

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014 - 2015, 22 October 2014

Ref No: SQ14-001345

OUTCOME: 1 – Population Health

Topic: Safety of Nanomaterials in Food

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Siewert, Rachel

Question:

Twice you have been asked (SQ14-000086, SQ14-000565) whether it is the view of FSANZ that nanomaterials being used in food are safe. Twice you have failed to answer the question. In your most recent response (000585), you replied that you are not aware of the use of any nanomaterials in food that “are unsafe for human consumption”. Not being aware of evidence that might make a food unsafe is very different from a view that nanomaterials are safe for human consumption.

So, I'd like to ask again, is it the view of FSANZ that nanomaterials currently used in food are safe for human consumption? If yes, I'd like you to provide the evidence upon which you base a belief in the safety of nanomaterials in food, broken down by nanomaterial.

Answer:

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) has stated previously that it has not received an application to amend the Code in relation to a new or novel nanoscale material for food use. Accordingly, FSANZ is not aware of any new or novel nanoscale materials currently being used in food in Australia.

Information about foods that are potentially unsafe and non-compliant with the Code should be directed to the relevant agency in each state or territory in Australia who have the legal powers of enforcement for food law.