



NEWS RELEASE

MAFF REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS MILESTONES OF "ADVERTISING LITERACY"

The Food Advertising Unit welcomed the publication of the MAFF-commissioned review "The Role of Television Advertising in Children's Food Choice" (March 1996).

The review was prompted by food activists' proposals to restrict advertising, specifically food advertising during children's television, on health grounds despite the absence of any empirical, academic or other form of accredited research to support the move. Among the issues addressed in the review is the concept of "advertising literacy".

"This refers to the ability that children acquire in the course of their cognitive and social development, and it is a concept that needs to be recognised and better understood," said FAU Communications Manager Jenina Bas, "The review **is** an excellent starting point for **more** people, especially parents and teachers, becoming more conscious of this aspect of early learning."

She added: "On the eve of the MAFF meeting to discuss the reviews findings, we hope this will be the start of a more informed assessment of the role of food advertising in formulating public policy, with greater emphasis on education and information, and less on restrictions."

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The Food Advertising Unit was set up in 1995 following the focus on food advertising in a number of Government initiatives that followed the Health of the Nation White Paper in 1992. The Unit is a strong advocate of effective and responsible codes of advertising practice, especially in relation to children, and actively supports the need for a sound basic education in nutrition, health education and other areas to enable individuals to make healthy food and lifestyle choices.

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If you would like extra copies of the Food Advertising Unit's summary of the MAFF Review, previously sent to you, please contact James Aitchison on 0171 828 2771.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

1. The Food Advertising Unit was set up by the Advertising Association in 1995 as a centre for information, research and public action in the area of food advertising.
2. The Advertising Association is a federation of trade associations and professional bodies representing advertisers, agencies, the media, and support services.
3. It is the only body which speaks for all sides of an industry worth over £10 billion.