OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT 2021 DIALOGUES

DIALOGUE DATE	Tuesday, 13 July 2021 10:30 GMT +10:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	What role does food labelling play in helping to shift consumers towards healthier, safe and sustainable consumption?
CONVENED BY	Australian Government Department of Health
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/30325/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Member State
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Australia

The outcomes from a Food Systems Summit Dialogue will be of use in developing the pathway to sustainable food systems within the locality in which they take place. They will be a valuable contribution to the national pathways and also of interest to the different workstreams preparing for the Summit: the Action Tracks, Scientific Groups and Champions as well as for other Dialogues.

Food Systems Summit Dialogues Official Feedback Form

Dialogue title What role does food labelling play in helping to shift consumers towards healthier, safe and sustainable consumption?   **Date published** 27/08/2021

1. PARTICIPATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

| | 0-18 | | 19-30 | | 31-50 | | 51-65 | | 66-80 | | 80+ |

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

| 11 | Male | 18 | Female | | Prefer not to say or Other |

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

	Agriculture/crops	7	Education	2	Health care
	Fish and aquaculture		Communication		Nutrition
	Livestock		Food processing	13	National or local government
	Agro-forestry		Food retail, markets		Utilities
1	Environment and ecology	1	Food industry		Industrial
	Trade and commerce		Financial Services		Other
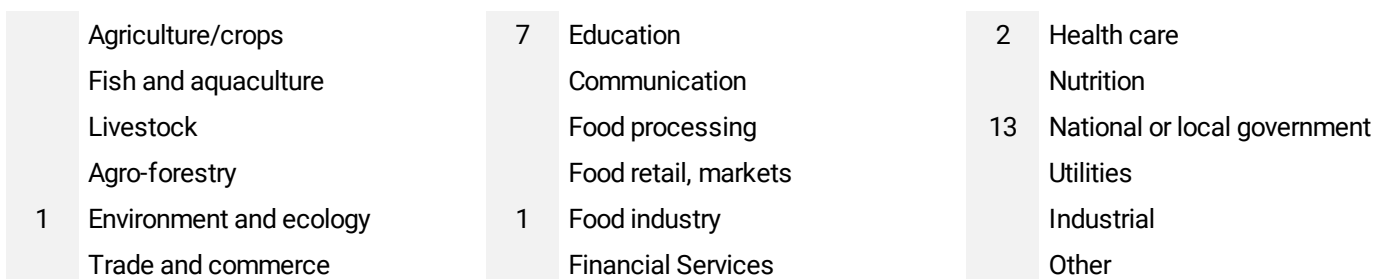
NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

1	Small/medium enterprise/artisan		Workers and trade union
	Large national business		Member of Parliament
	Multi-national corporation		Local authority
	Small-scale farmer	15	Government and national institution
	Medium-scale farmer		Regional economic community
	Large-scale farmer		United Nations
3	Local Non-Governmental Organization		International financial institution
	International Non-Governmental Organization		Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
1	Indigenous People		Consumer group
8	Science and academia		Other

Food Systems Summit Dialogues Official Feedback Form

Dialogue title   What role does food labelling play in helping to shift consumers towards healthier, safe and sustainable consumption?   Date published   27/08/2021

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

Participants were invited from government, academia and industry to bring a diverse range of knowledge and experiences in relation to public health, food information and labelling, consumer knowledge, health and sustainability. We sought First Nations perspectives into the dialogue, with a participation from a First Nations public health representative. This diverse expertise was represented in the key speakers at the dialogue. The Principles of Engagement were provided to all participants and the facilitator as pre-reading for the event.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The Department of Health dialogue embraced multi-stakeholder engagement and complementing the work of others. As Australia is a co-convenor of the Global Action Network on Labelling (Network), this dialogue focussed on food labelling to complement the work of the Network and considered innovative ways in which food labelling can contribute to improved health and sustainability. We targeted invited speakers which covered the complexity of food systems and the information available to consumers relating to nutrition, human health as well as planetary health and sustainability issues. While the dialogue was invitation only, a diverse range of stakeholders were invited to ensure a range of views were represented. To broaden the scope, we asked invitees to suggest others who may be able to contribute to the conversation. Through targeting the conversation with a small group, our dialogue reflected the principle of building trust.

DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR OTHER DIALOGUE CONVENORS ABOUT APPRECIATING THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT?

A principle that we found particularly important is to embrace multi-stakeholder inclusivity – such as First Nations voices and those who work with the community. Including participants from a range of areas provides the opportunity for a wide array of experiences, learnings, and views – including divergent views – to be heard.

Food Systems Summit Dialogues Official Feedback Form

Dialogue title | What role does food labelling play in helping to shift consumers towards healthier, safe and sustainable consumption? | Date published | 27/08/2021

3. METHOD

The outcomes of a Dialogue are influenced by the method that is used.

Yes   ✓   No

The Department of Health used a method similar to that recommended by the Convenors Reference Manual. The dialogue was a 1.5 hour invitation-only, small-group virtual discussion. The event featured five key speakers (approx. 45 minutes total), who delivered short presentations about initiatives related to food labelling. This was then followed by a facilitated discussion of 45 minutes, in which all participants were engaged and asked to share their views or perspectives. The discussion was facilitated by an external moderator and scribed by the Department of Health. Key discussion questions were posed to the group by the facilitator. Participants were called upon by the moderator to share in discussion areas where they had expertise, or where previously expressed views diverged from the recent conversation. There was also the opportunity for all participants to virtually raise their hand to speak or to comment through the online chat box, which allowed the conversation to continue following a discussion point. As such, all voices were given the opportunity to be heard. Following the discussion, the facilitator summed up the main outcomes of the discussion, including the points of agreement and contention. It was important for views to be shared as a group given the breadth of areas of expertise and experiences represented by the participants. The focus of this dialogue was on innovation in food labelling, and having all participants included in the one group discussion encouraged idea sharing among the group as a whole.

Food Systems Summit Dialogues Official Feedback Form

Dialogue title   What role does food labelling play in helping to shift consumers towards healthier, safe and sustainable consumption?   Date published   27/08/2021

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE) is the National Convenor for the Australian FSS dialogues. DAWE has held a series of webinars around FSS Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production. To complement these webinars, the Department of Health's roundtable dialogue focused on FSS Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable and healthy consumption patterns.

The dialogue was an online roundtable discussion which considered the role of food labelling to help shift consumers towards healthier, safe and sustainable consumption. This roundtable provided a purposeful and organised forum for stakeholders share examples and experiences, ideas, opportunities and solutions on the role of labelling in consumers making healthy, safe and sustainable food choices. This topic was selected as Australia is a co-convenor of the Global Action Network on Nutrition Labelling.

The dialogue featured short presentations from five key speakers from a range of areas including government, academia and industry, as follows:

• The Department of Health provided examples of current government food labelling initiatives that focus on safety, health and origins of food including country of origin labelling and date marking with discussion on how these initiatives can help consumers make safe and sustainable food choices.

• The Department of Health also presented to the group on the Health Star Rating, Australia's front of pack nutrition labelling system, which aims san help consumers make healthier choices when selecting packaged food.

• The George Institute delivered a presentation on the FoodSwitch app and the Planetary Health Rating. This app includes an Australian database which allows consumers to scan the barcode of a product and see both healthier choices and the impact of that food on the planet.

• Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation presented on the Australasian Recycling Label Program, focusing on the idea of packaging as the link between the product and consumer.

• OpenSC (SC stands for supply chain) presented on their traceability platform, providing an example of how scanning a QR code on a package can show a consumer exactly where the food has come from.

The group discussion was focused on the future of food labelling, and the following key discussion questions:

• How can food labelling motivate and empower consumers to make informed, healthy, safe and sustainable food choices?

• How can food labelling help to inform consumers about food choices that are better for the environment?

• What is currently working well in food labelling for sustainable diets? What is not working well?

• What are the incentives and disincentives for using food labelling to improve the health, safety and sustainability of diets?

