

The Health Star Rating



Health Star Rating (HSR) Industry Kit

November, 2015



The Health Star Rating



Industry Kit

Introduction

This kit is designed to help you promote your company's uptake of the Health Star Rating (HSR) system.

It contains the following:

- The HSR key messages (can be used in Media Releases)
- Industry frequently asked questions
- Consumer frequently asked questions
- Example tweets and posts
- Examples of materials available on the HSR website
- Infographic – How to use Health Star Ratings
- Media Fact sheet

The example Tweets and Facebook posts are indicative only and focus on the key messages of the HSR. They can be adapted to suit your company's needs and HSR product list.



The Health Star Rating



The HSR key messages

(Feel free to use these key messages in media releases or other communications).

Health Star Ratings are a quick and easy way for you to choose healthier packaged foods.

Health Star Ratings uses star ratings of ½ to 5 stars to measure the overall healthiness of packaged foods.

Foods lower in saturated fat, sugar or sodium (salt), and/or higher in fibre, protein, nut, legume, fruit or vegetable content have more stars.

When comparing similar packaged foods, the more stars, the healthier the food.

The stars make it easier for you to choose healthier products.

Health Star Ratings are voluntary so you won't see them on all packaged foods but you'll see Health Star Ratings appear on more products over time.

Health Stars give you an independent, quick and simple way of comparing similar packaged foods so you can make a healthier choice.

The Health Star Rating system was developed in collaboration with government, the food industry, public health and consumer groups.



The Health Star Rating



Industry frequently asked questions

What is the HSR?

The Health Star Rating system is a voluntary front-of-pack labelling system, which uses star ratings of ½ to 5 stars to measure the overall nutritional content and healthiness of packaged foods.

It allows people to make better informed, healthier choices quickly and easily when comparing similar types of packaged foods, e.g. comparing breakfast cereals. It takes the guesswork out of reading nutrition labels when buying and choosing food.

The Health Star Rating system is a joint Australian, State and Territory Governments and New Zealand Government initiative developed in collaboration with industry, public health and consumer groups.

What foods can display a Health Star Rating?

The Health Star Rating system is designed specifically for packaged foods. All packaged foods, including lower cost products, which have nutrition information on the label can use the system.

Health Star Ratings aren't designed for unpackaged foods, takeaway foods and other foods that aren't required to have nutrition labelling on them normally.

The Health Star Rating System is not appropriate for all packaged foods, such as alcohol, kava and some special purpose foods e.g. infant formula. This means that these foods are not allowed to carry Health Stars.

How should manufacturers use the Health Star Rating System?

The Health Star Ratings System is a great opportunity for businesses to differentiate and promote their healthier packaged products to consumers. The system also encourages manufacturers to reformulate their products to improve their 'star rating' which leads to healthier products being available to consumers.

Although voluntary, businesses who choose to adopt HSR need to ensure they follow the HSR System Style Guide and Guide for Industry. All details and tools to help implement the system can be found on MPI's Food Safety website:

<http://www.foodsafety.govt.nz/industry/general/labelling-composition/health-star-rating/>

In addition to the HSR System style guide, businesses still need to ensure that they meet their labelling requirements under the Food Act and the Australia New Zealand



The Health Star Rating



Food Standards Code, including the requirement for all food labels to be accurate and true.

Why is the HSR being introduced?

Evidence shows that consumers know some foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables are healthy food choices but are less sure which packaged foods are best. Consumers find current nutrition information on food labels difficult and time-consuming to understand.

The Health Star Rating system takes the guesswork out of label reading and gives an overall assessment of the nutrition content of the food.

The Health Star Rating helps consumers compare similar packaged foods and make an informed choice about which to buy.

Health Star Ratings also encourages food manufacturers to reformulate their products to achieve higher ratings.

Who developed the HSR?

The Health Star Rating system was developed in Australia through a collaborative process involving Commonwealth and State/Territory governments, industry, public health and consumer groups, with additional technical input provided by Food Standards Australia New Zealand.

The New Zealand Front of Pack Labelling Advisory Group developed principles for a front of pack labelling system for New Zealand in 2012. The Health Star Rating system meets these principles and consumer research showed that the system helped New Zealand consumers identify healthier products.

