

# THE GOOD VILLAGE

Food labels: how to find food facts fast





## DID YOU KNOW?

There are around 20,000 products on the shelves of an average Australian supermarket.

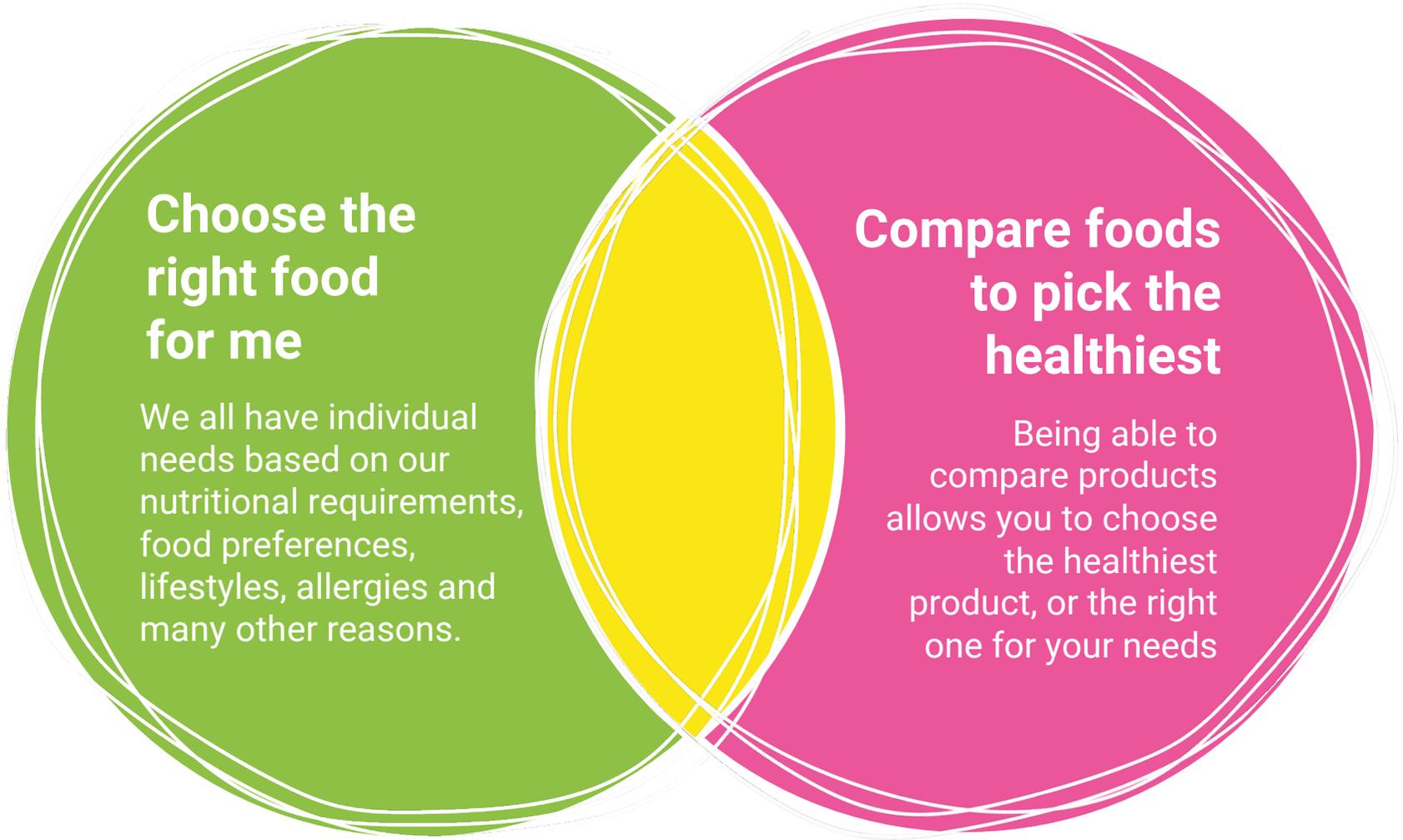
The average time spent looking at nutrition labels is 25-100 milliseconds. That's about the same time it takes to blink!

