



Food Justice: Junk Food Marketing

In 2014, Food Day has a special focus on issues related to food justice. We envision food that is healthy, affordable, and produced with care for the environment, farm animals, and the people who grow, harvest, and serve it.

The Facts:

- Consumers are all-too-often tricked by deceptive labels and advertisements, or seduced by low prices, into eating junk food.
- Companies spent \$1.79 billion in 2009 on marketing foods and beverages to children and adolescents ages two to 17.¹
- The food industry considers adolescents ages 12 and older to be appropriate targets for junk food marketing. However, it's not until adulthood that individuals fully develop the ability to defend against persuasive advertising.²
- During kids' TV shows, nearly three-fourths of the foods marketed are relatively unhealthful convenience foods, fast foods, and sweets.³
- Companies have nearly doubled their use of licensed characters in just four years, from 8.8 percent in 2005 to 15.2 percent in 2009 and roughly half of these ads are for nutritionally poor products.⁴ Other food marketing techniques aimed at youth include the use of celebrities, toy giveaways, collectibles, games, contests, kids' clubs, and more.
- Sugar-sweetened beverage marketing is targeted disproportionately at minorities. Coca-Cola went as far as to say that 86 percent of its future growth will come from Hispanics, blacks, and Asians.⁵
- Soda producers aggressively seek out partnerships with organizations that serve minorities and underserved populations, in part to burnish their own reputations among a growing and important consumer demographic. Thirty-one percent of Coca-Cola's U.S.-based senior executives sit on the boards of multicultural organizations and 43 percent of the company's U.S.-based philanthropy is directed at multicultural and underserved organizations.⁶



¹ Federal Trade Commission. www.ftc.gov/news-events/press-releases/2012/12/ftc-releases-follow-study-detailing-promotional-activities. Accessed 3/28/14.

² Friestad, M. & Wright, P. *J Consum Res*. 21, 1-31 (1994).

³ Kunkel D. et al. http://www.childrennow.org/uploads/documents/adstudy_2009.pdf. Accessed 3/28/14.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Lukovitz, K. <http://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/154215/coke-extends-bet-partnership-into-the-store.html>. Accessed 3/28/14.

⁶ The Coca-Cola Company. http://assets.coca-colacompany.com/11/f9/7d132d8d43c9a41aaed8216e563/2010_US_Diversity_Stewardship_Report.pdf. Accessed 3/28/14.