

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 19 October 2011

Question: E11-152

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: LABELLING OF IRRADIATED FOOD

Hansard Page: CA50

Senator Ludlam asked:

What are the irradiation labelling requirements for imported food? For example, where a box containing individual packets of meat curry premix for wholesale sale is labelled as irradiated, but the individual packets are not labelled.

Answer:

Standard 1.5.3 – Irradiation of Food in the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code* (the Code) requires that a package of irradiated food must include a statement to the effect that the irradiated food has been treated with ionising radiation. This requirement applies to the labels of individual product packs that originate from a wholesale package which itself was labelled as irradiated. Standard 1.5.3 applies equally to domestically produced and imported foods.

In the case of the meat curry premix package example, Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) referred this issue to the relevant state enforcement agency which is following the matter up with the food business concerned.

The relevant food enforcement agency (Victoria Department of Health) has followed up on this issue and the importer is implementing corrective action to bring the product into compliance with the Code i.e. relabelling of the product. FSANZ understands that the product will not be distributed further until this is done.