

To the Senate Committee with regards to the Food Standards Amendment (Truth in Labelling - Palm Oil) Bill 2010

I am writing as a general citizen and consumer to express my concern over the lack of labelling for palm oil. It was only a week ago that I learnt about palm oil and the destructive effect its harvesting has on the environment. I immediately did some research and could not believe that an environmentally conscious person such as myself could have been unknowingly contributing (however small a part) to the destruction of rainforests and animals like orang-utans and tigers.

I believe that I and other consumers have the right to choose not to purchase products with palm oil in them. Whether or not our collective action will pressure companies into finding alternative ingredients (or sustainable methods of producing palm oil) is beside the point. Of course I hope for that, but the point, in this enquiry, is that we have the right to be equipped with the information to make that choice.

Therefore I suggest that products containing palm oil should be forced to label it as 'palm oil' and not as 'vegetable oil'. That way we can easily make that choice. If a company is in fact using palm oil that is produced sustainably, they will have the option of announcing that on the front of their packaging. This, however, will have to be closely regulated.

I thank you for reading my submission, and I do hope the outcome will allow me to make ethical choices at the supermarket.

Sincerely,
Angela Meyer