People are often confused about which products are a healthier choice. Learning how to read the information on food packaging can help people make informed choices.



# WHY READ A FOOD LABEL?

There are two main reasons why we should read food labels.



## Choose the right food for me

We all have individual needs based on our nutritional requirements, food preferences, lifestyles, allergies and many other reasons.

## Compare foods to pick the healthiest

Being able to compare products allows you to choose the healthiest product, or the right one for your needs

# WHAT INFORMATION CAN YOU FIND ON A FOOD LABEL?

**Net Weight**

**Name and Description of Food**

**Health Star Rating**

**Recycling Information**

**Ingredients List**

- Percentage Labelling
- Food Additives

**Allergy Statement**

**Country of Origin**

**Contact Information**

**Date Mark**

**Storage requirement**

**Nutrition Information Panel**

**FOOD RANGE**

6 BARS 185g

SOURCE of FIBRE

APRICOT MUESLI BAR

HEALTH STAR RATING 4.5

	ENERGY	SAT FAT	SUGARS	SODIUM	FIBRE
PER PACK	490kJ	0.6g	4.9g	5mg	3.6g
PER SERVING	81.7kJ	0.1g	0.8g	0.8mg	0.6g

DO SOMETHING GREAT FOR THE PLANET

**Ingredients**  
 Muesli blend: [Rolled Oats (36%), wheat (12%), apricot (8%) (sulphites), breakfast cereal (whole grain wheat (5%), wholemeal wheat flour, wheat bran, sugar, vitamin E), coconut, milk powder], glucose, chicory root fibre, sunflower oil, sugar, humectant (glycerine), modified starch (1412), invert sugar, honey, emulsifier (soy lecithin), natural flavour.

**Contains:** gluten (wheat and oats), milk, soy and sulphites.  
 May contain other gluten containing ingredients and lupin.

Suitable for vegetarians.  
 Store in a cool dry place.

**NUTRITION INFORMATION**

	AVERAGE QUANTITY PER SERVING	%D <sup>1</sup> PER SERVING	AVERAGE QUANTITY PER 100g
Energy	490 kJ	6%	1850 kJ
Protein	2.2 g	4%	7.1 g
Fat-total	2.8 g	4%	9 g
- Saturated	0.6 g	2%	1.9 g
Carbohydrate	18.7 g	6%	59.8 g
- Sugars	4.9 g	5%	15.6 g
Dietary Fibre	3.6 g	12%	11.5 g
Sodium	5 mg	0.2%	15 mg

<sup>1</sup>Percentage Daily Intakes are based on an average adult diet of 8700kJ. Your daily intakes may be higher or lower depending on your energy needs.

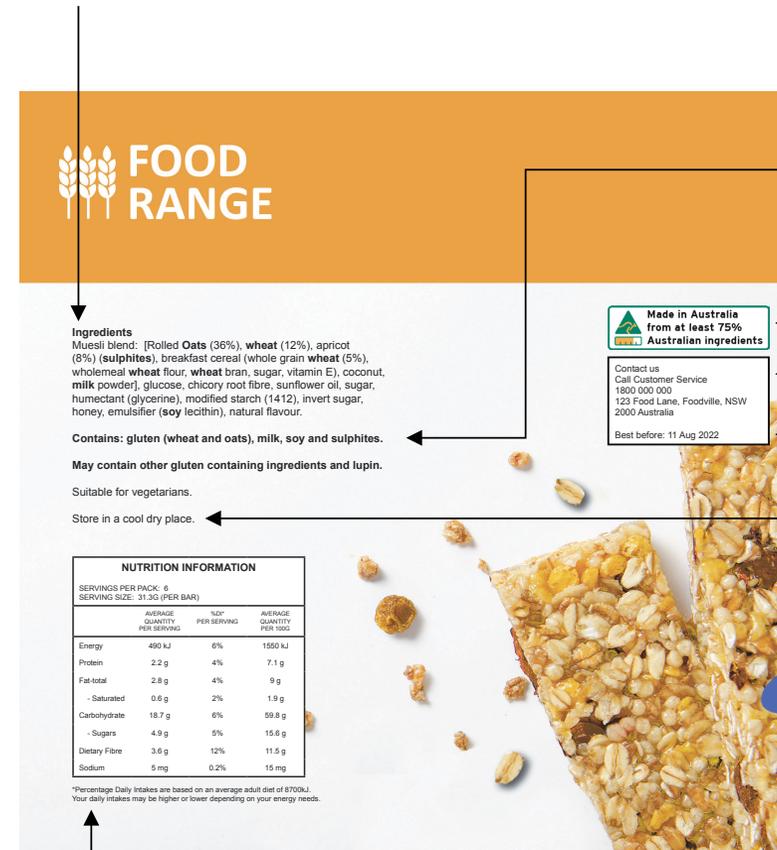
Made in Australia from at least 75% Australian ingredients

