

COMPLAINT NUMBER	17/175
COMPLAINANT	S Bentley
ADVERTISER	Fonterra Co-operative Group Ltd
ADVERTISEMENT	Fonterra Co-operative Group Ltd, Television
DATE OF MEETING	6 June 2017
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The Fonterra Television advertisement shows a Fonterra farmer and her daughter following the mozzarella manufacturing process through to its Chinese distribution point.

The Chair ruled there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed.

Complainant, S Bentley, said: Fonterra has been advertising, promoting itself by advertisements, I think mostly during national news for some months, promoting the green healthy grass, technology Dairy farmers are using, the milk which they are proving to schools, endorsements by Ritchie McCaw in earlier advertisements and on the most recent ad 25/5/2017 advertising mozzarella cheese. What concerns me is that nowhere is there a balance view of dairy farming, including the effects of overstocking with cows, the detrimental effects of fertilizers, the practice of spray, sow and fertilize, the widespread degradation of our water quality, rivers and streams , nitrate levels in soils and rivers, the depletion of aquifers by giant irrigators and the effect on water ways especially in Canterbury, the destruction of ecology and habitat in areas such as McKenzie Country totally unsuitable for dairy farming and the financial support the government gives to dairy farm irrigation.

These ads are misleading and smack of political influence to reassure the public how good the dairy industry is for our country. These ads are misleading and totally unbalanced in the information presented to the public. These ads should be removed form National TV.

The relevant provisions were Code for Advertising Food - Principle 1, Principle 2.

The Chair noted the Complainant's concern that the advertisement did not reflect a balanced view of the positive and negative aspects to dairy farming

In considering the issue raised by the Complainant about the recent campaign by the Advertiser, the Chair referred to a precedent decision, (17/103), which considered two of the advertisements quoted by the Complainant and was Not Upheld by the Complaints Board.

That decision said in part:

...the advertisements made only low-level claims about the "goodness" in milk and about long-term health benefits of children consuming it. The Board acknowledged the recommendations of the Ministry of Health regarding regular consumption of dairy products such as milk.

In decision 17/103 the Complaints Board accepted the Advertiser's explanation and evidence and ruled that the nutritional and health claims made in the advertisements

complied with the Food Standards Code and could be substantiated.

The Chair noted that the Advertiser, Fonterra, was entitled to present a commercial message about the benefits of their product. The Chair confirmed that it was common in advertising to present positive messages about products and services and this alone did not make an advertisement misleading.

The Chair ruled the advertisement in question had been prepared with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and there was no apparent breach of the Code for Advertising Food.

Accordingly, the Chair ruled there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed.

Chair's Ruling: Complaint **No Grounds to Proceed**