

The FIFA World Cup makes the children fat!

In connection with this years FIFA World Cup the food company Nestle is marketing "FIFA Official Licensed Breakfast Cereal" specially for children. But the product is more like candy than breakfast since it contains 35,4% sugar and has a energy contend of 1676 KJ (395 KCAL)/100g.

ASECO¹, a European network of 12 consumer organisations now voice strong criticism of FIFA

- 'FIFA Official Licensed Breakfast Cereal' consists of more than one-third sugar and has a energy contend that is only a little less that that of a Mars-bar. It is most unfortunate that FIFA allows the World Cup to be used is used to market unhealthy food that is contributing to the increase in obesity among children, says Klaus Melvin Jensen of ASECO.

A new study from Institute of Medicine, Washington DC, "Food Marketing to Children and Youth: Threat or Opportunity"² shows a clear link between marketing to children and the problems with obesity of children. The study was requested by the US Congress and sponsored by the US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Across the EU almost 1 in 4 children are overweight, and the figure is rising by around 400 000 a year. Obesity is one of the top causes of preventable premature deaths in the EU. It is a major risk factor for many chronic diseases such as hypertension and type-2 diabetes.³

- We call on FIFA to seriously reconsider which products they want to licenses in the future. Football is sport that is generally associated with healthy living and that can play an important part in fighting obesity among children. By giving license to unhealthy food FIFA is confusing the message of 'the beautiful game', says Klaus Melvin Jensen

ASECO has sent letters to FIFA and various national football associations asking them to change their licensing policy.

Contact and additional information

Picture of 'FIFA Official Licensed Breakfast Cereal' and the letter to FIFA at www.ASECO.net.org
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1 ASECO Alliance of Social and Ecological Consumer Organizations. A network of 12 European Consumer Organisations working together to promote socially and environmentally sustainable consumption. Website: www.ASECO.net.org

2 McGinnis JM, Gootman JA, Kraak VI, eds. Food marketing to children and youth: threat or opportunity? Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press, 2006.

3 European Commission: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/05/470>