Contact us  
 Call Customer Service  
 1800 000 000  
 123 Food Lane, Foodville, NSW  
 2000 Australia

Best before: 11 Aug 2022

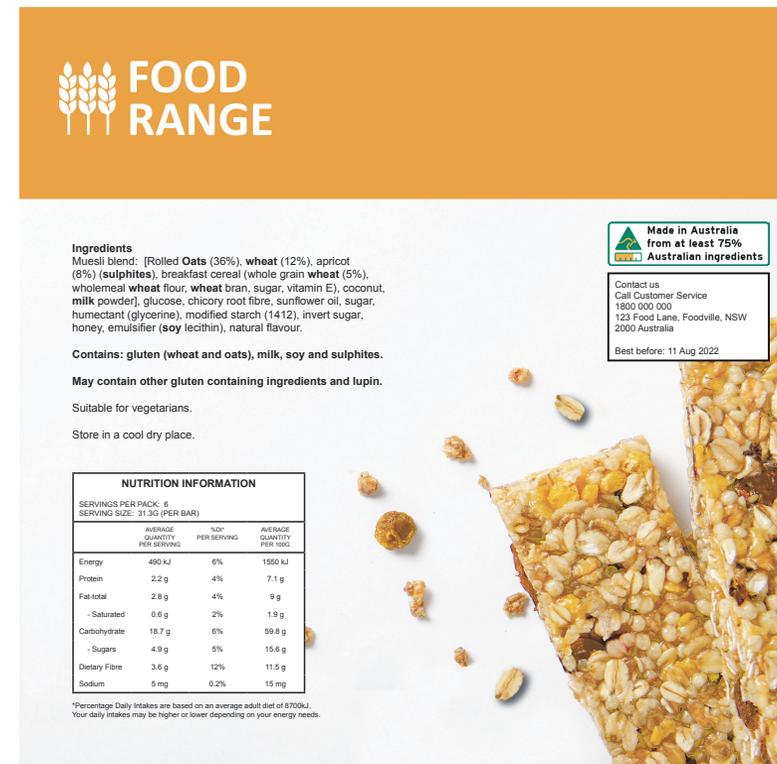
# FINDING FOOD FACTS FAST: CHALLENGE 1

Your challenge is to label all the elements on the food package.



