Food labelling practices,
Levels 7 and 8

Home Economics

Unit of work



**Disclaimer:** It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that duty of care is exercised in relation to the health, hygiene and safety of all students undertaking activities where students handle or taste food. In implementing projects with a focus on food, care must be taken with regard to food safety and specific food allergies that may result in anaphylactic reactions.

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Introduction to the unit of work

**Unit of work:** Food labelling practices

**Time (approximate):** 300 minutes (5 × learning activities)

**Curriculum band:** Levels 7 and 8

**Curriculum areas:**  Design and Technologies

 Health and Physical Education

Overview

Students explore food labelling in Australia, including nutrition information panels and front-of-package labelling. They research changes to food labels, including why the changes occur, and present an argument about kilojoule labelling in fast-food outlets. Students use digital tools to design their own food label for a healthy ready-to-eat meal.

Learning intentions

* Analyse food labels to make informed decisions on the healthiness of food products.
* Explore the design of food labels to explain why the information is required.
* Debate the arguments for mandatory kilojoule labelling in fast-food outlets and justify your decision regarding the initiative.
* Design your own food label based on mandatory requirements for labelling in Australia.

Victorian Curriculum correlation

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Design and Technologies strand** | **Health and Physical Education strand** |
| Technologies and Society  | Personal, Social and Community Health |
| **Achievement Standards (extract)** |
| By the end of Level 8, students … explain the contribution of design and technology innovations and enterprise to society. | By the end of Level 8, students … gather and analyse health information … They justify actions that promote their own and others’ health, safety and wellbeing at home, at school and in the community. |
| **Content Descriptions (extract)** |
| Technologies and Society* Investigate the ways in which designed solutions evolve locally, nationally, regionally and globally through the creativity, innovation and enterprise of individuals and groups ([VCDSTS044](http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCDSTS044))
 | Communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing* Develop skills to evaluate health information and express health concerns ([VCHPEP129](http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCHPEP129))

Contributing to healthy and active communities* Plan and use strategies and resources to enhance the health, safety and wellbeing of their communities ([VCHPEP130](http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCHPEP130))
 |

Advice and teaching considerations

* This unit of work could also link to Mathematics Level 7: Investigate and calculate ‘best buys’, with and without digital technologies ([VCMNA250](http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCMNA250)), for example, through looking at labels for grocery unit price in supermarkets.
* As an extension, students could review how food is labelled and promoted at the school canteen.
* Consider how students will collaborate and document their work throughout the unit. Online options include:
* a class blog using [Global2](http://global2.vic.edu.au/)
* OneNote, which is available via Microsoft Office 365
* Google Classroom, which is integrated with Google Drive
* tutorials for Office 364 and Google, which are available through [Lynda.com](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/classrooms/Pages/resourceslynda.aspx).
* Teachers in Victorian government schools can access Google, Office 365 and Lynda.com through [eduSTAR](https://www.edustar.vic.edu.au/Pages/LandingPage.aspx).

Learning activities, resources and tips

Learning activity 1: Front-of-package labelling

*Learning intention:*

*Explore the design of food labels to explain why the information is required.*

* Bring in a range of packaged food products so students can explore the front-of-package labelling. The products could be themed, such as snacks, cereals or pre-packaged meals.
* Working in small groups, have students examine one food product per group.
* Each group should complete a Y-Chart ([Appendix 1](#Appendix1)) to describe the following features of their front-of-package label:
* information and claims (e.g. organic, tasty, quick)
* look (i.e. colours, images, mascots)
* feel (e.g. fun, convenient, healthy).
* Students can then discuss the following questions:
* Who is the target market, i.e. adults, teenagers, health-conscious consumers?
* How are mascots and images used to create a message?
* Why are certain colours used? Do they portray a message?
* Which words are the largest? Which are in small print?
* Do you think any of the claims are misleading?
* Students share their findings in a class or small-group discussion.

