

Advertising Standards Authority

The AHDB makes a number of seriously concerning statements on their television advert and supporting website. This includes misleading statements, omissions and exaggerations. Please see below for a list of my top concerns regarding this marketing campaign.

The AHDB

1. State that opinions on meat and dairy consumption are misconceptions. They do not state what these are; this infers that any alternative opinions to their own are untrue
2. Infer that iron is deficient in a plant based diet, as well as insinuating that iron and zinc are exclusively found in meat-based diets, this is incorrect
3. Suggest that it is only vegan diets that need to be 'well-planned', and use supplementation or fortified foods to meet recommendations, when this is true for all dietary patterns
4. State that vegans are required to be careful of food high in fat, salt and sugar, when this is true for all dietary patterns, with over 50% of UK calories coming from ultra-processed foods
5. Insinuate that supplementation is un-natural despite being recommended for the general population (e.g. vitamin D)
6. Insinuate that food fortification is un-natural despite being used for a range of common UK food items e.g. breakfast cereal and flour.
7. Fail to mention that animals are also supplemented for the sake of the subsequent human consumption e.g. iodine, cobalt for vitamin B12
8. State that evidence for vegan diets is 'limited' and 'observational', and thereby overlooking and omitting a large body of evidence using randomised control trials
9. Provide unbalanced and misleading information by failing to include nutrients that are lacking in meat e.g. fibre
10. Fail to include data on the diseases that result from high meat consumption e.g. heart disease, diabetes and cancer that are so prevalent and related to diet and lifestyle in the UK
11. Infer that all animals feed on nothing but fresh grass, omitting the fact that animals are fed indoors throughout the winter and 20% are bred exclusively indoors
12. Falsely suggest that carbon sequestration can only take place in grassland
13. Claim grassland cannot be used for human food production which is false
14. State that cows and sheep have minimal consumption of soya, despite 2 million tons of being imported for animal agriculture, 70% of which is from South America and contributes to deforestation

15. Fail to include all greenhouse gas emissions from meat production e.g. 50% of methane from animal agriculture
16. Exclude important evidence on the carbon footprint of meat by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
17. Falsely claim that a move to a plant based diet would reduce impact by 4%, when this is estimated at over 60% by the IPCC
18. Specifically ask participants to use social media, but not to include the faces of individual animals, highlighting an intended lack of transparency in the advertisements and industry as a whole.