



Future ready Food Standards

# Digitisation

June 2024

# Stakeholder Forum 2022

*'Digital transformation  
has huge potential but  
must be people and  
client centred'.*

Stakeholder engagement identified three key areas for consideration:

- Digital food labelling
- Digital recalls platform
- Digitalisation of the Food Standards Code

## Research & engagement

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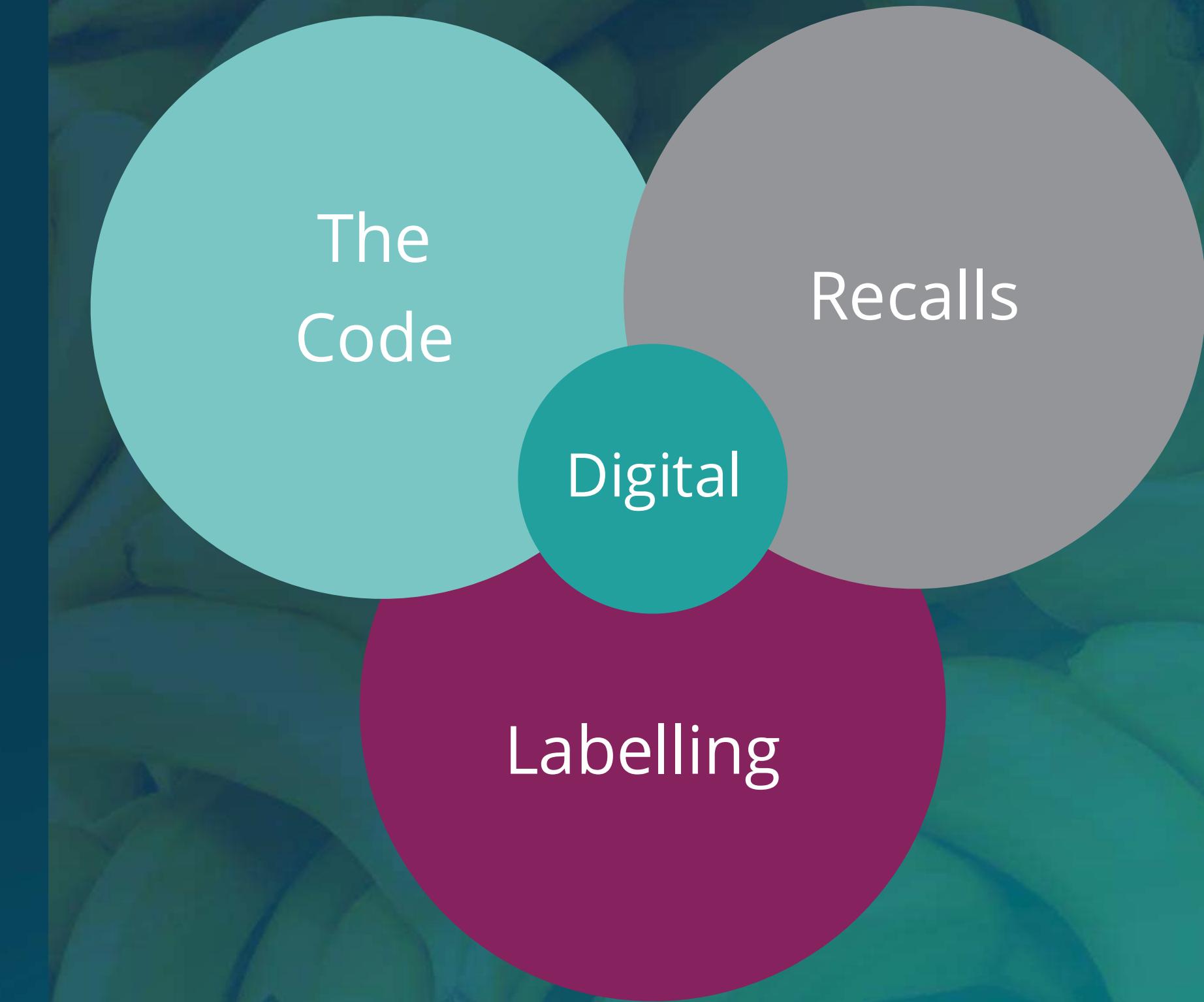
- **01** Completed scoping project
- **02** Stakeholder workshops
- **03** Explored costs and models