Essential resources

* A range of packaged food products
* Worksheet containing Y-Chart ([Appendix 1](#Appendix1))

Optional resources

* [Food marketing, food labelling](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?HXLWX7) is a series of articles from the Conversation examining the topics of food marketing and food labelling, and how they relate to issues such as animal welfare, obesity and more.
* The Choice article ‘[Credence claims on food labels](https://www.choice.com.au/shopping/packaging-labelling-and-advertising/labelling/articles/credence-claims-food-labels)’ explores which ethical, environmental, nutritional or quality food credentials are worth paying a premium for.
* ‘[Nestle removes Milo’s 4.5 Health Star Rating in response to criticism from public health groups](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-03-01/milos-4.5-health-star-rating-stripped-away-by-nestle/9496890)’ (ABC News, 1 Mar 2018) report on recent debate surrounding the Heath Star Rating system.
* ‘[The psychology of colour in food packaging](https://www.packaginginnovation.com/packaging-design/creative-packaging-2/psychology-color-food-packaging/)’ and [‘What do your label colours say about your brand?](http://www.avonlealabels.com.au/label-colours-brand/)’ provides some background about the use of colour in food packaging.

Tips

Alternatives to bringing in packaging:

* Most food manufacturers include nutritional information about their products and advertising on their websites (for example, [Kellogg’s Australia](https://www.kelloggs.com.au)).
* Packaging and nutrition panels can be found on individual food products on the [Woolworths online shopping website](https://www.woolworths.com.au).

Learning activity 2: Nutritional information and ingredients

*Learning intention:*

*Analyse food labels to make informed decisions on the healthiness of food products.*

* Use the same food products from Learning activity 1, but this time have students explore the nutrition panel and ingredient list.
* As a class, using the front-of-package labelling as a guide, rank the food products from most healthy to least healthy.
* If there are debates over the appropriate ranking, ask students to justify their reasoning.
* Document this ranking for comparison later in the activity.
* In groups, students should examine one food product. Referring to [Eat for Health’s ‘How to understand food labels](https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/eating-well/how-understand-food-labels)’, have them explore the following points, documenting their findings:
* What is the main ingredient?
* How does its fat, sugar, salt and fibre content compare to the [Eat for Health’s guide](https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/eatingwell/efh_food_label_example_130621.pdf)?
* Are other names being used for fat, sugar or salt? If so, what are they?
* How many serves are in the package?
* Is this food an everyday food or a discretionary food? Why?
* Students should then consider:
* Does the nutritional content match up with claims on the packaging?
* Are there any misleading terms or information?
* Are there any terms or information that you don't understand or have questions about?
* Each group can then present their findings to the class. As a class, rank the products again, from most healthy to least healthy. Get students to justify where foods have been placed on this continuum.
* Were there any differences from the initial ranking? If so, discuss why.
* If time permits, use the [Food Switch app](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?B2FM97) to see if there are healthier alternatives to these products, or check the claims on the labels using the [Traffic Light Food Tracker app](https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/traffic-light-food-tracker/id445262515?mt=8).

Essential resources

* A range of packaged food products
* Eat for Health website: [How to understand food labels](https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/eating-well/how-understand-food-labels)

Optional resources

* The [Food Switch app](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?B2FM97), which allows you to scan barcodes of packaged foods to see if there is a healthier option.
* The [Traffic Light Food Tracker app](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?ZXSWT7) from the Cancer Council Victoria, which gives each food product a rating based on the amount of fat, sugar and sodium per 100 grams.
* The Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) website, which provides a range of resources including an [interactive labelling poster](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumer/labelling/Pages/interactive-labelling-poster.aspx) and a [nutrition panel calculator](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/industry/npc/Pages/Nutrition-Panel-Calculator-introduction.aspx/).

Tips

Alternatives to bringing in packaging:

* Most food manufacturers include nutritional information about their products and advertising on their websites (for example, [Kellogg’s Australia](https://www.kelloggs.com.au)).
* Packaging and nutrition panels can be found on individual food products on the [Woolworths online shopping website](https://www.woolworths.com.au).

Learning activity 3: Kilojoule labelling at fast-food venues

*Learning intention:*

*Debate the arguments for mandatory kilojoule labelling in fast-food outlets and justify your decision regarding the initiative.*

In 2018, the Victorian Government introduced a kilojoule-labelling scheme that requires chain food businesses and supermarkets to display:

* the average kilojoule content of standardised, ready-to-eat food and non-alcoholic drinks on menus, menu boards, food labels and price tags
* the statement ‘The average adult daily energy intake is 8700 kJ’ on menus, menu boards and on each display cabinet, stand or area.

