



MEDIA RELEASE
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Front of package nutritional labelling introduced to Australian food and beverages

A new nutritional food and beverage labelling scheme is set to aid Australians in the fight against the country's current overweight and obesity epidemic.

The Australian Beverages Council Ltd (ABCL) today endorsed the introduction by the Australian Food and Grocery Council (AFGC) of standardised nutritional labelling on the front of product packaging to assist Australians in making informed dietary choices.

Members of the AFGC and ABCL have voluntarily committed to this significant and proactive change in an effort to work with communities to combat the issue of overweight and obesity in Australia.

Food & beverages products will progressively carry an energy logo on the front of packaging stating the kilojoules per serve in the product and the percentage those kilojoules represent of the total recommended daily intake (DI).

As part of the initiative, some beverage bottlers will also carry the percentage of DI for six nutrients within the nutritional information panel.

Tony Gentile, Chief Executive Officer of the ABCL, says the standardised nutritional labelling scheme represents a positive step by the food and beverage industries in promoting healthy dietary choices and commended the AFGC for its leadership on this issue.

“The new standardised labelling will be consistent, clear and meaningful so as to empower Australians to make informed dietary decisions.

“The scheme is a clear indication of our joint commitment to voluntarily champion significant developments that support an overall healthier Australian community.

“Labelling is of course only one aspect of the food and beverage industries' commitment to improving Australians' health, with the ABCL having already committed itself to extensive new policies on marketing to children.

Tony Gentile, Chief Executive Officer of the ABCL said beverage manufacturers are committed to implementing the new policy as soon as possible.

“This latest move demonstrates the manufacturing industries’ willingness to change along with the needs of Australian consumers.

“The labelling scheme showcases food and beverage manufacturers’ continued effort to act as a valuable partner to health experts, governments and consumers in supporting the improved health and wellness of Australians ,” said Mr Gentile.

ABCL member organisations have committed to providing improved nutritional information to consumers this will be introduced progressively over this coming summer season with smaller bottlers expected to be in compliance by the 1 November 2008 to allow for label run-outs.

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Notes:

Example of required minimum element:



The labelling proposal will not apply to bottled water as they contain no calories.

A list of ABCL members can be found at www.australianbeverages.org.au

Our “Commitment Addressing Obesity and Other Health & Wellness Issues” can be accessed at: <http://www.australianbeverages.org/scripts/cgiip.exe/WService=ASP0002/ccms.r?PageId=5004>

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