



# Cabinet Economic Development Committee

## Minute of Decision

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### Government Position on Preferred Direction for Improving Sugar Labelling

Portfolio                      Food Safety

On 19 June 2019, the Cabinet Economic Development Committee:

- 1        **noted** that high energy consumption from sugar may contribute to poor health outcomes, such as obesity and tooth decay, which disproportionately affect those from low socio-economic, Māori, and Pasifika backgrounds;
- 2        **noted** that improved labelling helps consumers to make more informed choices and be more aware of the amount of added sugar in the food and drinks they consume;
- 3        **noted** that at the upcoming Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation (Ministerial Forum) on 28 June 2019, the Forum will be asked to agree to a preferred direction for improving sugar labelling on packaged food and drinks;
- 4        **noted** that Food Standards Australia New Zealand will undertake further investigation in line with the Ministerial Forum's preferred direction;
- 5        **agreed** that the Minister for Food Safety support the Ministerial Forum committing to further consideration of a system for pictorial labelling, such as 'teaspoons of sugar' on sugary drinks, alongside potential changes to the current Health Star Rating labelling system;
- 6        **agreed** that the Minister for Food Safety support the Ministerial Forum asking Food Standards Australia New Zealand to progress the development of the option of quantifying and listing added sugars in mandatory nutrition information panels;
- 7        **noted** that any final changes to labelling standards arising from this work will be brought back to Cabinet for agreement, prior to any final decisions by the Ministerial Forum;
- 8        **noted** that these changes are part of a wider package of work over the coming months looking at sugar in food, including changes to the Health Star Rating system to likely recommend harsher treatment of sugar in all foods, and the potential restriction of 'percent sugar-free' claims seen on alcoholic drinks;

Janine Harvey  
Committee Secretary

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**Present:**

Hon Kelvin Davis  
Hon Grant Robertson (Chair)  
Hon David Parker  
Hon Stuart Nash  
Hon Kris Faafoi  
Hon Willie Jackson  
Hon Julie Anne Genter  
Hon Eugenie Sage

**Officials present from:**

Office of the Prime Minister  
Officials Committee for DEV

**Hard-copy distribution:**

Minister for Food Safety