

## **Update on the voluntary addition of fluoride to bottled water**

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) has put a final recommendation to food regulation ministers, the Australia and New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council, to permit the voluntary addition of fluoride to packaged water.

The amended standard will allow the addition of fluoride to non-carbonated packaged water to between 0.6 and 1.0 mg/L (total of naturally occurring and added fluoride) and to require mandatory labeling for food identification purposes to indicate that fluoride has been added.

FSANZ approved permitting the voluntary addition of fluoride to packaged water as it:

- is nutritionally equivalent to fluoridated reticulated water and provides consumers with an alternative source of fluoridated water;
- does not raise any public health or safety concerns for consumers of packaged water with added fluoride or the general population;
- is consistent with FSANZ's statutory objectives including Ministerial policy guidance on voluntary fortification;
- supports industry innovation; and
- provides consumers with adequate information on the product label to make an informed choice and to prevent them from being misled.

The Ministerial Council has 60 days in which to request a review of the FSANZ Board's decision. If no review request is made, the amended food standard permitting the addition of fluoride to packaged water will be gazetted (published) and become law. The amended standard could apply by July.