# LET'S DO A DEEP DIVE INTO THIS LABEL

Now we know all the components, let's find out what they all mean

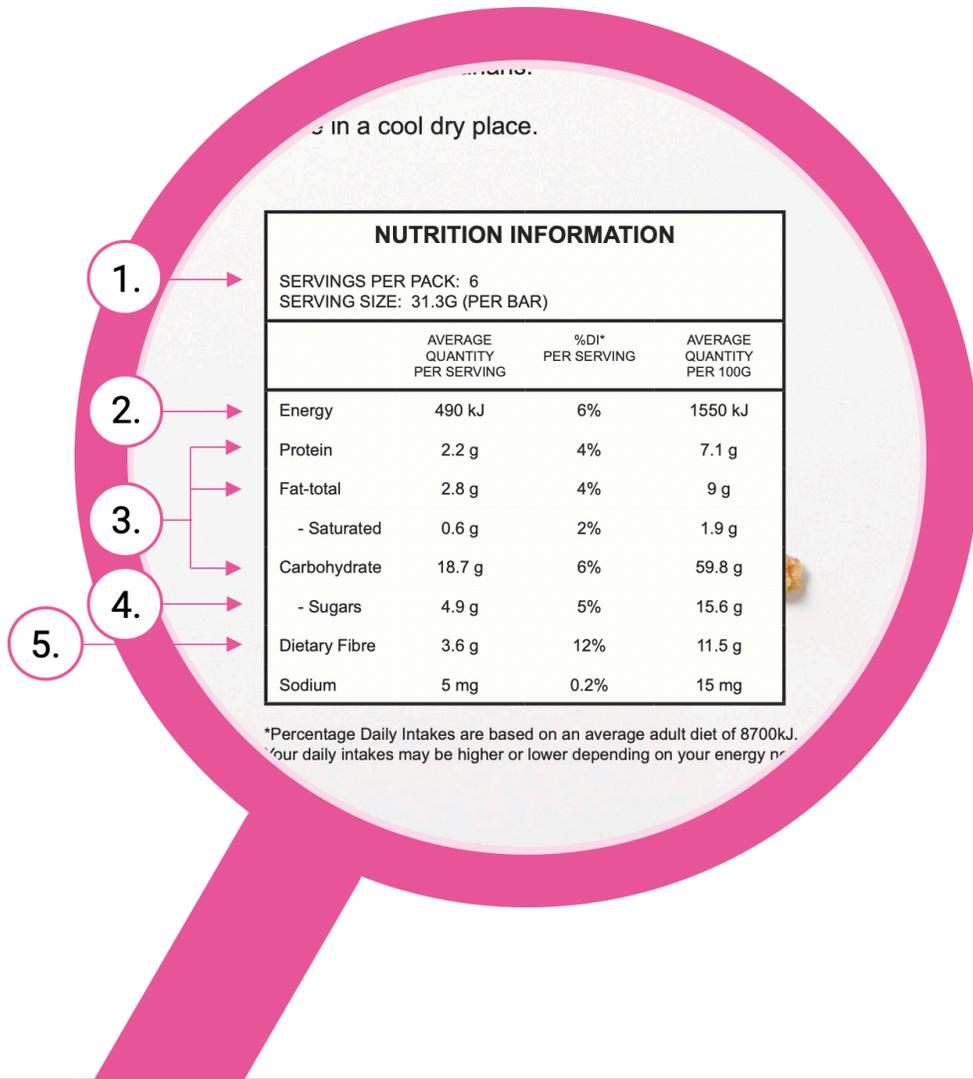


# WHAT'S A HEALTH STAR RATING?



- The Health Star Rating (HSR) is a labelling system that helps you to easily compare similar packaged foods and choose healthier options.
- Health Stars are on the front of many packaged foods.
- The Health Star Rating uses the nutrition information for a product to provide a star rating out of 5 – the more stars, the better.
- The Health Star Rating should only be used to compare similar products, like comparing two yoghurts. It shouldn't be used to compare a yoghurt with a muesli bar, for example.
- Lots of healthy foods don't show a Health Star Rating because they don't have packages, like fruit, veggies and water which are all 5 stars.

# HOW TO USE THE NUTRITION INFORMATION PANEL



➤ The Nutrition Information Panel (NIP) gives you lots of information about the nutritional value of a product, and can be used alongside the HSR and the ingredients list to help you understand how healthy a food product is.

➤ You'll find it on the back or side of a packaged food and it will tell you some important things:

1. The recommended serving size and serves per pack
2. The energy (kilojoules) in the product
3. The macronutrients in the product including protein, fat and carbohydrates
4. A breakdown of other nutrients in the food we might want to eat less of, like saturated fat, sugar and sodium. Sodium is how salt is listed on the NIP.
5. Sometimes you will see additional nutrients, like fibre, vitamins and minerals like iron and calcium.

