

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND MINISTERIAL FORUM ON FOOD REGULATION COMMUNIQUE

20 March 2020

The Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation (the Forum) met today via video conference to consider a range of food regulation and policy matters. The Forum comprises all Australian and New Zealand Ministers responsible for food, and the Australian Local Government Association, and is chaired by Senator the Hon. Richard Colbeck.

Key outcomes from the meeting include:

P1050 - Pregnancy warning labels on alcoholic beverages

Since 2011, the alcohol industry has implemented a voluntary pregnancy warning labelling scheme. The Forum considered the Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) notification regarding the proposed amendment to the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code) to require a pregnancy warning label on packaged alcoholic beverages sold in Australia and New Zealand (Proposal P1050).

In considering the Proposal, the Forum recognised the significant impacts of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) in Australia and New Zealand, which can be prevented if women abstain from alcohol during pregnancy.

The Forum maintains its commitment to a mandatory pregnancy warning label to ensure women and the broader community are aware of the need for pregnant women to not drink alcohol.

The Forum requested FSANZ review the draft standard for pregnancy warning labels noting that the proposed model places an unreasonable cost burden on industry. In undertaking the review, Ministers requested FSANZ to consider the colour requirements of the label and the signal wording. Ministers requested that this review be undertaken quickly and be notified to the Forum within three months.

Health Star Rating (HSR) System review implementation update

Forum members also received an update on work being undertaken by the Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC) on the implementation of the HSR system review outcomes. FRSC is in the process of finalising the work referred from the November 2019 Forum meeting including the development of an implementation plan. The finalised implementation plan and advice requested will be presented at the May 2020 Forum meeting.

Next Meeting

The next Forum meeting is scheduled to be held on 22 May 2020.