

# THE HEART FOUNDATION TICK

## Fact sheet

The Tick is the Heart Foundation's guide to help people make healthier food choices. It is Australia's number one food approval program<sup>1</sup>. Nestlé recognises the importance of the Heart Foundation Tick and is introducing the Tick to some of its product lines, making it easier for you to make a better choice.

### WHAT IS THE HEART FOUNDATION TICK PROGRAM?

The Tick is an endorsement program which encourages food manufacturers and food outlets to improve the nutritional quality of the food supply, by meeting the Heart Foundation's nutrition standards<sup>1</sup>. All foods that are Tick approved are identified on pack by the Heart Foundation Tick logo.

### WHY ARE TICK FOODS A BETTER CHOICE?

The program sets strict nutritional criteria across fifty different food categories<sup>3</sup>. The criteria aim to lower the levels of "negative" nutrients such as saturated fat, trans fat, sodium and kilojoules and increase levels of "positive" nutrients such as calcium and fibre in the food supply.

The Tick program also includes a range of fresh foods: milk, fish, meat, poultry, grains, legumes, nuts and seeds. All fresh fruit and vegetables qualify for the Tick<sup>2</sup>.

### WHY CHOOSE TICK-APPROVED FOODS?

The Heart Foundation Tick sets a nutritional gold standard so when you "pick the Tick" you can be sure that the product you are choosing is a healthier choice. Foods carrying the Tick are a better choice in their category, for example bread with the Tick is a healthier choice of bread<sup>2</sup>. It is important to note, if a product does not have a heart tick, but has the same nutritional composition as a product with the heart tick, then it can be just as good a choice. The Tick is a time saver, it helps you make a good choice when you don't have time to read all the nutrition information on food labels.

Foods displaying the Heart Foundation Tick are not specifically designed for people with heart disease or any other disease. Rather they are a healthier choice for the general population and all people who are concerned about their overall health and well-being.



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### HOW DOES A PRODUCT BECOME TICK APPROVED?

Food manufacturers cannot just choose to buy the Heart Foundation Tick; they first must meet strict nutrition criteria that have to be adhered to. Products must be tested by an independent laboratory, meet nutritional standards and routine spot checks. This process ensures that the Tick standards are always met<sup>2</sup>. If a food item does not qualify for the Tick, the Heart Foundation can work with the food company to improve the nutritional profile of the product<sup>2</sup>.



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### References

1. The Heart Foundation Tick. Making healthier choices stand out from the crowd. National Heart Foundation of Australia 2006.
2. Heart Foundation. Activities. Tick program. <http://www.theheartfoundation.com.au/index.cfm?page=976>
3. The Tick update: Criteria - the science behind the Tick. June 2006.

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