

14th April 2010
Louise Harper

Australian Senate
Community Affairs Legislation Committee

RE:
Food Standards Amendment (Truth in Labeling – Palm Oil) Bill 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

Dear Sir/Madam

I wish to provide the following submission in regards to the labeling of Palm Oil used in all foods in Australia.

1. Without accurate and truthful labeling I am not able to make an 'informed' decision regarding the products I buy for my family. I subsequently do not know what I am eating or feeding my family. In this day and age consumer information MUST be a paramount issue for food standards across Australia
2. If companies are not regulated and are continued to be allowed to list Palm Oil as vegetable oil this is misleading – indeed lying to the consumer, clearly not an honest pursuit of any company
3. With the current epidemic of obesity, which sadly Australia is leading the world in; surely the senate can see that by not labeling this product palm oil; which is high in saturated fat the senate is directly contributing to this continued unhealthy status of our country.
4. The continued devastation of 'our' world is something that 'we' as individuals and a society must address as a matter of urgency. The producers of palm oil contribute to the current habitat fragmentation of the orangutans' forest; this is nothing short of obscene. By allowing these companies to hide the effect of the destruction the senate perpetuates the demand for a product that the everyday person would never consider acceptable – it simply MUST STOP – NOW
5. The production of palm oil can be a sustainable venture with a low environmental impact. This will still provide income for those people working on palm oil plantations, whilst also providing a fair trade situation. Producers will then be able to sell their product as "Certified Sustainable Palm Oil" something that they can be proud of.

Since my realization of the impact of the current practices of Palm Oil production I have excluded all products that contain vegetable oil (unless the specific oil is identified) from my shopping. This is an extremely limiting activity but one which I am happy to pursue until these companies are forced to change their production process and the inclusion of Palm Oil and the manner in which it is produced is identified.

I implore the senate to take immediate action, as an individual I can make only a small difference. Clearly we as a society must take action now to stop this practice and make a difference to the world we have left.

This is now in your hands – you do have the power – please use your power effectively now, support the sustainable production of palm oil and let me choose what I eat, and allow me to make informed decisions based on truth!

Sincerely
Louise Harper