



Red light on food labels

HEALTH groups have reacted angrily after the Federal Government rejected traffic light food labelling.

The Gillard government yesterday reported back on 61 recommendations in an independent review of the nation's food labelling laws.

Generic health warning labels on alcohol were also rejected, but it will be mandatory within two years to caution pregnant women against its dangers.

Fast food chains will have to declare kilojoule content

Marianne Betts

health reporter

on their menu boards, and the standard of health claims on foods will improve.

The Government said there wasn't enough evidence that traffic light labelling would be effective.

The system uses traffic light colours — green, orange or red — to indicate whether the levels of fat, sugar and salt in a product are low, medium or high.

But Obesity Policy Co-

alition senior policy adviser Jane Martin accused the Government of bowing to food industry pressure and ignoring evidence that traffic light labelling helped people make healthy choices.

“There is evidence it changes consumer behaviour in a real world situation,” she said.

“Traffic light labelling has been found to be the most effective scheme in helping people understand the nutritional content of food.”