

What is the Health Star Rating and why does it matter for Members?

WHAT IS THE HEALTH STAR RATING SYSTEM?

The Health Star Rating (HSR) system is an on-pack nutrition labelling initiative used in Australia and New Zealand that helps consumers compare the overall nutritional profile of similar packaged foods at a glance using a rating from ½ to 5 stars.



WHY INDUSTRY SHOULD ENGAGE

In early 2026, health ministers started the formal process to mandate the HSR system through amending the Food Standards Code with the expectation that the process will be wrapped up within 12 - 18 months.

The outcomes of this decision will have significant implications for labelling, packaging, and product reformulation.



If your business has not started preparing or does not understand what your products look like from an HSR perspective, it's time to get started. Things may move very quickly.

HOW THE HSR WORKS

1. Rating scale

Stars range from ½ to **5 stars** — the more stars, the healthier the product's nutrient profile when compared to **similar products**.

2. Nutrient components used

- ★ **Negative (risk) nutrients:** energy, saturated fat, total sugar, sodium
- ★ **Positive (beneficial) components:** protein, fibre, and fruit, vegetable, nut and legume (FVNL) content. These are balanced to calculate the final star score.

3. Where it works best

- ★ Comparing similar products (e.g yoghurt vs yoghurt).
- ★ **The HSR is not designed to compare across different food categories (e.g bread vs crackers).**



HOW MEMBERS CAN USE THE HSR SYSTEM & KEY RESOURCES

1. Calculate Your Product's HSR

Use the **HSR Calculator**:

- ★ [Use the online tool or download the Excel version](#) – enter your product's nutrient data.
- ★ [Step by step guides](#) are available to help apply the correct category and nutrient values.



- ★ **Tip:** FAQs are available to guide online calculator use.
- ★ **Tip:** Always use the **Calculator together with the HSR Style Guide** to ensure accurate results.

2. Download Artwork for Packaging

Once the rating is determined:

- ★ [Download official HSR graphic files for packaging](#). It's in a zip folder.
- ★ Open with vector graphic software (e.g., Adobe Illustrator). It is possible to adjust the graphic to ensure it is clear, legible and fits into your packaging design.
- ★ Choose the appropriate layout for your pack (stars alone or stars plus nutrient icons).

3. Follow Official HSR Style & Display Guidelines

Before applying the logo on packaging:

- ★ Consult the [HSR Calculator and Style Guide](#) (includes rules on placement, sizing, and allowable versions of the HSR graphic).

4. Use Additional Industry Resources

- ★ [HSR Industry resources page](#)
- ★ [Industry Factsheet](#) - A concise explainer tailored to manufacturers on how to adopt the HSR system.
- ★ [FAQs for Industry](#) - A series of questions and answers to help industry

5. Understand Intended Products & Anomalies

- ★ Review the [list of products intended to carry an HSR](#) to check eligibility as well as excluded foods.
- ★ Check the [anomalies section](#) to understand how out of place or unusual ratings are handled.

6. Contact & Support

If you have questions or need guidance:

- ★ The [Health Star Rating Unit](#) supports industry enquiries via email or phone. They can help clarify technical issues like category selection and graphic application.
- ★ **Government Front-of-Pack Labelling Secretariat** for questions about the Guide and use of the HSR graphic.
Email frontofpack@health.gov.au or call 1800 099 658
- ★ AFGC support: Contact **Anne-Marie Mackintosh**, Associate Director – Nutrition and Regulation
anne-marie.mackintosh@afgc.org.au or 0448 170 568.

QUICK CHECKLIST FOR MEMBERS

- Gather full nutrition panel data
- Run data through the HSR Calculator + Style Guide
- Download and apply official HSR artwork files
- Ensure label placement and scale meets guidance
- Consult FAQs and factsheets before submission
- Contact the Health Star Rating Unit for support

