

# GET IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME FOOD AND BEVERAGE



IS YOUR FOOD AND BEVERAGE  
ADVERTISING CUTTING THE  
MUSTARD?

**T**he advertising of food and beverages results in complaints to the ASA on a regular basis.

There is a duty of care required in this area, with rules designed to ensure that excessive consumption is not encouraged. Understanding the Advertising Codes and the government food and beverage regulations helps to prevent issues and support consumer trust in advertising.

Here are our **top tips** to make responsible food and beverage ads:

## 1 GET TO KNOW THE GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS

Understanding what's allowed and what isn't is the first step in making ads responsible. The government regulates food and beverage advertising through the [Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code](#). There are also food and nutrition policies to be aware of, including the [Food and Nutrition Guidelines](#) and the [Eating and Activity Guidelines](#).

## 2 SHOW THE RIGHT PORTION SIZES

Condoning or encouraging excessive consumption in your advertising will usually result in complaints. Show a reasonable quantity of food appropriate for the person or people depicted in your ad.

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## 3 STEER CLEAR OF THE NEGATIVE

Avoid promoting inactive or unhealthy lifestyles, or portraying people who choose a healthy, active lifestyle in a negative manner.

## 4 DON'T PUSH THE LIMITS

Creating a sense of urgency or encouraging excessive consumption when featuring a promo offer is against the rules, as is claiming physical, social or mental health benefits from consuming the product.

## 5 ENSURE YOUR TARGETING IS SPOT ON

Occasional food and beverage product advertising (high in sugar, fat and/or salt) must not be targeted at children under 14 years. Exercise a particular duty of care for food ads targeted at young people aged 14 to 18 years of age.

## 6 IS IT A HEALTH CLAIM?

If you make a nutrient, nutrition or health claim about a food or beverage in an ad, you need to be able to provide evidence that it complies with the requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code, specifically Food Standard 1.2.7.

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## What are the rules around food and beverage advertising?

Advertising of food and beverages requires a high standard of social responsibility and is covered by two Codes:

- The Advertising Standards Code, in particular Rule 1 (h) Health and Well-being, which sets out that ads must not undermine the health and well-being of people, and Rule 2 (g) Food and Beverage Claims, which deals with misleading claims and substantiation. There are strict guidelines around encouraging excessive repeat purchases of occasional food and beverages, which are those that are high in fat, salt or sugar.
- Food or beverage advertisements targeting Children or Young People must also comply with the Children and Young People's Advertising Code.

Note that advertisements for alcohol are dealt with under the Alcohol Advertising and Promotion Code.

## Remember the spirit and intention of the Code

When interpreting the Codes, the ASA Complaints and Appeal Boards consider compliance with both the spirit and intention as well as the rules and principles of the Codes. When checking Code compliance, we think about what the consumer takes away from the advertisement rather than the intent of the advertiser.

## Further help

We offer industry training on this topic, or you can contact the AdHelp Information Service for written information about the advertising rules and guidelines. For a more detailed look at the rules, head to the Advertising Codes.