



Is it worth making the complaint?

Your research task is to:

- Do the mathematics in this example and explain to the class if it is worth making a complaint about underweight goods.

An investigation was carried out in the meat department of a large supermarket. The 1kg packs were weighed and found to be under the stated weight by an average of 30 grams per pack.

If the average price of the meat was \$10.00 per kilogram then a customer would be lose 30 cents if they bought a meat pack.

This may seem small for the consumer and not worth a complaint, but consider the supermarket. For every pack of meat they sell they take an extra 30 cents. A big supermarket would sell at least 1,000 packs a day so the extra takings are 30 cents x 1,000 = \$300.00.

If the supermarket is open 7 days a week, work out what the extra takings would be.

If the supermarket is open $51\frac{1}{2}$ weeks in the year, work out what the extra takings would be.

Most businesses that are found to be selling underweight products are not deliberately trying to make an additional profit from the consumer. Often they are selling underweight goods because they have not taught staff how to do the weighing properly. The most common mistake is made by staff forgetting to take the weight of the packaging off the weight of the goods to be sold.

When businesses are prosecuted they can be fined, but they may also have to agree to provide better staff training and supervision.

- Use the Ministry of Consumer Affairs website <http://www.consumeraffairs.govt.nz/measurement/index.html> and the publication **Weigh in and Measure up** (available on the website as a PDF file <http://www.consumeraffairs.govt.nz/measurement/consumerinfo/WeighinMeasureUp.pdf>) to investigate some occasions when businesses have been prosecuted, and what happened as a result of the prosecution.
- Make a presentation to the class that:
 - includes the meat example
 - provides an example of a prosecution
 - lists the pros and cons of making a complaint
 - gives some reasons why consumers should make a complaint
 - considers some situations where consumers might decide it is not worthwhile making a complaint.

