



**National Council of
Women of New Zealand**

Te Kaunihera
Wahine O Aotearoa

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**Submission to Food Standards Australia New Zealand on
Nutritional, Health and Related Claims - A guide to the
development of a food standard for Australia & New Zealand**

The National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) is an umbrella organisation representing 38 nationally organised societies. It has 32 branches throughout the country attended by representatives of these societies and some 150 other societies. The Council's function is to serve women, the family and the community at local, national and international levels through research, study, discussion and action.

The Consumer Affairs standing committee circulated the above proposed new food standards to NCWNZ branches throughout New Zealand seeking discussion by members at their meetings. The committee has received a good response from members.

- All replies supported an improved labelling of food and requested that labels should be clear and in large enough print to be able to be read in busy shops, often with poor lighting.
- One branch suggested that the changes in food standards and labelling should be publicized in conjunction with a "Buy NZ made food Campaign".
- Rural members consider that as consumers they frequently "miss out" on publicity regarding food changes in their local newspapers, so welcomed the understanding that changes would be well publicized.
- Several branches commended the proposal, as they considered the increase in obesity in New Zealanders may well be addressed by the proposed guide.
- Some members expressed concerns regarding the sugar contents of fresh fruit, but the committee viewed that fresh fruit is seldom labelled so this may not be an issue.

The committee congratulates FSANZ for preparing the draft food standard nutrition, health and related claims about food. The committee considered that many claims made about health benefits of many foods are very misleading, are not accurate, and therefore have the potential to harm the health of the public. NCWNZ considers that consumers require assistance in order to gain accurate information about the contents of the food they eat and the benefit which follows with a healthy diet and lifestyle.





NCWNZ supports the checks and balances in the proposed standard where claims must be substantiated with scientific evidence and assessed by FSANZ; the need for specific criteria for nutritional content; additional information on contents and health claims, for example, the percentage of daily nutritional needs; and the endorsement for programmes such as the Heart Foundation's "Pick the Tick".

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this draft.

Christine Low
National President

Eileen Imlach
Convener, Consumer Affairs Standing Committee