



Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck
Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians
Minister for Youth and Sport

17 July 2020

Pregnancy warning labels for alcoholic beverages

Pregnancy warning labels will be mandatory on alcoholic beverages under recommendations agreed to today by representatives of The Australian and New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation.

Manufacturers will now have three years to implement the “PREGNANCY WARNING” label across all alcoholic beverages.

The Minister with portfolio responsibility for food regulation, Richard Colbeck said it was an important step toward protecting the health of pregnant women and infants.

“The Australian Government is strongly committed to mandatory pregnancy warning labels on alcoholic beverages to inform pregnant women and the broader community of the advice for pregnant women to not consume alcohol in order to prevent Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD),” Minister Colbeck said.

“The decisions made today underpin the efforts across the sector to improve standards and ensure the health of consumers, while giving consideration to the pressures on producers.”

The forum brought together all Australian State and Territory Ministers responsible for food, as well as the Commonwealth and New Zealand ministers.

Representatives considered the Review Report for mandatory pregnancy warning labels completed by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ).

The review focussed on the colours and signal wording in the draft pregnancy warning label design.

The FSANZ Review Report proposed two amendments to the mandatory pregnancy warning labels and these were accepted by the Forum: a change to the signal words from ‘HEALTH WARNING’ to ‘PREGNANCY WARNING’, and an extended transition period for implementation, from two years to three years.

Additionally, The Australian Government proposed an amendment to remove the colour prescriptions for the label and adopt the general legibility requirements of the Food Code that

the statement and pictogram should contrast distinctly with the background of the label.

The intent of the amendment, which was supported by New South Wales, South Australia and Queensland, was to achieve the pregnancy warning objective while at the same time minimising the cost and regulatory burden on business, particularly small and medium enterprises, in these challenging economic times.

In response the Forum accepted the proposed draft standard for pregnancy warning labels. The standard for pregnancy warning labels will now be gazetted and included in the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code. An implementation period of three years will apply from the date of gazettal.