brine, etc.), highly processed and flavoured vegetables

\*FVNL – Fruit, Vegetable, Nuts and Legumes