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- **01** Implemented an upgraded form for businesses to speed up response action and automate steps
- **02** Improved visibility of food recalls for consumers

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- **01** Considered international approaches
- **02** Stakeholder workshops
- **03** Considered cross-government appetite

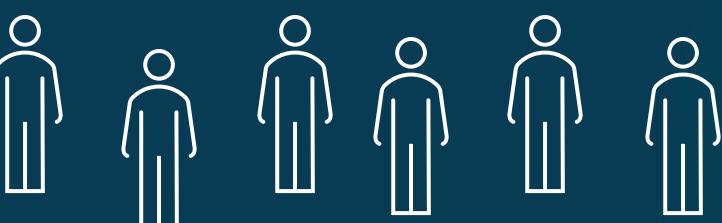


'Technology that helps people be self-sufficient and get the information they need faster is supported'

'Time and resource savings through improved access to information, better quality submissions, fewer industry enquiries and simpler and more cost-effective compliance activity'

'This work should be strongly linked to the Government's broader digitalisation agenda and funded accordingly'

## Across all workshops stakeholders expressed support for digital transformation projects



### 61 participants

8% Consumer  
19% Government  
42% Industry  
12% Public Health  
19% other

'Regulatory frameworks lack agility to accommodate the increasing technology developments, therefore it will be good to see these ideas come to pass'

'Health and safety information like use by and best before dates, warning statements, list of ingredients and directions for use are all essential information to retain on-pack'

'If only one project was to progress would prefer efforts and resources be directed to the Code'

# Feedback summary

## **Start with the Code content and digitalise it all at once**

Prioritise improving access and readability of the content over linking interpretational guidance or resources

## **Ensure it can be read on all devices**

Functionality to be usable across platforms and devices

## **Staged approach**

Start with minimalist approach with basic features such as internal searchability, indexes, hyperlinks and a clear table of content

## **Clear benefits**

Likely lead to time saving and access improvements for users, government and FSANZ, potentially leading to improved understanding of and compliance with the Code

## **Future features**

Progressively introduce features such as signposting, searches by commodity/product, questions, links to existing guidance and PIF forms, personalisation and external linkages to other related legislation

## Digital Food Labelling

## **Balancing the benefits**

Overcoming limited space on pack, packaging costs for industry and broadening consumer access

## **Purpose of digitalisation of on-pack information**

Clarity needed regarding the problem to be addressed, the purpose of any change and the implications and benefits of that change

## **Presentation**

Needs to be meaningful and useful for consumers and not limited in digital format to QR Codes (e.g. website addresses)

## **Content**

Low appetite for removing existing health and safety information from on-pack labels. Preference to use digital labelling to provide supplementary, complementary, discretionary or additional information

## **Other concerns**

Inconsistent or inaccurate information between on and off pack, equity of access to information and digital literacy, privacy, tracking and cybersecurity

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# Scoping a digiCode: key findings



## Nearly 1 million people access the Code annually

- An annual average of 972,000 visits across the Code and enabling instruments over the past five years
- Most accessed standards: food safety, labelling, health claims and food additives



## Alignment on basic functionality

- Stakeholders were aligned on their desire for search optimisation, hyperlinking, cross-referencing and navigational aids for the Code



## Guidance

- On 'How the Code works', tips and tools to assist people to more efficiently access the information
- Opportunities to harness and harmonise guidance across jurisdictions



## Benefits

- For small to medium businesses, relieving pressure associated with regulatory burden
- Decreasing non-compliance, reducing enforcement costs
- Improving public health outcomes for all

# Road ahead

## 01 Consolidated Code

**Publish a consolidated Food Standards Code to the FSANZ website imminently:**

- A compilation of the 74 Standards and 29 Schedules that will be regularly updated

## 02 Future opportunities

- Develop a 'How the Code works' webpage to support understanding
- Continue to explore ways to make 'digiCode' as user friendly as possible – linkages, easier navigation, indexing
- Pursue options to support further digitalisation, including exploring new and emerging technologies
- Continue considering international and whole-of-government approaches to digital food labelling
- Utilising the new website to deliver fit-for-purpose information