The system is being implemented in both New Zealand and Australia over five years, from July 2014. The food industry is responsible for ensuring that the stars are calculated accurately and in accordance with the system.

The Australian Government, state and territory governments, and the New Zealand Government, are supporting the initiative with information about the system to assist industry engagement and use by consumers.



The Health Star Rating



Who developed the HSR calculator?

The algorithm that drives the Health Star Rating Calculator was developed in consultation with Food Standards Australia New Zealand and other technical and nutrition experts.

The Health Star Rating Calculator is a modified version of the Nutrient Profiling Scoring Criterion developed by Food Standards Australia New Zealand for the regulation of health claims in Australia and New Zealand and prescribed in Standard 1.2.7 – Nutrition, Health and Related Claims of the Food Standards Code.

Do I have to use the HSR on my food products?

The Health Star Rating system is voluntary. On 27 June 2014, the Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation agreed to make the Health Star Rating system voluntary and implemented over a five year period, with progress reviewed after two years.

Who is responsible for applying the HSR system?

Food manufacturers and retailers are responsible for the correct and accurate use of the Health Star Rating system. This includes, but is not limited to, correctly calculating the Health Star Rating, accurately displaying nutrient information, ensuring consistency of information between the Health Star Rating and the Nutrition Information Panel, and complying with all relevant legislation and regulations.

It is important to note that businesses still need to ensure that they meet their labelling requirements under the Food Act and the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code, including the requirement for all food labels to be accurate and true.

How do I calculate a Health Star Rating for my food products?

The Health Star Rating Calculator has been developed to calculate the Health Star Rating for packaged food products.

The Calculator takes into account four aspects of a food associated with increasing the risk factors of chronic diseases, these are energy, saturated fat, sodium and total sugars content. Certain 'positive' aspects of a food such as fruit, vegetable, nut and legume content, and in some instances, dietary fibre and protein content are also considered.

Taking these components into account, points are allocated based on the nutritional composition of 100g or 100mL, following the units used in the Nutrition Information Panel of a packaged food. The points are converted to a star rating (from ½ to 5



The Health Star Rating



stars). [The Calculator](#) should be used in conjunction with the *Guide for Industry to the Health Star Rating Calculator*.

To use the calculator, manufacturers enter information for key nutrients 'per 100g' from the nutrition information panel, along with amounts of certain other ingredients to obtain a Health Star Rating.

How do I access the HSR calculator?

The Health Star Rating Calculator (HSRC) can be used in two different formats: online or via a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.

The [Online Calculator](#) generates a Health Star Rating for products and then provides the product's corresponding star rating artwork.

The [Excel Calculator](#) is a spreadsheet which calculates the Health Star Ratings of products only. The Health Star Rating Style Guide, Guide for Industry, and artwork files are accessed separately.

Before accessing the Excel calculator, please close any Excel workbooks that may already be open on your desktop.

We recommend that you use this web form in a modern browser such as Internet Explorer 9+, Chrome or Firefox. Results of the calculator may not be accurate in older browsers. If you are unsure, please use the [Excel Calculator](#) instead. In both cases, the Terms and Conditions must be accepted before use.

How do I display the HSR on my product?

The Health Star Rating system graphic can be displayed in a number of different ways. The full system graphic uses a star rating, 'risk' nutrient icons and a 'positive' nutrient icon. In certain circumstances, additional interpretive information can also be displayed through % Daily Intake (for energy), and 'high' and 'low' qualifiers for the nutrients. Refer to the [Style Guide](#) for more information about these.

Not all products will choose to display a 'positive' nutrient, and some packages may choose – or only have enough space to display – the star rating icon or the energy icon. The hierarchy of elements included in the Style Guide provides further information about how to choose a display best suited to an individual product.



The Health Star Rating



The HSR graphic is too large to fit on my product packaging. What should I do?

The Health Star Rating graphic can be scaled to fit packaging, provided all elements can be clearly read, and legislative criteria are met (e.g. compliance with the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code). Not all elements of the Health Star Rating graphic need to be displayed so long as it is in line with the hierarchy of elements provided in the Health Star Rating Style Guide. Very small packages or labels may wish to display the star rating or energy icon only.

Can I overstick/use stickers to display the HSR on packages?

