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1 March 2023

s 9(2)(a)

By email: s 9(2)(a)
Ref: H2023019832

Tēnā koe s 9(2)(a)

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to Manatū Hauora (the Ministry of Health) on 2 February 2023. You requested:

"the team at WCRF who oversaw the research studies said in a 2015 report that they could not report a direct cause of eating red meat to cancer.

They and your government agency haven't provided defensible proof for the court of law as to a reason to restrict the intake of red meat.

Please provide it otherwise it will be seen as overstepping the ministry powers"

The *Eating and Activity Guidelines for New Zealand Adults* (the guidelines) were first published in 2015. In 2020, the guidelines were updated to include advice for pregnant and breastfeeding women. The dietary recommendations for adults, including current advice to limit the amount of red meat to no more than 500g of cooked red meat each week, were not reviewed as part of this update.

The Ministry's dietary guidelines were informed by international guidelines, systematic reviews and reports. This includes the American Dietary Guidelines, Nordic Nutrition Review, the Australian Dietary Guidelines and World Cancer Research Fund Reports. The evidence and guidelines were reviewed by a technical advisory group of nutrition experts prior to publication.

At the time of development of the guidelines, the World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) guidance, including the 2007 report and the Continuous Update Project report (2011) on colorectal and rectum cancer both state "red meat is a convincing cause of colorectal cancer". The level of evidence provided is deemed 'convincing' and the specific personal intake recommendation being to 'limit intake to less than 500gm week'. (WCRF and AICR 2007, 2011).

Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Manatū Hauora website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Old', written in a cursive style.

Dr Andrew Old
Deputy Director-General
Public Health Agency | Te Pou Hauora Tūmatanui