



**THE HON MARK BUTLER MP  
Parliamentary Secretary for Health**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Salt is on the Table**

This week is World Salt Awareness Week.

A high salt diet can cause serious health problems including high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease.

In Australia, most of our salt intake comes from processed foods.

The Rudd Government welcomes the significant efforts industry have already made to reduce salt levels in some processed foods but we know that more can be done.

Our own experience, as well as that of other jurisdictions like the UK, has shown the effectiveness of voluntary industry action to cut salt levels in processed foods.

The Rudd Government established the Food and Health Dialogue last year as a framework for government, industry and public health groups to work together on improving Australian diets through food reformulation, consumer awareness and portion standardisation.

Chaired by the Parliamentary Secretary for Health, Mark Butler, members of the Dialogue include the Australian Food and Grocery Council, Woolworths, the National Heart Foundation, the Public Health Association and the CSIRO.

"Through the Dialogue, we are actively working to set meaningful salt level targets to achieve our agreed goal of reducing salt consumption as soon as possible," Mr Butler said.

"We are currently developing targets for commercial bread and cereal and will then be focussing on other foods such as processed meats and sauces."

The Dialogue aims to engage the entire food sector from primary producers to fast food restaurants and use a co-operative approach for improving Australian diets and health.

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