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Media release

Australian Banana industry prepares for boycott of Wrigley's gum

Indignation at lack of action on TV ad

Disregard for the Australian banana industry's outrage over a Wrigley's television commercial and their half-hearted response when the issue was made public has prompted a call for banana allies to boycott chewing gum unless the subject ad is withdrawn or modified.

Australian Bananas Marketing Manager, David Chenu says, "From growers to retailers, for years we have devoted significant resources to communicate the wonderful health and nutritional benefits of bananas, just to see our efforts undermined by a chewing gum television commercial.

"Even though Wrigley's is a big American company, it needs to understand that the might and determination of Australian banana growers to protect their product is awesome.

"We will not have a confectionery company denigrating our product when it is one of the healthiest snacks and a 100% natural food.

"The industry will now call on all its allies from growers to retailers to encourage their children and friends to stop buying chewing gum unless Wrigley's either withdraws or modifies the commercial as requested," he says.

"We believe we have been very fair in the way we have approached this issue. First we wrote to the Regional Managing Director of Wrigley's with no response or acknowledgement.

"We then lodged a complaint with the Advertising Standards Bureau and advised the public of our position which finally prompted a response saying, 'Considering the accurate and educational nature of the campaign, The Wrigley Company is not in a position to withdraw or amend the current commercial at this time'.

"But from the Australian banana industry's perspective, this 'education' flies in the face of our nutrition messages and challenges the millions of dollars committed to educating Australians about healthy eating," he adds.

Chenu says, "With obesity, health and nutrition being uppermost in the minds of governments, the medical profession and educators, the banana industry is bewildered to think that a confectionery company that's promoting oral health has failed to think laterally about the ramifications of their communications. The banana industry has received many calls and emails from Australians who noticed the banana in the Wrigley's ad not understanding why it is alongside other foods.

"So now we mobilise our banana allies, as we have done before, in our quest to get this big American confectionery company to listen to reason.

"Our goal is reasonable. We must ensure there is no confusion over the positive health messages we can communicate about bananas. This is about making sure the consumer is always aware of how nutritious a banana can be in so many areas for every Australian. And we are certain the story is not the same for chewing gum," he says.

Enquiries

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