Have students investigate the kilojoule labelling scheme and create a [persuasion map](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?EHPDZ9) outlining their argument for the following question:

* Does kilojoule labelling at fast-food stores encourage people to make healthier choices?

Prompts for class discussion:

* What other factors influence our food choices?
* How often do teenagers eat at fast-food stores?
* What are the serving sizes generally like at fast-food stores?
* Who is kilojoule labelling in fast-food outlets aimed at – teenagers, parents, young adults?

If time allows, encourage students to present their arguments in the form of:

* a class or small-group debate
* a podcast or short video
* an argumentative essay.

Essential resources

* The Better Health Channel’s [‘Kilojoules on the menu’](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/kilojoules-on-the-menu) interactive tools and video
* Health Victoria’s [Kilojoule labelling scheme for large chain food businesses and supermarkets](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety/food-safety-laws-local-government-and-auditors/food-safety-laws-and-regulations/kilojoule-labelling-scheme)

Optional resources

* If students are presenting their arguments:
* Tools for [podcasting](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?TRXBG7)
* Tools for [movie making](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?82LNCY).

Learning activity 4: Requirements for food labels in Australia – Critical inquiry task

*Learning intention:*

*Analyse food labels to make informed decisions on the healthiness of food products.*

Have students work independently or in pairs to research the following questions. Students can then document their answers in a shared class space.

* The [FSANZ interactive food labelling poster](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?4HMXHS) identifies what needs to be on a food label in Australia.
* Why are these twelve areas included on a label? Suggest one reason for each.
* The [Health Star Rating system](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?R8X9FN) was introduced in 2014.
* Which three areas are used to calculate a food project’s rating?
* Why was the Health Star Rating system introduced?
* Evaluate the Health Star Rating system by discussing its benefits and limitations.
* [Country of origin food labelling](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?NTP8QY) became mandatory on 1 July 2018 for food products.
* Explain the differences between ‘Made in Australia’, ‘Product of Australia’ and ‘Grown in Australia’.
* What are the main differences between the old requirements and the new labelling?
* View the ABC news video [‘FDA announces first nutrition label change in 20 years’](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?QM7HNP) to learn about the then proposed changes to food labelling in the USA.
* Why were these changes proposed?
* How do you think food labelling in Australia may change in the future?

Essential resources

* [FSANZ interactive labelling poster](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?4HMXHS)
* [Health Star Rating system](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?R8X9FN)
* [Country of origin](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?NTP8QY) labelling
* [ABC news video](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?QM7HNP) [‘FDA announces first nutrition label change in 20 years’](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/Resource/ByPin?Pin=QM7HNP&SearchScope=All)

Optional resources

* [‘Requirements for food labels in Australia’ – Critical inquiry task (FUSE package)](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?L9B9WC) – Teachers from Victorian government schools can edit and [personalise](https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/MyDesk/About#Personalise) this FUSE package to share with their students.

Tips

* Alternatively, a critical inquiry task could be created using simple links in a Word doc, or an online collaborative environment such as a [blog](http://global2.vic.edu.au/), OneNote or Google Classroom.
* If using OneNote, students can document their answers via a voice recording ([audio or video recording](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Record-audio-or-video-notes-b90fa4a2-253b-47ec-99bd-c9b368268465)) and/or written notes within the document.
* Tutorials are available through [Lynda.com](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/classrooms/Pages/resourceslynda.aspx), which is available through [eduSTAR](https://www.edustar.vic.edu.au/Pages/LandingPage.aspx).

Learning activity 5: Develop your own food package

(2–3 × 50-minute sessions)

*Learning intention:*

*Design your own food label based on mandatory requirements for labelling in Australia.*

* Find a recipe for a healthy meal that could be produced and sold as a ready-to-eat meal at the supermarket. Modify the recipe if needed.
* Have students develop the nutrition information for the recipe. Students can choose between:
* a nutrition panel using the Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ) [Nutrition](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/industry/npc/Pages/Nutrition-Panel-Calculator-introduction.aspx/) Panel Calculator
* a health star rating using the industry calculator.
* Students can then design a food package for the meal. The packaging should include:
* all the mandatory labelling information (as identified from previous research and the [FSANZ interactive labelling poster](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/Resource/ByPin?Pin=4HMXHS&SearchScope=All))
* marketing claims in line with FSANZ labelling requirements
* colours and images to appeal to the target market.
* Students can display their products around the school or in an online collaborative space, such as a blog or school website.