➤ It's split into at least 2 columns, so you can see what you are eating if you eat the whole serve and you can see per 100g to easily compare to other products.

➤ Often you'll see a %DI column as well. This stands for Percentage Daily Intakes and this helps you understand how much a serve of the food is contributing to your daily recommended intake of that nutrient. This is based on requirements for an average adult.

# THE INGREDIENTS LIST

## Ingredients

Muesli blend: [Rolled **Oats** (36%), **wheat** (12%), apricot (8%) (**sulphites**), breakfast cereal (whole grain **wheat** (5% wholemeal **wheat** flour, **wheat** bran, sugar, vitamin E), **coconut milk** powder], glucose, chicory root fibre, sunflower oil, sugar, humectant (glycerine), modified starch (1412), invert sugar, honey, emulsifier (**soy** lecithin), natural flavour.

**Contains: gluten (wheat and oats), milk, soy and sulphites**

**May contain other gluten containing ingredients and lactose**

Suitable for vegetarians.

Store in a cool dry place.

## NUTRITION INFORMATION

PER 100g



- The ingredients list shows ingredients in order of weight, so the first ingredient makes up the majority of the product and so on.
- Ingredients with allergens, like milk and wheat, are in bold. There is also an allergen statement underneath the ingredients list.
- Foods may also have an allergen claim on the pack e.g. “gluten free”

# THE LOWDOWN ON SUGARS



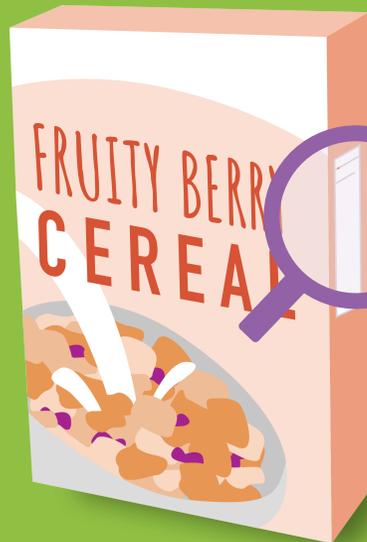
- Many foods have sugars – either natural or added. Some food labels show added sugar, but not all do.
- If the Nutrition Information Panel shows the product has a lot of sugar, take a look at the ingredients list to see where the sugars come from. Foods containing ingredients like fruit and dairy can be high in natural sugars but often also contain important nutrients like fibre and calcium.
- Use this handy list to be able to spot added sugars – if choosing foods with added sugar, look for a product where these ingredients are low on the ingredients list.

**Added sugars: Sucrose, glucose, fructose, maltose, dextrose, golden syrup, corn syrup, honey, malt, molasses, rice malt, rice malt syrup, agave, brown sugar, caster sugar, raw sugar and invert sugar**

# HOW TO MAKE HEALTHIER CHOICES: BREAKFAST CEREAL

If the product shows a Health Star Rating then use this as a quick guide and read the nutrition panel and ingredients information to find out more.

Look for whole grains like oats at the top of the ingredient list. The more whole grains, the better!



## INGREDIENTS

Whole grain cereals (52%)  
[**wheat** 40%, **Oats** 12%], Fruit  
Paste [Berry puree (2.5%),  
Concentrated Fruit Juice,  
Sugar, Glucose syrup....

Look for a lower sugar cereal – this cereal has no sugar added. Check the ingredients list to see if added sugars are at the top of the ingredients list.



## INGREDIENTS

Whole grain wheat (99%)  
Salt blend [salt, Mineral  
Sea Salts(508,511)]...

# HOW TO MAKE HEALTHIER CHOICES: BREAD

If the product shows a Health Star Rating then use this as a quick guide and read the nutrition panel and ingredients information to find out more.

Look for whole grain flours at the top of the ingredients list, like wholemeal or rye flour.

Compare the nutrition information to find a lower sodium bread, using the per 100 g columns.



