

WFA tightens EU Pledge commitment under EU Farm to Fork Code of Conduct for responsible business and marketing practices

Leading food and beverage manufacturers strengthen EU Pledge commitment on responsible marketing to children

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Brussels

Twenty-three major international food brand owners, representing more than 80% of EU food and beverage advertising spend, have made a new commitment to enhance the [EU Pledge](#) initiative on responsible food and beverage marketing.

The changes mean that from the start of next year under 13s will see even fewer ads for food and beverages that do not meet the EU Pledge nutrition criteria, as media selection rules are tightened and creative guidelines enhanced. New nutrition criteria restricting promotions for sweet biscuits, cakes, savoury crackers and meat-based products will be in place by June 30 2022.

Launched in 2007 as a commitment of the [World Federation of Advertisers \(WFA\)](#) to the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, the EU Pledge programme has made a significant difference to the amount and type of food and beverage advertising that children see across media in the EU.

The WFA and EU Pledge member companies welcome and support the European Commission's Code of Conduct on responsible business and marketing practices and are committed to working towards the Code's objectives and targets.

In line with the Code's indicative action to “*apply responsible food marketing and advertising practices, e.g. by adhering to self- and co-regulatory initiatives and standards*”, EU Pledge members have strengthened their commitment on responsible marketing to children by:

- **Strengthening the definition of children's media** by extending the commitment to children aged 13 and lowering the audience threshold to 30% under 13s, which will cover more media channels that have a significant child audience.
- **Revising the [common nutrition criteria](#) to further limit the type of products that can be marketed to children under 13.** In addition to chocolates, candies/confectionery and soft drinks, members will not advertise ice creams and potato crisps; and further strengthened criteria for sweet biscuits and cakes, savoury crackers and meat-based products.
- **Embedding qualitative requirements** from the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) [Code of Advertising and Marketing Communication Practice](#) and [Framework for Responsible Food and Beverage Marketing Communications](#) in all marketing communications. This will ensure, for instance, that snacks should not be presented as meals, that appropriate portion sizes are represented and that ads support rather than undermine good dietary habits.

Member companies will abide by this enhanced commitment across the EU by 1 January 2022. The enhanced common nutrition criteria will be applied no later than 30 June 2022.

These rules are applicable to all EU Pledge member companies across the EU. Individual member companies may maintain or adopt specific policies that go beyond the EU Pledge commitment.

Compliance with the EU Pledge commitment is independently audited on an annual basis.

Stephan Loerke, CEO of the World Federation of Advertisers said: “*We are delighted to submit the EU Pledge as a new commitment under the European Commission's Code of Conduct. With the EU Pledge we set out to change how food and beverage products are marketed to children in Europe, and we have achieved some significant results. The Code of Conduct recognises the important role and value of voluntary responsible marketing commitments, and we look forward to continuing to make a positive contribution to the EU agenda on health and nutrition.*”

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Notes for editors:

The World Federation of Advertisers (WFA) is the voice of marketers worldwide, representing 90% of global marketing communications spend – roughly US\$900 billion per annum – through a unique, global network of the world's [biggest markets](#) and [biggest marketers](#). WFA champions responsible and effective marketing communications worldwide. More information at www.wfanet.org

The EU Pledge: The [EU Pledge](#) is a voluntary initiative by leading food and beverage companies to change food and beverage advertising to children under the age of 13 in the European Union. It consists of three main commitments:

- No advertising for food and beverage products to children under the age of 13 on TV, print and internet, except for products which fulfil common nutritional criteria.
- No marketing or advertising in primary schools, except where specifically requested by, or agreed with, the school administration for educational purposes.
- Abide by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) codes and frameworks in all marketing communications.

These are minimum common standards that enable joint monitoring and accountability. Individual companies can apply corporate standards that go above and beyond these common rules. The EU Pledge was launched in December 2007 as part of signatories' commitment to the multi-stakeholder European Union Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, forum. The initiative was last strengthened in July 2021, in the context of the EU Code of Conduct on responsible business and marketing practices, under the banner of the EU Farm to Fork Strategy.

The EU Pledge commitment is owned and supported by the World Federation of Advertisers (WFA).