

<b>COMPLAINT NUMBER</b>	22/070
<b>ADVERTISER</b>	50 Shades of Green
<b>ADVERTISEMENT</b>	50 Shades of Green Billboard
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	7 April 2022
<b>OUTCOME</b>	Settled

**Advertisement:** The 50 Shades of Green billboard shows white text against a green background of pine trees. In bold, the billboard states "Meat prices through the roof?" with "Blame Carbon Farming" below. The URL [www.50shadesofgreen.co.nz](http://www.50shadesofgreen.co.nz) is stated along the bottom of the billboard.

**The Chair ruled the Complaint was Settled.**

**Complaint:** I wish to complain about the billboard ad in the attached photograph. The text states "Meat prices through the roof? Blame carbon farming."

I believe this ad contravenes the advertising standards because it makes a claim that is both not true and misleading, and further that the intention and purpose of the ad is to mislead and misinform.

The statement is incorrect because:

- 1) NZ produces enough meat to feed around 50 million people.
- 2) NZ meat prices are set relative to global export prices
- 3) The overall scale of carbon farming in NZ (or globally) is not significant enough to have influenced meat supply, or local or global meat prices.

The statement is intentionally misleading because it attempts to convince the reader that carbon farming has materially increased meat prices for consumers when it has not, and there is no evidence that this has occurred. Further, the statement is an absolute one, when clearly the basis for making an absolute statement is extremely weak. If carbon farming had affected meat prices, it would be one of numerous factors, including global production, global demand, supermarket pricing strategies, profit margins, exchange rates etc. No qualifier is given to the statement "Blame carbon farming" which implies that carbon farming should be blamed absolutely and entirely for higher meat prices.

The billboard has been paid for by an advocacy group, that has no goal other than to advocate for changes to carbon farming policy, hence the intent to mislead is more problematic than if they were selling a product.

**The relevant provisions were Advertising Standards Code - Principle 2, Rule 2(b), Rule 2(e)**

**The Chair** noted the Complainant was concerned the advertisement was misleading.

The Chair accepted the complaint to go before the Complaints Board to consider whether the Advertising Standards Code had been breached. As part of the self-regulatory process, Advertisers have the option of amending or removing their advertising to comply with the Advertising Codes.

Upon receipt of the complaint, the Advertiser advised they had removed the advertisement and said they would not use it again in its current form.

Given the Advertiser's co-operative engagement with the process and fact the advertisement had been removed and would not be used again, the Chair said it would serve no further purpose to place the matter before the Complaints Board

**Chair's Ruling:** Complaint **Settled**

#### **APPEAL INFORMATION**

According to the procedures of the Advertising Standards Complaints Board, all decisions are able to be appealed by any party to the complaint. Information on our Appeal process is on our website [www.asa.co.nz](http://www.asa.co.nz). Appeals must be made in writing with notification of the intent to appeal lodged within 14 calendar days of receipt of the written decision. The substantive appeal application must be lodged with the ASA within 21 calendar days of receipt of the written decision.