

**CIAA-PRINCIPLES OF FOOD AND BEVERAGE**  
**PRODUCT ADVERTISING**  
**FINAL VERSION**

Food and beverage manufacturers are committed to adhere to principles of responsible consumer communication, above and beyond compliance with applicable laws and regulations. In addition to each company's own set of internal principles, manufacturers have supported and will continue to actively support advertising self-regulatory organizations at the national level, and to adhere to standards set by such bodies. Self-regulatory organizations have been operating effectively in a number of countries for many years, based on core principles that can be found in these national self-regulatory systems. While they do not replace the standards set by each company, which are sometimes even more stringent, self regulatory mechanisms provide a common framework and an open process, including review and enforcement procedures, to assure that advertising adheres to standards established in each country.

**Objective of the Principles**

**The following principles are intended to have two primary uses.**

**First**, they are intended as a recommendation to companies to guide the development, execution, placement and monitoring of their advertisements.

**Second**, they are intended to be used in strengthening, where needed, national self-regulatory mechanisms regarding food and beverage advertising. While many countries have well developed advertising guidelines applicable to food and beverages, the industry encourages national self-regulatory organizations to consider these principles, incorporate them, where appropriate, into their own frameworks, and actively enforce them.

**These principles are particularly important** given the rising levels of obesity and chronic disease related to poor diets and lack of physical activity. Given the concern about rising obesity rates in children, special principles dealing with communications to children are included.

**A person's weight and health are affected by a multiplicity of factors**, including genetic predisposition, dietary habits, activity level, and food availability. Information gained from advertising can, for example, help consumers make informed choices about their diets. This is because advertising can help convey information to consumers with respect to nutritional benefits, balance, moderation and variety, in addition to taste and enjoyment in a healthy diet. These principles are intended to help advertising play such a role.

**Public health is the responsibility of all stakeholders.** The food and beverage industry is committed to playing its part by working with interested persons in empowering consumers to choose diets and levels of physical activity which can positively impact their health and well being. This will require multiple strategies, and the integrated efforts of manufacturers, retailers, public health officials, educators, dietary professionals, as well as many others.

Ultimately, what a person eats and how active a lifestyle is followed is a question of personal choice and individual responsibility. The food and beverage industry has committed itself to playing a positive role in helping consumers to make these choices with the benefit of advertising that adheres to sound fundamental principles.

## **Principles of Food and Beverage Product Advertising**

### **General Principles in the Context of Food and Beverage Advertising**

1. Copy, sound, and visual presentation of food products should accurately represent all material characteristics advertised -- including size, and content, as well as nutrition and health benefits – and should not mislead consumers concerning any of those characteristics.
2. Nutrition and health benefit claims should have a sound scientific basis.
3. Food and beverage advertisements should not encourage or condone excess consumption and portion sizes should be appropriate to the setting portrayed.
4. Where a food or drink product is presented in the context of a meal, a reasonable variety of foods should be shown, to reflect generally-accepted good dietary practice.
5. Food and beverage advertisements should not undermine the promotion of healthy, balanced diets.
6. Food and beverage advertisements should not undermine the promotion of a healthy, active lifestyle.
7. Food products not intended to be substitutes for meals should not be represented as such.

### **Additional Principles for Food and Beverage Advertising to Children**

The same principles which are applicable to general advertising also apply to advertising directed to children. Advertising is a valuable source of information to them as well, but advertisers must take into account the abilities and judgment that children at various stages of development can be expected to bring to the understanding of communications.

1. Advertisements should not mislead about potential benefits from the consumption of a product.
2. Food product advertisements should not undermine the role of parents and other appropriate adult role models in providing valuable dietary guidance.
3. Advertisements should not include any direct appeal to children to persuade their parents or other adults to buy advertised products for them.
4. Advertisements directed toward children should not create a sense of urgency.
5. While fantasy, including animation, is appropriate in communication with younger as well as older children, care should be taken not to exploit a child's imagination in a way that can encourage poor dietary habits.
6. Products derived from or associated with TV program content primarily directed to children should not be advertised during or adjacent to that program.
7. Broadcast or print media personalities (live or animated) should not be used to sell products, premiums or services in a way that obscures the distinction between program or editorial content and commercial promotion. For example, commercials or advertisements featuring characters from programs or publications primarily directed to children's should not be adjacent to programs or articles in which the same personality or character appears.