Yes. In some circumstances it may be more practical to 'overstick' existing product packaging with the Health Star Rating system graphic. This may be a temporary approach until permanent packaging changes can be made, or may suit some product categories such as imported products. Stickers should not obscure any mandatory labelling required by the Australia New Zealand Food Standard Code, and the Health Star Rating graphic should be consistent with the Health Star Rating Style Guide.

What if I believe my food product should receive a higher score because it is an important part of a balanced diet?

If you believe that your Health Star Rating is incorrect, consider the following points in relation to the Calculator:

- Have you chosen the correct category for the food product?
- Have all nutrient values been entered correctly?
- Have you entered values (or zero values) in all of the spreadsheet fields?
- Has fruit, vegetables, nuts and legumes content been calculated correctly?
- If you have considered the above and achieved the same Health Star Rating, it may be that your food product is close to the border line for the next star for the particular category. Relatively small changes to the product formulation may result in a different Health Star Rating.

The Health Star Rating system enables comparison of similar packaged food products, rather than providing guidance on how much of each food should be consumed as part of a balanced diet.



The Health Star Rating



If I reformulate my product to achieve a higher star rating should I aim for 5 stars?

Not all foods will or should achieve 5 stars. Reformulating a product to improve the star rating by ½ to 1 star can make a significant difference to the nutritional quality of the product.

What monitoring activities will be taking place to ensure the HSR is working?

The Australia and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation agreed that the Health Star Rating system would be implemented by industry on a voluntary basis over five years (from 27 June 2014), with a review after two years.

Monitoring and evaluation of the Health Star Rating system will address three areas of enquiry:

1. Label implementation and consistency with the Health Star Rating system Style Guide;
2. Consumer awareness and ability to use the Health Star Rating system accurately; and
3. Nutrient status of products carrying a Health Star Rating system label.

How will complaints about the HSR be addressed?

There is a formal process in place to deal with complaints and this is managed via the trans-Tasman Health Star Rating Advisory Committee (HSRAC). The HSRAC is responsible for overseeing implementation of the Health Star Rating system. Information on the complaints process is available [here](#).

Who can I contact for further information about the HSR system?

Questions about calculating a Health Star Rating or other aspects of the Health Star Rating system and its operation can be directed to the Ministry for Primary Industries. Contact the Ministry for Primary Industries at Healthstars@mpi.govt.nz



The Health Star Rating



Consumer frequently asked questions

What is the Health Star Rating system?

The Health Star Rating system is a voluntary front-of-pack labelling system, which uses star ratings of ½ to 5 stars to measure the overall nutritional content and healthiness of packaged foods.

It allows people to make better informed, healthier choices quickly and easily when comparing similar types of packaged foods, e.g. comparing breakfast cereals. It takes the guesswork out of reading nutrition labels when buying and choosing food.

What do the Health Star Ratings look like?



How should I use Health Star Ratings?

Health Star Ratings allows you to quickly compare similar types of packaged foods so you can make better informed healthier choices.

The system uses star ratings of ½ to 5 stars to measure the overall nutritional content and healthiness of packaged foods, so when comparing similar packaged foods, the more stars means the healthier the food.

What foods can display a Health Star Rating?

The Health Star Rating system is designed specifically for packaged foods. All packaged foods, including lower cost products, which have nutrition information on the label can use the system.

Health Star Ratings aren't designed for unpackaged foods, takeaway foods and other foods that aren't required to have nutrition labelling on them normally.

The Health Star Rating System is not appropriate for all packaged foods, such as alcohol, kava and some special purpose foods e.g. infant formula. This means that these foods are not allowed to carry Health Stars.

Do packaged foods have to display a Health Star Rating?

No, the Health Star Rating system is voluntary for manufacturers and will be implemented over a five year period, from June 2014.



The Health Star Rating



Why don't fruits and vegetables get Health Star Ratings?

Unpackaged foods such as fruits and vegetables are not expected to display Health Star Ratings. Consumers generally know that fresh fruits, vegetables, are healthy choices. However, any fresh produce that is packaged and has a Nutrition Information Panel can carry Health Stars on their labels.

Why can't I see Health Star Ratings on the packaged foods I buy?

Health Star Ratings are voluntary, which means the food industry can choose whether to use it on their packaged foods or not. It can take up to two years for labels on food packaging to be updated to include the Health Star Rating and for products to be available in stores, so an increasing number of packaged foods showing a Health Star Rating will appear over time.