• What are the barriers to using or understanding food labels, which could reduce consumers' ability to make informed, healthy, safe and sustainable choices?

• How can labelling be incorporated into food systems to ensure consumers can make informed decisions about both health and sustainability?

• What innovative food labelling solutions have been tried, and what were the outcomes and learnings?

• Are there any trade-offs?

• What does the future of food labelling look like?

• How can we utilise technology to improve the effectiveness of food labelling?

Food Systems Summit Dialogues Official Feedback Form

Dialogue title | What role does food labelling play in helping to shift consumers towards healthier, safe and sustainable consumption? | Date published | 27/08/2021

ACTION TRACKS

☐	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
✓	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
☐	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
☐	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
☐	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

☐	Finance	✓	Policy
✓	Innovation	☐	Data & Evidence
☐	Human rights	✓	Governance
☐	Women & Youth Empowerment	☐	Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

Food Systems Summit Dialogues Official Feedback Form

Dialogue title   What role does food labelling play in helping to shift consumers towards healthier, safe and sustainable consumption?   **Date published**   27/08/2021

MAIN FINDINGS

This report seeks to summarise views and perspectives of webinar participants during discussions, and does not necessarily represent the views of the Department of Health or the Australian Government.

The main findings of the dialogue were as follows:

Evidence finds that consumers are mostly driven by price, health, taste and nutrition. Issues such as the environment and sustainability are lower priorities when choosing food.

Food labelling initiatives range from simple symbols or text on a label to interactive experiences via QR codes and/or apps that can provide much more information to consumers. Labels may start as a consumer facing symbol, but this can evolve into the products themselves changing (for example, product reformulation due to Health Star Rating front of pack labelling, or better adherence to sustainable fishing practices).

Labelling on its own doesn't change behaviour. Consumers need to invest the time to look at, and act on, the information presented on a label. Even with good food labelling, nutrition and sustainability literacy is important for consumers to understand and make better choices. Consumer comprehension can be quite limited and therefore there is a need to engage with consumers to find out what they need to improve their understanding. Understanding the requirements of the community is especially important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It was noted that aside from the targeted Good Tucker app, developers are generally not engaging diverse communities, such as Aboriginal communities, when developing new food labelling solutions. It was also noted that the range of information that can be made available consumers is ever increasing and can be overwhelming. Different consumers will engage with different types of information. The role of a food label and innovative options for sharing information needs to be considered and balanced.

The sustainability of food is so complex that we can't necessarily just leave it all to consumers to make sustainable choices – food producers, manufacturers and retailers all have a role to play as well. Participants considered whether we are moving towards a future where conscious consumer food choice is taken away and becomes something delivered by an algorithm. Algorithms can nudge consumers into more environmentally friendly choices either without their knowledge, or by design (i.e. if the consumer can choose how to set the algorithm then they could set it to select more sustainable choices if that's what they're interested in). For data and algorithms to be trusted it must be either 100% transparent or independently verified. However, algorithms may not be useful in Indigenous communities which are grappling with more fundamental issues such as access to local healthy food supply (i.e. food security).

ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- ✓ Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- ✓ Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

	Finance	✓	Policy
✓	Innovation	✓	Data & Evidence
	Human rights	✓	Governance
	Women & Youth Empowerment	✓	Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

Food Systems Summit Dialogues Official Feedback Form

Dialogue title   **What role does food labelling play in helping to shift consumers towards healthier, safe and sustainable consumption?**   Date published   **27/08/2021**

This report seeks to summarise views and perspectives of webinar participants during discussions, and does not necessarily represent the views of the Department of Health or the Australian Government.
In addition to the topics already highlighted, there were a number of additional messages that emerged during the discussion, which related to the key discussion questions outlined above. The key outcomes of these discussion topics were as follows:

What innovative food labelling solutions have been tried, and what were the outcomes and learnings?
Some examples of innovative solutions were discussed, including:

• Carbon labelling, which presents information about the carbon footprint of a product in a relatable way that is also easy to understand. "Lightbulb minutes" on the label were presented as something people could relate to. A study found people were more likely to choose the lower carbon footprint options based on the label. However, it was noted that in general, knowledge of the carbon footprint of different foods was low.

