

Why Nestlé must change

Nestlé promotes artificial infant feeding around the world, creating and expanding markets for its products and putting profits before health. Nestlé controls approximately 40% of the worldwide market for baby food, and, because of its size and the extent of its coffee, cocoa and food trading, it exerts a powerful influence on governments and influences market trends and company behaviour more than any other single food company. It is the world's largest food manufacturer, with operating companies in 75 countries and a turnover of \$42 billion, selling \$1,335 of food every second.

Nestlé's baby food marketing strategies violate the *International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes*, adopted by the World Health Assembly in 1981 and Resolutions adopted since. The Code aims to ensure that parents and health workers have access to unbiased information and are protected from the commercial pressure to favour bottle feeding.

Breastfeeding is the best start in life for all babies, but in poor conditions it is a lifeline. Expensive baby foods also increase family poverty which is a major cause of malnutrition. UNICEF says that reversing the decline in breastfeeding could save 1.5 million lives every year and in a community without clean drinking water a bottle fed infant is 25 times more likely to die from diarrhoea than a breastfed infant.

Nestlé makes a profit leaving others to count the cost.

This is why Nestlé products, such as Nescafé coffee, are boycotted by consumers in 20 countries. The boycott will continue until Nestlé abides by the *International Code* and subsequent Resolutions in policy and practice.

What can a boycott achieve?

Because of the boycott Nestlé has curbed some of its more blatant malpractice, such as the use of 'milk nurses' (company sales reps dressed as nurses); baby pictures on infant formula tins and *some* media advertising. However, it continues to promote its products in many other ways and to lobby for weak legislation and trading standards. At the same time it hides behind public relations exercises such as the "Charter" shown overleaf.

The boycott continues to have an important impact on Nestlé, in direct economic terms, in damage caused to its corporate image and management morale and in the resources the company must spend trying to combat it.

The boycott also raises awareness of the issues. It gives people a voice which Nestlé cannot ignore. Companies do respond to public pressure. Once Nestlé changes, it will have no reason to obstruct governments which take action to protect infants.

The International Nestlé Boycott is supported in the UK by over 100 church, health and consumer groups, over 90 businesses, 80 student unions, 17 local authorities, 12 trade unions, 74 politicians and political parties and many celebrities.

Campaign for positive action

Tell Nestlé that you will boycott Nescafé until it replaces its Charter with the full *International Code* and the subsequent World Health Assembly Resolutions and ensures its staff abides by them.

Write to: Alastair Sykes, Chairman and Chief Executive, Nestlé UK Ltd, St George's House, Croydon, Surrey, CR9 1NR.
Tel: (0208) 686 3333 Fax: (0208) 681 3516

Join Baby Milk Action to receive regular updates.

Please return this form to: Baby Milk Action,
23 St. Andrew's Street, Cambridge, CB2 3AX.

- I enclose a donation of £____
- I would like more information
- I would like to Join Baby Milk Action and enclose £____
(£15 waged, £7 unwaged, £20 family, £30 organisations)

Signed _____ Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Post code _____ Tel _____

Cheques payable to Baby Milk Action VAT No: 599 5547 63



Nice
design -
shame
about the
text

*Nestlé infant
formula policy
in developing
countries*

Nestlé's new Charter is not
all that it seems -
see inside for
Baby Milk Action's critique

In its Charter, Nestlé implies that its baby milk marketing policy is the same as the WHO/UNICEF International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes yet, as you will see, there are important differences.

The WHO/UNICEF International Code, unlike Nestlé's Charter, covers all breastmilk substitutes in all countries. Article 11.3 of the International Code calls on manufacturers to abide by the Code independently of government or other action.

In many countries Nestlé's labels are not in the appropriate language.

Independent monitoring consistently shows that Nestlé violates the International Code and subsequent Resolutions.*

Nestlé has tried to undermine attempts to bring in strong legislation in many countries, for example, the Philippines, Ghana, Pakistan, Uganda and Europe.... It is now facing criminal charges for breaking the Indian baby food Act. Instead of admitting guilt, the company is challenging the provisions under which it is being prosecuted.

The WHO/UNICEF International Code bans promotion – not just advertising and covers all breast milk substitutes, not just infant formula.

True – because of pressure from the Boycott, Nestlé stopped using pictures of babies on infant formula packages in 1984. But many Nestlé bottle-fed complementary foods still carry idealising baby pictures.

Nestlé infant formula policy in developing countries¹

NESTLÉ DOES

- Encourage and support exclusive breast-feeding as the best choice for babies during the first months of life²
- Warn mothers of the consequences of incorrect or inappropriate use of infant formula
- Believe that there is a legitimate market for infant formula³ when a safe alternative to breast-milk is needed
- Believe that parents have the right to choose how their babies are to be fed on the basis of adequate and objective information

NESTLÉ WILL

- Comply with both the letter and the spirit of the World Health Organisation's International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes
- Support efforts by governments to implement the International Code through legislation, regulation, or other appropriate measures
- Encourage sustained breast-feeding after the introduction of complementary foods

NESTLÉ DOES NOT

- Advertise infant formula to the public
- Permit staff whose responsibilities include the marketing of infant formula to make direct contact with mothers, except in response to consumer complaints
- Give incentives to its staff based on infant formula sales
- Use pictures of babies on its infant formula packs

For more information write to
Denise Briggs or Ralph Claydon at
Nestlé UK Ltd, St. George's House,
Croydon, Surrey CR9 1NR
or call us on 0181 667 6594



Distribute free infant formula samples to mothers

Give financial or material incentives to health professionals for the purpose of promoting infant formula

Allow educational material relating to the use of infant formula to be displayed publicly in hospitals and clinics

Donate free infant formula for use by healthy new born babies except in exceptional social cases (e.g. where the government policy allows manufacturers to respond to a specific medical request, for example if the mother dies in child birth)

NESTLÉ WILL

Take disciplinary measures against any Nestlé personnel who deliberately violates this policy

Nestlé invites government officials, health professionals, and consumers, to draw to its attention any Nestlé infant formula marketing practices in developing countries which they consider are not in conformity with the above commitment

Why does Nestlé give gifts to health workers if not to promote its products?

Hundreds of incidences of Nestlé promotion to mothers in health care facilities have been reported.*

This is a clear admission – World Health Assembly Resolutions ban all commercial donations of breastmilk substitutes to all parts of the health care system. Many governments are working to close these loopholes, aware that orphans and socially deprived babies need regular consistent support, not erratic, commercial donations.

Nestlé management are responsible for violations, but are not disciplined.

In addition companies have a responsibility to monitor their practices according to the International Code

* Independent monitoring

The International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN), has been monitoring the baby food industry for nearly two decades. The *Breaking the Rules* reports contain details of thousands of violations of the International Code and subsequent Resolutions by Nestlé.

In 1996 the Interagency Group on Breastfeeding Monitoring, a group of 27 academic, church and development organisations, conducted research independently of IBFAN. Its report, *Cracking the Code*, demonstrates the Code is being violated by companies in a "systematic manner." Nestlé's marketing is shown to break its own Charter as well as the Code.