

14th February 2020

Food Standards Australia New Zealand
PO Box 7189
CANBERRA BC ACT 2610
AUSTRALIA

Email: submissions@foodstandards.gov.au

Dear Standards Management Officer,

Re: Submission to Application A1186 Soy leghemoglobin in meat analogue products

Woolworths Group welcomes the opportunity to provide comment on Application A1186 Soy leghemoglobin in meat analogue products provided by Food Standards Australia and New Zealand.

Please find below our comments to the consultation paper.

Regards,

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Consumer Trends and Innovation

Woolworths agrees with the applicant's statement *'flexitarians', are looking for a "more ethical and environmentally friendly alternative meat products without compromising on attributes such as the taste and texture"*.

Consumer dietary habits continue to evolve with consumer demand for plant-based protein alternatives on the rise, with many now moving towards a 'flexitarian' approach of eating. Australia has become one of the fastest-growing vegan markets in the world, with almost 10 million Australian adults saying they are "eating less red meat these days".

As mentioned in the 2018 Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) Report *The Evolution Of Plant Protein* there is a growing drive amongst consumers for more sustainable and healthier lifestyles with a shift towards plant protein products, and consumers preferences are creating a need for these products.¹

Woolworths is supportive of food industry innovation, research and development. Food innovation can be enhanced by the adoption of new foods, ingredients and manufacturing processes. Woolworths recognise that there are some international advances in innovation that are ahead of Australia and New Zealand. If we limit these innovations, it is the Australian and New Zealand consumer that is disadvantaged.

Overall Position

There is a growing shift in consumer dietary preferences for plant-based protein alternatives, and the demand for these products is on the rise.

Woolworths understands the importance of providing choice to our customers, not only as a retailer of vendor branded products but also as we produce our own range of products and therefore we are supportive of new developments and innovations in the area of plant-based alternatives to give a wider range for our customers.

Based on FSANZ conclusion to this application that consuming meat analogue products containing soy leghemoglobin at levels up to 0.8% poses no health or safety concerns to the Australian and New Zealand populations, we support this application.

¹ Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) and Plant & Food Research jointly commissioned report, *The Evolution Of Plant Protein*, 2018, <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/29141-the-evolution-of-plant-protein-assessing-consumer-response-report>