



**Ministry of Health Healthy Kids Industry Pledge Update
15 February 2018**

Introduction

The New Zealand Beverage Council (NZBC) proudly represents the manufacturers of New Zealand's juice, carbonated drink and bottled water brands, as well as their suppliers. Our members represent over 75 percent of the non-alcoholic ready to drink beverages sold at retail level.

We recognise that New Zealand, like many other developed and middle-income countries, has a growing childhood obesity issue. While the causes of this increasing obesity are numerous and complex, we do recognise that the over consumption of sugary drinks plays a contributory role.

While there is no single answer to childhood obesity, our members are committed to working with government, health experts and regulators as part of a multi-faceted approach to develop meaningful solutions. For example, our members are investing in developing low sugar alternatives, improving labelling to provide clearer nutritional information, developing educational information and undertaking responsible marketing activities.

The New Zealand Beverage Council is proud to strongly support the Ministry of Health's Healthy Kids Industry Pledge and is pleased to provide this update.

Schools

Schools are unique learning environments and for this reason we strongly believe that classrooms should remain commercial-free. **Members of the NZBC do not undertake any commercial advertising in any primary, intermediate or secondary school in New Zealand.**

In 2006 Coca-Cola Amatil NZ and Frucor signed a landmark Voluntary Schools Agreement (VSA) with the Ministries of Education and Health to not sell sugar sweetened carbonated soft drinks or energy drinks directly to any New Zealand school. Internationally, this agreement was the first of its kind.

In 2017, the agreement was extended to all of our member companies, and **our members have further pledged to only sell bottled water to primary and intermediate schools** in New Zealand. This is a significant commitment by the industry to help address childhood obesity and to deliver sugar-free schools in New Zealand.

We will now work with third party wholesalers, who may be selling our members products directly into schools, and encourage them to adhere to the commitments made by our industry when selling beverages into New Zealand schools.

Marketing

Our strong expectation is that our members fully comply with all advertising and marketing related legislation.

All our members abide by the voluntary *Children's and Young People's Advertising Code, Code for Advertising Food, and the Advertising Code of Ethics.*

This means **our members do not advertise any beverage in media that directly targets children under fourteen, or where 25 percent or more of the expected audience will be children under 14.** Further, our members will not design advertising that significantly appeals to children under fourteen.

We do believe, however, that **there are further opportunities to build a ‘responsible use’ message into the marketing activities undertaken by the industry,** and we will continue discussions with our members on how to best do this.

We are also **continuing discussions with the New Zealand Retailers’ Association and the New Zealand Association of Convenience Stores** to encourage their members who are located near primary and intermediate schools to focus their marketing activities on low and no kilojoule beverage products, to increase their range of such products and to increase their range of smaller sized beverage packs.

Kilojoules and sugar

The industry has taken significant steps to provide consumers with more choice and better information to allow informed dietary choices. This includes developing new and reformulated products to offer low and no-sugar varieties and voluntarily displaying kilojoule information on the front of labels.

Soft drink consumption continues to decrease, down 4.2 percent since 2010¹, while sales for low and no sugar non-alcohol beverages have grown by 66.7 percent over the past decade². Water continues to be the most consumed beverage and consumption of water is growing – up over 20 percent since 2010³.

For children in particular, a 2011 Otago University study found, using Ministry of Health data, **only 6 percent of a child’s energy consumption came from non-alcoholic beverages,** including just 1.7 percent from soft drinks.⁴ We do, however, acknowledge that beverages do make a significant contribution to the added sugar content of our children’s diets.

Our members are committed to continuing to look at options for further innovation and the reformulation of their products to ensure children and their families have easy access to healthier beverage options and we have seen a number of no or reduced sugar product launches in recent years from our members.

Labelling and Education

We want to ensure New Zealanders have access to the right information at the right time to enable them to make the best nutritional decisions for themselves and their families.

That is why we **strongly support the government’s voluntary Health Star Rating System and will continue to ensure our members have adopted the system’s Integrated Energy Icon on front-of-pack.** We will also ensure this system is promoted on both members and the NZBC website.

¹ The New Zealand Beverage Council calculation based in part on frequency of beverage drinking reported by Nielsen through its consumer and media insights (ICM) service for YE Q1 2016

² Nielsen Scantrack total supermarkets MAT to 18/9/2016.

³ See footnote 1. Water includes tap water, bottled water and cooler water.

⁴ University of Otago and Ministry of Health. 2011. A Focus on Nutrition: Key Findings of the 2008/09 NZ Adult Nutrition Survey. Wellington. Ministry of Health. Republished in ‘A Look Inside NZ Fridges. Beverage Consumption in NZ’ NZ Beverage Council 2017, <http://www.nzbc.nz/media/release/012.asp>

We also believe that education and nutritional literacy from an early age are key to changing the obesity trend in New Zealand. With the right education, we believe that sensible, occasional consumption of foods and beverages containing sugar, fat and salt can have a place for both children and adults in a balanced and active lifestyle.

We believe that our members can do more to illustrate the sugar content of their products on-label, in a clear and graphical way, and we are continuing to work with them to make this happen.

Reporting and Compliance

We have undertaken to report annually on our members' activities to support the commitments we have made as part of the Healthy Kids Industry Pledge.

A survey of our member companies will be undertaken in the first half of 2018 and we will make these results available on both the NZBC website as well as on our members' websites.

Conclusion

The New Zealand Beverage Council remains steadfast in ensuring our members fulfil the commitments we have made as part of the Healthy Kids Industry Pledge.

Childhood obesity not only has profound implications on the future health of our young people, it will also have significant societal implications that could affect each of us.

We want the children of New Zealand to grow up happy, active and healthy and that is why we remain committed to working with all parties to both identify and to contribute to meaningful solutions that make it easier for families to make healthy choices.

For further information, please contact:

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