

COMPLAINT NUMBER	17/239
COMPLAINANT	N McKenzie
ADVERTISER	Beef + Lamb NZ
ADVERTISEMENT	Beef + Lamb NZ, Digital Marketing
DATE OF MEETING	11 August 2017
OUTCOME	Settled

Advertisement: Beef and Lamb NZ website, www.beeflambnz/index, contains a FAQ's section which addresses many meat related topics, including statements about consumption of red meat.

The Chair ruled the complaint was Settled.

Complainant, N McKenzie, said:

"Meatfree Mondays... Do we eat too much red meat?"

Eating less meat will not save the planet, especially our part of it here in New Zealand. ~Going vegetarian might seem like a simple solution, but there is little evidence to show any benefit."

"The notion that eating less meat is good for the environment is based on the mistaken belief grain could be substituted wherever meat is produced. In New Zealand, large areas of the country are unsuitable for grain production and are most efficiently used by growing pasture for sheep and cattle. Red meat is also nutrient dense which means eating meat is an efficient way to meet daily dietary nutrient requirements on a per calorie/kilojoule basis. Eating less meat is neither healthier nor kinder to the environment so Kiwis should continue to enjoy lean beef and lamb as part of a balanced diet, confident in its quality and the credibility of those involved in its production."

"The notion that eating less meat is good for the environment is based on the mistaken belief grain could be substituted wherever meat is produced." No, its not. the fact that producing less meat is good for the environment is based on the overwhelming evidence gathered about the impact that animal agriculture has on greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation, ocean desertification and toxic runoff into natural freshwater systems (something that we have been watching closely in NZ) - just to name a few.

"In New Zealand, large areas of the country are unsuitable for grain production and are most efficiently used by growing pasture for sheep and cattle." (no references, no claims that can be substantiated barring the unsuitability of some areas in this country being unsuitable for grain production. You could quite easily argue that vast tracts of land In NZ are unsuitable for cattle too. Moot point) Eating less meat is neither healthier nor kinder to the environment

"So Kiwis should continue to enjoy lean beef and lamb as part of a balanced diet."

Although there are a myriad of health issues arising from meat consumption.

According to The World Health Organisation processed meat is classified as a group 1 carcinogenic- This category is used when there is sufficient evidence of carcinogenicity in

humans. In other words, there is convincing evidence that the agent causes cancer. The evaluation is usually based on epidemiological studies showing the development of cancer in exposed humans.

In the case of processed meat, this classification is based on sufficient evidence from epidemiological studies that eating processed meat causes colorectal cancer.

And red meat is classified as a class 2 carcinogenic- the case of red meat, the classification is based on limited evidence from epidemiological studies showing positive associations between eating red meat and developing colorectal cancer as well as strong mechanistic evidence.

The relevant provisions were Code for Environmental Claims - Principle 1, Principle 2; Code for Advertising Food - Guideline 2 (a), Principle 1, Principle 2.

The Chair noted the Complainant's concerns that the Beef and Lamb NZ (BLNZ) website contained misleading information about the health and environmental effects of producing and eating red meat

The Chair acknowledged the response by Counsel for the Advertiser which said in part-

...“Without admission of liability, BLNZ has now withdrawn the FAQ section of its website to review and (where appropriate) amend the content in light of contemporary understandings and reports about the issues referred to in it.”...

Given the Advertiser's co-operative engagement with the process and the self-regulatory action taken to review the FAQ section of the website, the Chair said that it would serve no further purpose to place the matter before the Complaints Board. The Chair ruled that the matter was settled.

Chair's Ruling: Complaint **Settled**