



**The more stars,
the healthier.**

Information for food retailers and manufacturers on changes to the Health Star Rating system

The Health Star Rating (HSR) is a front-of-pack labelling system that rates the overall nutrition profile of packaged foods with a rating from ½ a star to 5 stars. It provides a quick, easy, standardised way to compare similar packaged foods. The more stars, the healthier the choice.

The HSR system is voluntary, however there are clear uptake targets over the next few years and changes outlined in Recommendations of the Health Star Rating System Five Year Review are to be adopted by 14 November 2022.

Uptake will be measured¹ against the following targets:

- **50% uptake across intended products by 14 November 2023**
- **60% uptake across intended products by 14 November 2024**
- **70% uptake across intended products by 14 November 2025**

If the HSR system continues to perform well but the final uptake target is not met, consideration will be given to a mandatory system subject to government requirements.

What do manufacturers need to know?

There are changes to:

- the permitted HSR logos – energy-only icon is no longer permitted
- automatic Health Star Ratings – new advice for specific products
- the Health Star Ratings calculator – total sodium and sugars will be penalised more strongly and dairy categories have been refined



What do manufacturers need to do?

- Remove the energy-only icon from products and replace with a permitted HSR graphic.
- Determine whether your products have changed categories.
- Re-run products through the revised HSR calculator to see if existing HSR labels need to be updated.

¹ To find out what packaged foods are intended and permitted to carry the HSR system visit <http://www.healthstarrating.gov.au/internet/healthstarrating/publishing.nsf/Content/target-and-intended-products>

- **All label changes and use of permitted HSR graphics need to be implemented by 14 November 2022.** However, for products with a shelf life of 12 months or longer, a stock-in-trade provision of a further 12 months will be permitted.

HSR Changes required by November 2022

Changes to the logo

The HSR system no longer uses graphic Option 5 (the energy only icon). Update products labelled with the energy-only icon and replace with a permitted HSR graphic by 14 November 2022. Stock-in-trade provision applies as outlined above.



Automatic Health Star Ratings

Fresh and minimally processed fruit and vegetables

Businesses can apply an automatic 5 star rating to fresh and minimally processed fruit and vegetables. Fresh and minimally processed fruit and vegetables means all whole, fresh fruit (except coconut) and vegetables, fungi and legumes (except peanuts) as sold with no processing, plus these same products that have only been peeled, cut and/or surface treated and/or blanched and/or frozen (not dried), or canned without the addition of fat, sugars/sweeteners or salt.

For unpackaged fruit and vegetables, businesses are encouraged to communicate the 5 star rating on in-store banners, shelf wobblers and posters, or through marketing activities.

Unsweetened flavoured waters

To better discern water from high energy drinks an automatic 4.5 star rating will apply for all unsweetened flavoured waters. Unsweetened flavoured waters are packaged beverages similar in nutritional profile to water that may contain only:

- carbon dioxide, whether added or naturally occurring;
- permitted flavouring substances (as defined by Standard 1.1.2-2 of the Code);
- mineral salts at Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) (Schedule 16 of the Code);
- additives that provide a specific safety or stability function at GMP (Schedule 16 of the Code);

and must not contain:

- added sugars, sweeteners, colours, sodium, caffeine, quinine, or any other ingredient that contains energy and is not expressly permitted above (e.g. protein).

Changes to the HSR Calculator

Changes to the HSR calculator mean that total sugars and sodium will become more strongly penalised:

- The points table for application of baseline points for sugar in HSR categories 1D², 2³ and 2D⁴ has been extended to 25 points (from the previous 22).

² HSR category 1D captures dairy beverages that contain sufficient calcium to meet the requirements for a 'source of calcium' claim under Standard 1.2.7 of the Code. Category 1D may include milk and dairy beverage alternatives derived from legumes, cereals, nuts or seeds, providing they contain at least 100mg calcium per 100ml.

³ HSR category 2 captures all foods other than those in Category 1, 1D, 2D, 3 or 3D.

⁴ HSR category 2D captures dairy and permitted dairy alternative foods derived from legumes (not including those included in Category 1D or 3D).

- The upper limit of the points table for application of baseline points for sodium in categories 1D, 2 and 2D has been reduced from a maximum of 30 baseline points for sodium content > 8,106mg/100g to a maximum of 30 baseline points for sodium content >2,700mg/100g.

Dairy

Dairy product categories have been refined. HSR categories 2D and 3D⁵ have been rescaled in the HSR Calculator – this means that ratings of products in these categories may have changed.

- Many dairy products will see increased ratings under the revised system, an approach that recognises the important role dairy foods play within a balanced diet.
- Custards, evaporated milks, dairy-based desserts (such as mousses, crème caramels, panna cottas) cream cheeses, creams, sour creams, crème fraiche and mascarpone will now be considered Category 2D products (rather than Category 2).



Jellies and ice confections

Changes to the way star ratings are calculated for HSR Category 1 mean that ratings of products in these categories may have changed:

- Jellies and water-based ice confections now fall into HSR Category 1⁶ (Non-dairy beverages, jellies and water-based ice confections)

Fruit and vegetable juices

The maximum rating for juices low in sugar will become 4 stars, and juices high in sugar (including naturally occurring sugars) may receive a lower rating of 2.5 stars. Fruit drinks may score even lower.

As sold versus as prepared ruling

In most cases the HSR should be calculated and displayed based on how the product appears on the shelf (i.e. as sold). However, for some products that need to be rehydrated, diluted or mixed with water, or drained of water or brine prior to eating, the HSR can be calculated based on the product 'as prepared'. If the HSR is based on the product 'as prepared', the label should clearly specify the directions for that preparation. Further support is available in the Health Star Rating system Calculator and Style Guide.

Questions to ask yourself when using the HSR calculator:

- Is your product intended or permitted to carry an HSR? (Refer to the Health Star Rating system Calculator and Style Guide for support)
- Have you chosen the correct category for the food product?
- Have you entered all nutrient values correctly?

⁵ HSR category 3D captures cheese and processed cheese as defined in Standard 2.5.4 of the Code (with calcium content >320mg/100g). Category 3D may include cheese alternatives derived from legumes providing they meet the criterion for 3D foods for calcium content.

⁶ HSR category 1 captures beverages (other than dairy beverages and alcoholic beverages), jellies and water-based ice confections.

- Have you entered values (including zero values) in all spreadsheet fields?
- Has fruit, vegetables, nuts and legumes (FVNL) content been calculated correctly?

Support

For more information on the HSR system and recent changes, visit healthstarrating.gov.au.

For information on how to categorise and calculate an HSR, access the *Health Star Rating system Calculator and Style Guide* updated on October 2021 at healthstarrating.gov.au/internet/healthstarrating/publishing.nsf/Content/guide-for-industry.

Questions about the Guide and use of the HSR graphic can be directed to the Front-of-Pack Labelling Secretariat. Email frontofpack@health.gov.au or call 1800 099 658.