	Per serve	Per 100g
<b>SODIUM</b>	317mg	430mg



	Per serve	Per 100g
<b>SODIUM</b>	288mg	390mg

## INGREDIENTS

Wholemeal **Wheat** Flour (44%), Water, **Wheat** Flour, Baker's Yeast, **Wheat Gluten**, **Wheat** Fibre, Vinegar, Canola Oil, Iodised Salt, **Soy** Flour, Vegetable Gum (412), Emulsifiers (472, 481), Minerals (Iron, Zinc), Vitamin E, Niacin, Vitamin B6, Thiamin, Folic Acid).

Contains: gluten Cereals and Soy.  
May be present: Sesame

# HOW TO MAKE HEALTHIER CHOICES: DAIRY & ALTERNATIVES

If the product shows a Health Star Rating then use this as a quick guide and read the nutrition panel and ingredients information to find out more.

Dairy milk is naturally a good source of essential nutrients like calcium. When choosing plant-based milk alternatives, look for products with added vitamins and minerals such as calcium, vitamin B12 and vitamin D.

With yoghurts and flavoured milks, compare labels to choose the lower sugar option.

## INGREDIENTS

Filtered Water, Soy Protein (3.5%), Minerals (Calcium, Phosphorus, Magnesium), Vitamins (A, B12, D2, B2, B1)



	Per serve	Per 100g
Low Fat Passionfruit Yoghurt	15.1g	8.9g
No added sugar Mango Yoghurt	8.6g	5.7g

## SUGARS

	Per serve	Per 100g
Low Fat Passionfruit Yoghurt	15.1g	8.9g

## SUGARS

	Per serve	Per 100g
No added sugar Mango Yoghurt	8.6g	5.7g

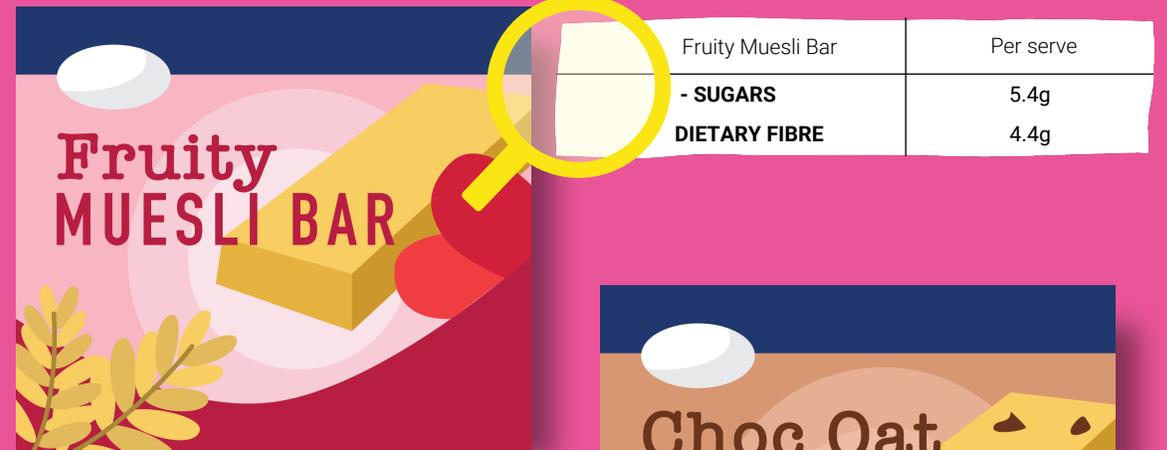
# HOW TO MAKE HEALTHIER CHOICES: SNACK FOODS

If the product shows a Health Star Rating then use this as a quick guide and read the nutrition panel and ingredients information to find out more.

When comparing packaged single-serve snack foods, like a muesli bar or small packet of popcorn, compare the per serve column, as this is how much you're likely to eat.

For savoury snacks like chips, popcorn and crackers, look for lower sodium.

For sweet snacks like muesli bars look at the total energy and where possible choose lower sugar and higher fibre.



# FINDING FOOD FACTS FAST: CHALLENGE 2

Your challenge is to compare the nutrition information on these snack foods to answer the following questions.

