

Article

Fat Content and Composition in Retail Samples of Australian Beef Mince

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Abstract: Nutrient composition data, representative of the retail supply, is required to support labelling and dietetic practice. Because beef mince represents approximately 30% of all beef dishes prepared in Australian households, a national survey of the different types of mince available for purchase in representative retail outlets was conducted. Sixty-one samples of beef mince from 24 retail outlets in New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia were collected in 2010 and analysed for moisture, protein, total fat and fatty acid profile. A variety of 18 different descriptors were used at point of sale with "Premium" (n = 15) and "Regular" (n = 8) the most commonly used terms. The analysed fat content of "Premium" samples varied from 2.2 g/100 g to 8.0 g/100 g. Forty-eight percent (n = 29) of the samples were categorised as low fat (<5 g/100 g; mean 4.1 g/100 g), 21% as medium fat (5–10 g/100 g; mean 8.9 g/100 g) and 31% as high fat (>10 g/100 g; mean 10.4 g/100 g). There was no significant difference between the types of mince available for purchase in low versus high socio-economic suburbs (Chi-square, p > 0.05). In conclusion, the fat content of the majority of retail beef mince in Australia is <10 g/100 g and a variety of descriptors are used at point of sale, all of which do not necessarily reflect analysed fat content.