

Dear Sir or Madam

I write regarding the Truth in Labelling – Palm Oil Bill 2009.

I consider that the truthful and accurate labelling of food and other products is important for a number of reasons.

- **Palm oil** and the issues surrounding clearing of land in Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries is a particularly important one, especially because of the plight of orangutangs and other species, and the loss of habitat due to the clearing of rainforest hardwood forests for palm oil plantations.
- There is also irreversible damage done once this cleared land is drained, and issues such as uncontrollable wildfire, and the contribution to greenhouse gas emissions make the environmental value of biofuels made from palm oil dubious, unless these plantations are sustainably produced and managed on previously cleared land.
- From a dietary perspective, foods containing saturated palm oil are reported in some studies as making an undesirable contribution to cardiovascular disease, but it appears that further research is required into this matter.
- I also feel strongly that **Trans fats** should be identified on all products that contain them, for health reasons. These fats do not appear to be a justifiable ingredient in anyone's diet and should be clearly labelled if they must be used in foods.
- Companies who are required to label products containing undesirable substances tend to eventually remove those substances from their products. The truthful labelling campaign will encourage companies to consider the benefits of labels like *contains no palm oil* or *contains no trans fats*, once these claims can be proven to be true.
- A regulatory system which demands truthful labelling and investigates fraudulent claims is an important fundamental which is available in many countries but for some reason not in Australia. It appears that **FSANZ** does not take the broader issues of health and wellbeing (of both humans and other species affected) very seriously. I also urge you to consider their role and to insist that they lift their game.

Yours sincerely  
Mary Jeavons

I do not wish to give evidence before a Senate Committee hearing