Hint: use the per serve panel when comparing these products, as they are already packaged as one serve

## Product 1:

### Blueberry Muesli Bar



#### INGREDIENTS

Muesli blend: [Whole Grain Rolled **Oats** (36%), **wheat** (12%), blueberries (blueberries (4%), sugar, sunflower oil), pumpkin seeds (4%), sunflower seeds(2%), coconut (1%), quinoa(1%), millet (1%), **milk powder**], glucose, chicory root fibre, sunflower oil, sugar, humectant (glycerine), modified starch (1412), invert sugar, honey (0.7%), caramelised sugar, emulsifier (**soy** lecithin), natural flavour

Contains: **gluten (wheat and oats), milk and soy**

NUTRITION INFORMATION		
SERVINGS PER PACK: 5 SERVING SIZE: 35G (PER BAR)		
	AVERAGE QUANTITY PER SERVING	AVERAGE QUANTITY PER 100G
Energy	570 kJ	1540kJ
Protein	2.8 g	8.1 g
Fat-total	4.3 g	12.4 g
- Saturated	0.8 g	2.3 g
Carbohydrate	19.3 g	55.0 g
- Sugars	5.4 g	15.5 g
Dietary Fibre	3.9 g	11.0 g
Sodium	9 mg	26 mg

## Product 2:

### Almond & Honey Oat Slice



#### INGREDIENTS

Wholegrain Cereals (30%) (Wholegrain **Oats** (80%), Buckwheat), **Wheat Flour**, **Butter** (11%) (**Cream (Milk)**, Salt), Invert Sugar, Brown Sugar, **Almonds** (7%), **Desiccated Coconut** (Coconut, **Colour Stabiliser (233 (Sulphites))**). Sunflower Seeds, Honey (3%), Pumpkin Seeds (3%), **Whole Egg Powder**, Raising Agents (450, 500), Natural Flavours

Contains **Gluten, Milk, Tree Nuts, Sulphites and Egg**

NUTRITION INFORMATION		
SERVINGS PER PACK: 6 SERVING SIZE: 40G (PER BAR)		
	AVERAGE QUANTITY PER SERVING	AVERAGE QUANTITY PER 100G
Energy	764 kJ	1910kJ
Protein	4 g	10 g
Fat-total	9.9 g	24.7 g
- Saturated	4.5 g	11.2 g
Carbohydrate	19.6 g	49.1 g
- Sugars	8 g	20 g
Dietary Fibre	2.6 g	6.5 g
Sodium	63 mg	157 mg

Which product has more wholegrains? \_\_\_\_\_

Which product has less sugars? \_\_\_\_\_

Which product has more fibre? \_\_\_\_\_

Which product would you choose as the healthier option? \_\_\_\_\_

# RECYCLING SYMBOLS

Food labels also show you how to dispose of the packaging, once empty.  
There are three symbols to look out for:



This black symbol means the packaging can be placed into the recycling bin as it is.



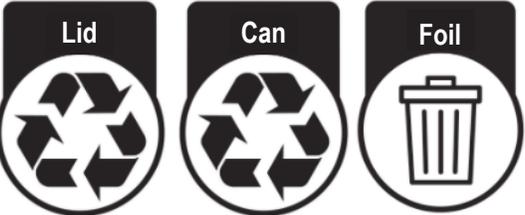
This clear symbol means you must follow the instructions to recycle it, e.g. return to store. If you don't follow the instructions, it must go in the rubbish bin.

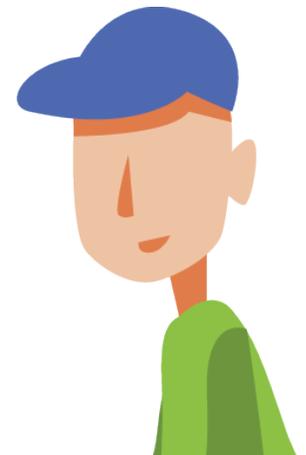
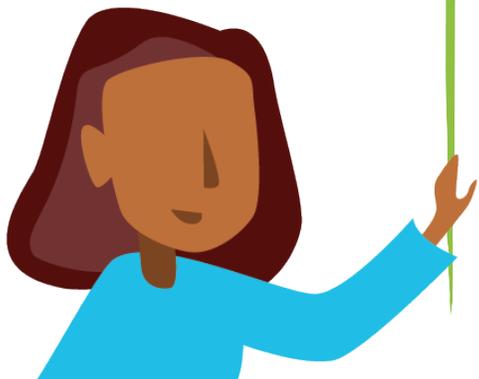


This bin symbol means the packaging is not recyclable and must go in the rubbish bin.