• The FoodSwitch app, which scans barcodes and provides simple health information for a products as well as healthier alternatives to 'switch' to. A 'Planetary Health Rating' has been added to the app and displays a star rating between 0.5 stars (higher greenhouse gas emissions) and 5 star (lower emissions) to provide consumers with information about the emissions associated with producing a certain food product.

• The Good Tucker app, which is targeted to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The app scans barcodes and gives a thumbs up, thumb sideways or thumbs down to indicate the healthiness of the food choice. The app was developed in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including elders and local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, which empowered communities and contributed to the success and acceptance of the app.

• OpenSC (supply chain), which uses QR codes to help consumers verify whether a product was sustainably and ethically produced and trace their food from the origin to their plates. For example, consumers can see when and where a specific fish was caught, by which fishing company, verify that it was caught in a legal fishing zone, and trace its journey to their location (e.g. restaurant). The app helps consumers make sustainable choices but is also a powerful tool to ensure businesses are adhering to sustainable and ethical practices. A deliberate decision was made to display the information on a webpage, as the requirement to download a specific app was identified as a potential barrier to uptake.

• The Australasian Recycling Program, which provides on-pack information to consumers about whether the different components in packaging (box, lid, wrap etc.) are recyclable, non-recycle or conditionally recyclable, and how to dispose of them correctly (e.g. in bin, in recycling bin, return to store, etc). The governance structure is designed to ensure the labelling is consistent, fair and accurate, with representation across the supply chain, including brand owners, packaging manufacturers, waste and recyclers, independent experts and government. This contributed to the increasing adoption of the label by many Australian and New Zealand brands.

• A partnership in the UK between Waste & Resources Action Programme, the UK Food Standards Agency and the UK Department of Environment, Food & Regional Affairs developed standardised food labelling guidance to help consumers to better manage their food and waste less of it, resulting in a reduction of household food waste in the UK by a quarter. The initiative focused on educating consumers on the meaning of 'use by' and 'best before' dates, how to store different categories of food, whether a food product is suitable for home freezing (indicated by a snowflake logo), how to safely defrost and use frozen foods, and the temperature that should be maintained in fridges and freezers. The Food Food Waste Cooperative Research Centre in Australia intends to take these learnings to replicate in Australia.

ACTION TRACKS

✓	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
✓	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

	Finance	✓	Policy
✓	Innovation	✓	Data & Evidence
	Human rights	✓	Governance
	Women & Youth Empowerment	✓	Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

Food Systems Summit Dialogues Official Feedback Form

Dialogue title — What role does food labelling play in helping to shift consumers towards healthier, safe and sustainable consumption?   Date published   27/08/2021

What are the barriers to using or understanding food labels, which could reduce consumers' ability to make informed, healthy, safe and sustainable choices?

There is limited real estate (space) on a food label, with many legislated requirements competing with other information such as branding and images. Solutions other than on-pack labelling need to be considered in order to give consumers more information than space allows. The FoodSwitch app and the OpenSC platform are examples of how this can work.

Consumers need to have the motivation, time and understanding to really take in the information presented through food labelling. Many consumers do not have sufficient health or environmental literacy to understand the information and respond accordingly.

In addition to understanding labels, the community also needs to trust the information included on food labels or apps. Education and engaging with communities is an important part of this.

Research has found that consumers are influenced by price, taste, health and nutrition when grocery shopping, while factors such as animal welfare and environmental impact rank quite low. Therefore clear sustainability labelling would not necessarily push consumers to make sustainable choices if the price is not competitive.

ACTION TRACKS

✓	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
✓	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

	Finance		Policy
	Innovation	✓	Data & Evidence
	Human rights		Governance
	Women & Youth Empowerment	✓	Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

Food Systems Summit Dialogues Official Feedback Form

Dialogue title | What role does food labelling play in helping to shift consumers towards healthier, safe and sustainable consumption? | Date published | 27/08/2021

How can labelling be incorporated into food systems to ensure consumers can make informed decisions about both health and sustainability?