Essential resources

* Food Standards Australia and New Zealand [I[nteractive labelling poster](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?4HMXHS)](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumer/labelling/Pages/interactive-labelling-poster.aspx)
* Tools for making nutrition labels:
* FSANZ [Nutrition panel calculator](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/industry/npc/Pages/Nutrition-Panel-Calculator-introduction.aspx)
* Health star rating [industry calculator](http://healthstarrating.gov.au/internet/healthstarrating/publishing.nsf/Content/calculator)
* Websites for finding healthy recipes:
* [Nutrition Australia](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?DN3WG6)
* [Eat for Health](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?XQ7KMM)
* [Better Health](https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/Resource/LandingPage?ObjectId=f5f6fb5e-c7da-42a6-8a70-01460daf07aa&SearchScope=All)
* Tools for producing the food packaging:
* [Adobe Illustrator](http://www.digipubs.vic.edu.au/curriculum/adobe-in-education/apps-illustrator)
* [Adobe Photoshop](http://www.digipubs.vic.edu.au/curriculum/adobe-in-education/apps-photoshop)
* PowerPoint or Word (for producing simple graphics)
* See [Lynda.com](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/classrooms/Pages/resourceslynda.aspx) for a range of tutorials about creating graphics.

Tips

* Students may wish to prepare the meal at home (or as an extension activity) and take a photograph of the completed dish to use on their packaging.
* As an alternative exercise, ask students to design a package for a discretionary food using ‘honest’ marketing and claims.
* As an extension, use the Design and Technologies creating designed solutions process to prepare the meal.

Further resources

* The [Food Standards Australia New Zealand](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?GLGD2H) website contains resources such as ‘Truth in labelling’, ‘Weights and measures’ and ‘Legibility requirements’.
* The [Eat for Health](https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/eating-well/how-understand-food-labels) website provides information about reading food labels, as well as a [poster](https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/eatingwell/efh_food_label_example_130621.pdf) demonstrating how to read a nutrition information panel and providing suggested amounts for fat, sugar, salt and fibre.
* The Better Health Channel website has easy to read articles on [Food labels](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/HealthyLiving/food-labels) and [Reading food labels](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/HealthyLiving/reading-food-labels-tucker-talk-tips).

Useful apps:

* The [Food Switch app](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?B2FM97) allows you to scan barcodes of packaged foods. The app provides nutritional information about the food, and suggests healthier alternatives.
* The Cancer Council Victoria’s [Traffic Light Food Tracker app](http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/?ZXSWT7) gives a rating based on the amount of fat, sugar and sodium per 100 grams.

Other useful resources and news items:

* ‘[Supermarket product recalls: Undeclared milk in dairy-free dessert sent dad-to-be to hospital](https://www.9news.com.au/national/2018/06/11/19/24/supermarket-recalls-gluten-free-vegan)’ (*Nine News*, 11 June 2018) highlights the importance of food labels for people with allergies.
* ACCC [grocery unit price](https://www.accc.gov.au/consumers/groceries/grocery-unit-prices) (if using a cross-curricular approach with Mathematics)

Useful resources for safety and hygiene include:

* [Food allergies guidelines](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/allergies.aspx)
* [Guidelines for the prevention of anaphylaxis in schools, preschools and childcare](https://www.allergy.org.au/health-professionals/papers/prevent-anaphylaxis-in-schools-childcare)
* [Hand hygiene guidelines](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/personalhygiene.aspx)
* [Hand hygiene teaching resources](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/physed/Pages/hygiene.aspx)
* [Safe food handling guidelines](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/pages/foodhandling.aspx)
* [Food and healthy eating guidelines](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/finance/pages/canteen.aspx)

Appendix 1

Describe the following features of the front-of-package label. What are the messages?

Feel

Who is the target market?

Look

Information and claims