Health Stars are not intended for foods that are not required to have nutrition information on the label and some single-ingredient products such as flour, salt, herbs and spices.

How are Health Star Ratings calculated?

Health Star Ratings are calculated using a Health Star Rating Calculator. The calculator uses an algorithm to work out the appropriate rating. The algorithm takes into account the nutritional value of ingredients in packaged foods.

The number of stars is calculated based on the energy, saturated fat, salt and sugar as well as fibre, protein, fruit, vegetable, nut and legume content of packaged foods.

Foods that are lower in saturated fat, sugar or sodium (salt), and/or higher in fibre, protein, fruits, vegetables, nuts or legumes will have more stars.

How can the Health Star Rating system help me to eat a balanced diet?

Health Star Ratings can help you make healthier food choices but it doesn't mean you should eat large amounts of foods with higher stars. For recommended portion size of each food, refer to the Nutrition Information Panel on packaging.

Health Star Ratings are just one tool to help with healthy eating choices and are not intended to be used alone. For information about a healthy and balanced diet, visit the Health Ed website - <https://www.healthed.govt.nz/>

Find out more about Health Star Ratings on MPI's Food Smart website –
www.mpi.govt.nz/healthstars



The Health Star Rating



Example tweets and posts

Tweets

- Health Star Ratings help you to make healthier choices between similar packaged foods.
- Health Stars take the hard work out of choosing similar packaged foods. The more stars means the healthier the food.
- {Insert product type} on the menu? Look for products with a higher star rating. The more stars means the healthier the food.
- Let Health Stars guide you to make healthier food choices by comparing similar packaged foods www.mpi.govt.nz/healthstars
- Next time you're shopping, look for products with a higher Health Star Rating on similar packaged foods.
- Over 600 products with Health Star Ratings can now be found on supermarket shelves
- Health Star Ratings should be used to compare similar packaged foods. Look for a higher rating.



The Health Star Rating



Facebook Posts

- Health Star Ratings are a quick easy way for you to choose healthier packaged foods. Use Health Stars when comparing similar types of packaged foods. For more information, visit www.mpi.govt.nz/healthstars
- Health Star Ratings uses ½ to 5 stars to measure the overall nutritional content and healthiness of packaged foods, so when comparing similar packaged foods, the more stars means the healthier the food.
- {Insert company name} now has {products} with the HSR. Look for them on shelves.
- Health Stars take the hard work out of choosing packaged foods. Foods lower in saturated fat, sugar or sodium (salt), and/or higher in fibre, protein, nut, legume, fruit or vegetable content have more stars
- The Health Star Rating system can be used to compare similar packaged food products. For more information, visit www.mpi.govt.nz/healthstars
- {Insert product type} on the menu? Look for those with a higher star rating. The more stars means the healthier the food. The Health Star Rating system is designed specifically for packaged foods. All packaged foods, including lower cost products, which have nutrition information on the label can use the system.
- Over 600 products with Health Star Ratings can now be found on supermarket shelves. For more information, visit: www.mpi.govt.nz/healthstars
- Health Star Ratings are just one tool to help with healthy eating choices and are not intended to be used alone. For information about a healthy and balanced diet, visit the Health Ed website - <https://www.healthed.govt.nz/>
- The Health Star Rating system considers certain aspects of packaged food, including energy, saturated fat, sodium and total sugar content. For more information about how the stars are calculated, visit www.mpi.govt.nz/healthstars



How to use Health Star Ratings

1

Health Star Ratings are a quick easy way for you to choose healthier packaged foods. Look for Health Stars on packaged foods when you are shopping. What to look for:



ENERGY	SAT FAT	SUGARS	SODIUM	NUTRIENT
0000kj	0.0g	0.0g	000mg	0.0g
			LOW	HIGH

PER 100g

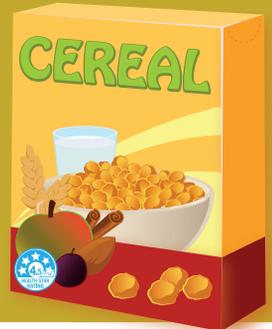


2

Health Stars help you **compare and choose** similar types of packaged foods.

