



**CONSUMERS
FEDERATION
OF AUSTRALIA**

Developing and promoting
the consumer interest

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Peak consumers group calls on supermarkets to use new guidelines to save shoppers money

The nation's peak body for consumer organisations, the Consumers Federation of Australia (CFA), says grocery retailers should use new revised ACCC guidelines on the provision of unit pricing to make it much easier for their customers to notice, read, understand and use unit prices.

Effective unit pricing (pricing per unit of measure) greatly assists shoppers to compare values and so to save money or get more for the same amount.

CFA chair Gerard Brody says the ACCC's revised guidelines for retailers are very comprehensive and provide excellent guidance on how to provide really effective unit pricing.

Gerard also says that while providing effective grocery unit pricing is very beneficial for all consumers it is of particular benefit to the many who are vulnerable or disadvantaged, including those with disability and those struggling to make ends meet due to COVID-19.

Consumer surveys show decisively that although many consumers use unit pricing they also want unit prices to be much easier to notice, read, understand and use. This can be done by improving the quality of display and by greater consistency in the units of measure used to show the unit price for different items of the same product type.

Improving the quality of the unit pricing provided by grocery retailers will increase consumer awareness and use of it and thus greatly assist consumers to compare values and save even more money and time.

In addition to indicating the specific requirements of the mandatory Industry Code of Conduct administered by the ACCC, the guidelines also contain important practical tips on how retailers can provide "best practice" unit pricing.

CFA strongly welcomes the inclusion of these tips in the guidelines and says all grocery retailers should adopt them.

The tips include:

- Consider your unit pricing display from the perspective of all of your customers, including customers with a disability, low mobility, or vision impairment.
- Display the unit price in a simple and plain font, for example one of the sans serif fonts.
- Use easy to read font sizes, such 6mm or bigger, or at least 50% of the height of the selling price.
- Use black text on a white background or another contrasting colour.
- Use a consistent style and layout for unit price labelling across all grocery items.
- Position the unit pricing below or adjacent to the selling price.
- If there is multiple pricing information near the selling price, the unit price should be clearly labelled or easily identified.
- If you have an online store, have a function that allows consumers to sort grocery items by unit price.
- Make it easy for your customers to compare value across similar items using unit pricing.

CFA also welcomes that the guidelines also remind retailers that in addition to complying with the Code they also need to be aware of their obligations under other legislation including:

- state, territory and Federal anti-discrimination laws
- the Australian Consumer Law, which prohibits misleading or deceptive conduct.

CFA says the ACCC should ensure that all grocery retailers are aware of the revised guidelines and should step-up its monitoring and enforcement of compliance with the Code.

During the next few months, consumers will be closely monitoring the impact of the new guidelines on the quality of the unit pricing provided by grocery retailers.

Notes for Editors

1. The ACCC's revised guidelines "Unit pricing - A guide for retailers" were released on 1 October 2021 and are available here:
<https://www.accc.gov.au/publications/unit-pricing-a-guide-for-grocery-retailers>
2. The revised guidelines were requested by the federal government following its decision to make the scope and the requirements of the new Code that commenced on 1 October 2021 exactly the same as those of the Code that had operated since 2009.
3. The new Code's scope and its requirements are the same as in the old one despite calls by consumers and other stakeholders for changes and the results of surveys indicating that consumers want more and better grocery unit pricing, and they want other relevant retailers, such as chemists (for non-prescription items) and hardware stores to be required to provide unit pricing , as happens in many EU countries and the UK.