# FINDING FOOD FACTS FAST: CHALLENGE 3

Look at the symbols found on these food packages and decide where to dispose of them:

Label	Where would you dispose of the empty package?
	
	
	



# PERSONAL DECISIONS

Sometimes, we choose foods for reasons other than health.  
You might choose a food because it is:

**Vegetarian or Vegan**

**Kosher or Halal**

**Made in Australia**

**Organic**

You might be able to find this information on a food label – look for certification or other claims on pack to help you understand if a product meets these requirements.  
You can also contact the manufacturer if you'd like more information.

# FINDING FOOD FACTS FAST: CHALLENGE 4

Putting it all together – look at the whole label and answer the following questions:

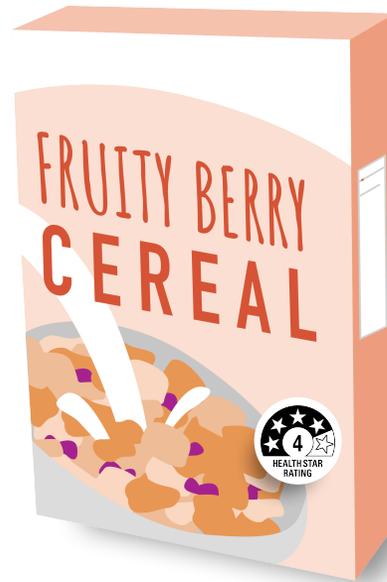
## Fruity Berry Cereal



### INGREDIENTS

Whole Grain Cereals (52%) [**Wheat** (40%), **Oats** (12%)], Fruit Paste [Berry puree (2.5%), Concentrated Fruit Juice, Sugar, Glucose syrup, Humectant, Acidity Regulator, Gelling agent, Firming agent, Flavour], **Wheat** Flour, Sugar, Mineral Salt (Calcium Carbonate), Salt.

May contain other gluten containing ingredients, milk, Soy, tree nuts & Lupin



### NUTRITION INFORMATION

SERVINGS PER PACK: 16  
SERVING SIZE: 30G

	AVERAGE QUANTITY PER SERVING	%DI* PER SERVING	AVERAGE QUANTITY PER 100G
Energy	450 kJ	5%	1550 kJ
Protein	2.2 g	4%	7.4 g
Fat-total	0.6 g	1%	2.1 g
- Saturated	0.1 g	1%	0.4 g
Carbohydrate	21.4 g	7%	71.3 g
- Sugars	6.7 g	7%	22.3 g
Dietary Fibre	2.3 g	8%	7.7 g
Sodium	13 mg	1%	45 mg

Are there any allergens? If so, list them. \_\_\_\_\_

Does this food show a Health Star Rating? What is it? \_\_\_\_\_

Does this food have whole grains? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there added sugars in this product? If so, list them. \_\_\_\_\_

Can you recycle this package? If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_

# FINDING FOOD FACTS FAST: EXTRA HOMEWORK CHALLENGE

Find a food label either at home, at the shops, or online, and answer these questions.

Are there any allergens? If so, list them. \_\_\_\_\_

Does this food show a Health Star Rating? What is it? \_\_\_\_\_

Can you recycle this package? If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_

Does this food label tell you anything else helpful or interesting about the product? \_\_\_\_\_

Compare this food label with another similar food label, using the per 100g column.

Which food is higher in fibre? \_\_\_\_\_

Which food is higher in sugars? \_\_\_\_\_

Which food is higher in sodium? \_\_\_\_\_

# THE GOOD VILLAGE

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