



Food Standards Australia New Zealand
PO Box 5423
KINGSTON
ACT 2604
AUSTRALIA

Via email: submissions@foodstandards.gov.au

6 October 2023

Response from the Brewers Association of Australia to the Call for submissions on Proposal P1062 - Defining added sugars for claims.

The Brewers Association of Australia welcomes the opportunity to provide this submission concerning the proposal by FSANZ to amend the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code in relation to how sugars are defined for the purposes of making claims.

Brewers Association Position

The Brewers Association of Australia strongly supports providing consumers with the accurate information they need to make informed choices about the products they consume. On this basis we supported the proposed amendment to the Code in relation to energy labelling as we believe this will ensure that beer drinkers get clear information that is aligned to the objectives set out in dietary guidelines and the National Alcohol Strategy.

We do, however, have a serious concern in relation to Proposal 1062.

The Food Code currently specifically excludes malt and malt extracts from its definition of sugar(s) in Standard 1.2.7, Standard 1.2.8 and Schedule 4. It also, however, lists malt and malt extracts under the list of items which prevent a 'no added sugar claim.'

Our concern is the proposed alteration to the Table to Schedule 4-3, specifically the entry addressing "Sugar or sugars." We believe this is inconsistent with the principle that the use of malt and malt extracts in the production of beer does not constitute an addition of sugars. Malt and malt extracts are the essential starting ingredients for the production of beer. The sugars contained in these ingredients are largely removed through the fermentation process and dietary guidelines do not identify malt and malt extracts used in beer production as areas of concern.

To describe this process as involving 'added sugars' is therefore totally misleading and not, we believe, in the spirit of what this Proposal is aiming to achieve.

As noted by FSANZ in Tables 3 and 4 of the Call for submissions on Proposal P1049 in relation to Sugar and Carbohydrate claims, the percentage of products with any sugar claims is low (5 per cent in one study and 1.2 per cent in another) and the percentage with the statement “no added sugars” will likely be much lower than this.

Notwithstanding this it is important that the Food Code is accurate and can be relied upon to provide clear and useful information to consumers.

On this basis we seek an adjustment to the proposed definition of 'added sugars' in the CFS to exclude carbohydrate sources used in the fermentation of alcoholic beverages from the definition.

Our further concern is that the definition of ‘added sugars’ proposed in the call for submissions will have a wider impact than ‘no added sugars’ claims, since it will in effect determine the meaning of ‘added sugars’ for future regulatory proposals related to labelling added sugars in the NIP.

To address this, we believe that work on this Proposal should be done in conjunction with Proposal P1058 – Nutrition labelling about added sugars. It is critical that a three-year implementation period should also be adopted and that this should be coordinated with P1058 and other Proposals which may require a labelling change.

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature and name of the sender.