

Healthy Food Partnership Executive Committee Communique

26 August 2016 - Meeting 4

The Australian Government, food industry bodies and public health groups met today to progress the work of the Healthy Food Partnership (Partnership)

The Partnership comprises representatives from the Australian Food and Grocery Council, Ausveg, Coles, Dairy Australia, Dietitians Association of Australia, Food Standards Australia New Zealand, Meat and Livestock Australia, Metcash, National Heart Foundation of Australia, Public Health Association of Australia, the Quick Service Restaurant Forum and Woolworths, and is chaired by the Assistant Minister for Rural Health, Dr David Gillespie.

At the meeting today Minister Gillespie spoke about his commitment to working in this important area and commended all of the Partnership members and their respective organisations for their ongoing contribution to improving the dietary habits of all Australians.

Members agreed that the key priority of the Partnership would be to improve the nutritional health of all Australians. Members discussed the overarching strategic direction which will guide all work of the Healthy Food Partnership and its working groups, and see this priority being achieved. Members noted that:

- The Partnership will aim to improve the nutrition of all Australians by making healthier food choices easier and more accessible and by raising awareness of better food choices and portion sizes.
- The Partnership will provide consistent national cross-sector leadership – involving the government, the public health sector and the food industry – in an effort to tackle diet-related chronic disease, encourage healthy eating and empower the food supply chain to make positive changes.
- Work of the Partnership will be voluntary and evidence based.
- Policies, programs and initiatives will aim to:
 - Promote healthy diets throughout the life course, starting from the early stages of life to adulthood.
 - Align with the Australian Dietary Guidelines.
 - Build upon and align with existing initiatives, for greater national consistency, particularly through public communications.
 - Work towards relevant national and international targets, with a particular focus on targets that have been agreed by the Australian Government.
 - Foster community enjoyment of healthy food and normalise healthy eating.
- Transparency and communication of intent, process, evaluation and outcomes will be a key characteristic of the Partnership.

Members agreed the membership for the five working groups that have been established and noted that meetings of these groups would be arranged as a matter of priority and work and activities initiated.

The Partnership commended food industry for their efforts to voluntarily improve the nutritional quality of processed packaged foods to date and noted that the *Report on the Evaluation of the nine Food Categories for which reformulation targets were set under the Food and Health Dialogue* is now available on the Partnership's website

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/fhd>.

Significant reformulation progress has been made by the Australian food industry across 2009-2015, including average sodium reductions of 32% in ready-to-eat breakfast cereals; and over 80% of target breads, ham and other cured meats, and ready-to-eat breakfast cereals meeting the agreed sodium targets in 2015.

Members noted that the Partnership's new Reformulation Working Group will establish a broad work plan which will build on these achievements and other existing tools, such as the Health Star Rating system, and will look to optimise the nutritional profile of the food supply.

The Partnership also discussed the focus of the other working groups and noted that draft work plans would be developed by the agreed working groups and considered by members of the Executive Committee at the next meeting.

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