While some consumers may have the time, motivation and health/environmental literacy to seek information from a food label to make healthier and more sustainable food choices, many do not. As consumers do not necessarily prioritise sustainability, one suggestion was to incorporate healthier and sustainable food choices into food systems by moving decision away from the consumer and instead delegate it through algorithms so that sustainable choices are the default. Alternatively, consumers could retain influence over algorithms, for example by selecting sustainability as a preference for a food delivery service's suggested menu items.

It was also noted that choices about the healthiness and sustainability of a product need to be made before the products even reach consumers; that is, innovation is required further up the pipeline at the agriculture/farming/fisheries and manufacturing levels, so that by the time the consumer is purchasing, it's the best possible choice. Labelling and technology may help make this push.

ACTION TRACKS

✓	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
✓	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

	Finance		Policy
✓	Innovation	✓	Data & Evidence
	Human rights		Governance
	Women & Youth Empowerment	✓	Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

Food Systems Summit Dialogues Official Feedback Form

Dialogue title	What role does food labelling play in helping to shift consumers towards healthier, safe and sustainable consumption?	Date published	27/08/2021

How can we utilise technology to improve the effectiveness of food labelling?

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Australian consumers have become more familiar with using QR codes. There is an opportunity to harness QR codes to provide the additional information consumers desire about their food without taking up limited space on food labels.

Technology can also influence the healthiness and sustainability of packaged food before it even reaches consumers. For example, the OpenSC software can identify companies that are not producing food ethically and sustainability and use the platform to encourage them to change practices.

ACTION TRACKS

✓	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
✓	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

	Finance		Policy
✓	Innovation	✓	Data & Evidence
	Human rights		Governance
	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

Food Systems Summit Dialogues Official Feedback Form

Dialogue title | What role does food labelling play in helping to shift consumers towards healthier, safe and sustainable consumption? | Date published | 27/08/2021

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

This report seeks to summarise views and perspectives of webinar participants during discussions, and does not necessarily represent the views of the Department of Health or the Australian Government.

Expanding on the summary of the main outcomes and discussion topics outlined above, several areas of divergence emerged during the dialogue.

Views diverged about what is needed for food system sustainability. While much of the discussion was focused on the use of technology and algorithms moving forward, it was noted that in some parts of Australia, in particular rural and remote communities, food security remains an issue and some participants considered this should be prioritised for food system sustainability over the use of technology. Algorithms to drive food choices will not make a difference in food insecure remote communities.

With regard to the use of technology and algorithms to nudge consumers towards more sustainable and healthy choices, views diverged about data that would sit behind the algorithms. Some participants highlighted concerned about transparency of the data and suggested that the data and assumptions driving algorithms should be accessible to researchers and the public to ensure public trust. There were also concerns that the use of technology will take away choice from consumers. Other participants voiced disagreement and noted that the use of algorithms to make food choices for consumers already happens without transparent data – for example, the products available on the shelves of major supermarkets impacts consumer choice and the decisions about what is stocked is not transparent. Concerns were raised that it is mostly technology experts deciding on the algorithms and therefore issues of health, sustainability and equity are secondary considerations. It was suggested that diverse expertise needed around the table when algorithms are being developed.

ACTION TRACKS

✓	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
✓	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

	Finance	✓	Policy
✓	Innovation	✓	Data & Evidence
	Human rights	✓	Governance
	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
			Environment and Climate

Food Systems Summit Dialogues Official Feedback Form

Dialogue title — What role does food labelling play in helping to shift consumers towards healthier, safe and sustainable consumption?   Date published   27/08/2021

ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

ATTACHMENTS

- https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Department-of-Health-FSS-Feedback-Form-13-July-2021.docx

Food Systems Summit Dialogues Official Feedback Form

Dialogue title   **What role does food labelling play in helping to shift consumers towards healthier, safe and sustainable consumption?**   **Date published**   **27/08/2021**