3

Health stars **take the hard work out of choosing packaged foods.** Foods lower in saturated fat, sugar or sodium (salt), higher in fibre, protein, nut, legume, fruit or vegetable content have more stars.



4

You'll see Health Stars on a range of packaged foods including lower cost products. Over time, you'll see **more packaged foods with health stars.**



5

Find out more about **Health Star Ratings on MPI's website:**
www.mpi.govt.nz/healthstars

www.mpi.govt.nz/healthstars



October 2015





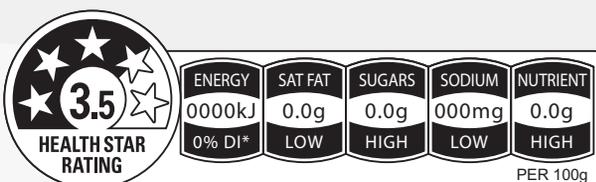
Health Star Ratings

What is it?

- Health Star Ratings are a voluntary front-of-pack labelling system for packaged foods. It provides a quick easy way for shoppers to compare similar packaged foods and choose the healthier option.
- Health Stars rate the nutrition content of packaged food using a scale of half a star to 5 stars.
- Foods lower in saturated fat, sugar or sodium, and/or higher in fibre, protein, nut, legume, fruit or vegetable content will have more stars.
- Over time, there will be more packaged foods displaying Health Stars as uptake by the food industry grows and stock on shelves is replenished.

What does it look like?

- Health Star Ratings can appear on packaged foods in different ways. It can be just the star rating of the product, or the star rating with additional specific nutrient content as shown below.
- Colour, size and location on front of pack will vary.



How are they calculated?

- The number of stars is based on energy, saturated fat, salt and sugar content as well as fibre, protein, fruit, vegetable, nut and legume content of packaged foods. Food manufacturers input their recipes into a calculator to get the Health Star Ratings for their products.
- Health Star Ratings take dietary guidelines into account.
- Health Star Ratings also encourage food manufacturers to reformulate their products to improve their star rating, which can lead to healthier packaged foods being available to consumers.

Core facts

- ★ Health Star Ratings help take the guesswork out of reading food labels and give shoppers information to make healthier choices quickly and easily when comparing similar packaged foods.
- ★ It is a voluntary front-of-pack labelling system adopted by New Zealand and Australia in 2014 for packaged foods.
- ★ It uses a star rating scale of ½ to 5 stars to measure the overall nutritional content and healthiness of packaged foods.
- ★ Health Star Ratings are calculated by food manufacturers using an algorithm-based calculator.
- ★ Most manufacturers have undertaken to put Health Star Ratings on their entire product range (including private labels).

Who developed it?

- The Health Star Rating system and calculator have been developed in collaboration with nutritionists, food industry representatives and public health experts in New Zealand and Australia, and is underpinned by robust science and food composition data.
- It is a government-led initiative in New Zealand and Australia.

How to use Health Star Ratings

- Health Star Ratings apply to packaged foods as these are the foods consumers have the most difficulty making healthier choices.
- Health Star Ratings enable shoppers to compare similar packaged foods. The foods with more stars are healthier choices.
- Health Star Ratings are one tool to help shoppers compare and choose packaged foods.
- Health Star Ratings will appear on packaged foods including lower cost products.
- Health Star Ratings are not intended to be used on fresh fruit, vegetables or meat. However, fruit and vegetables remain an important part of a healthy balanced diet.

Technical information

- Health Star Ratings are based on 100g or 100mL of food product.
- The Health Star Rating system does not apply to:
 - alcoholic beverages
 - formulated products for infants and young children
 - non-nutritive foods (eg. vinegar, herbs, spices, tea, coffee)
 - unpackaged foods
 - ready-to-eat foods from restaurants and fast food outlets.
- Health Star Ratings take into account how a packaged food is intended to be consumed (eg. reconstituted, drained, added to milk).

More information

- Ministry for Primary Industries administers the Health Star Rating system in New Zealand: www.foodsafety.govt.nz/industry/general/labelling-composition/health-star-rating/
- Consumer information is available at www.mpi.govt.nz/healthstars
- The Health Promotion Agency is working with the Ministry for Primary Industries and Ministry of Health on development of a consumer awareness campaign.
- Australian campaign information is available at <http://healthstarrating.gov.au/>