Dietitians Australia

Review of the Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991 - Submission 2021

Submitted to the Department of Health (June 2021).

Accredited Practising Dietitians (APDs) have an important role in the food system to support consumers to identify healthier food options and companies with product formulation, marketing, compliance and consumer education.

The existing food regulatory system leaves Australians at risk of poor nutrition and wellbeing.

Eating a balanced, healthy diet allows us to enjoy healthy, happy lives. However, with shelves filled with processed foods, and misleading marketing claims about 'health benefits' of products, Australians aren't adequately protected from confusion faced at the supermarket. This is a significant public health issue, so the food regulatory system requires urgent reform. The health of Australians should be the priority.

Our recommendations to achieve long-term health of Australians include:

- addressing chronic and diet-related diseases
- reviewing the health claims process to support positive long-term health outcomes and informed consumer choice
- introduce a pathway for public health and consumers to propose changes to the Food Standards Code

- Allow Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) to monitor and evaluate whether the Food Standards Code aligns with public health objectives, and to amend the Code as necessary
- prioritise the protection of public health and health outcomes
- address food system sustainability
- regularly review food standards to ensure the protection of public health
- collaborate with enforcement agencies, government bodies and international partners as necessary to share information and identify optimal practices and responses to food policy

Currently, the *Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991 (Cth)* doesn't support efficient or effective regulation, and is largely unenforceable. It's letting down Australians and doesn't promote a strong, resilient food standards system. An enforceable and effective food standards system is required.

For more, download our full submission.

Get in touch

If you have questions about this submission, contact us at policy@dietitiansaustralia.org.au