

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO
Public Hearing (Palm Oil), 18 April 2011

Question: 1

OUTCOME 1

Hansard Page: CA46

Senator Xenophon asked:

Would Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) have a role in requiring food manufacturers to place compositional details of their products on their websites to include information such as palm oil and whether the palm oil is certified sustainable palm oil?

Answer:

FSANZ would only have a role if such a requirement were to be implemented through a food standard.

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Question: 2

OUTCOME 1

Hansard Page: CA47

Senator Boyce asked:

Would FSANZ provide information on the general labelling requirements for oils in Codex Alimentarius Standards.

Answer:

The Codex labelling requirements are specified in the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1-1985). The Standard is available at http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/more_info.jsp?id_sta=32

Section 4.2.3.1 of this Standard specifies that except for those ingredients known to cause hypersensitivity, and unless a general class name would be more informative, for refined oils other than olive the class name 'Oil' together with either the term 'vegetable' or 'animal', qualified by the term 'hydrogenated' or 'partially-hydrogenated', as appropriate may be used.

Accordingly, the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods permits palm oil to be labelled as 'vegetable oil'.

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Question: 3

OUTCOME 1

Hansard Page: CA48

Senator Boyce asked:

Would FSANZ provide comment on any added complexity that might be involved in having food standards covered by Acts other than the *Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991* (e.g. the Corporations Act)?

Answer:

As a matter of principle, food standards should be established in the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code* and not by other legislation. Other legislation already contains provisions relating to the labelling of goods including foods e.g. consumer protection legislation. That legislation is not, however, establishing a food standard.