

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Government of Mexico Launches New Health Campaign Targeting Processed and Imported Foods

Country: Mexico

Post: Mexico City

Report Category: Policy and Program Announcements

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Report Highlights:

On June 22, Mexican President Andres Manuel Obrador announced the launch of a new health and nutrition campaign from the Secretariat of Consumer Protection (acronym PROFECO in Spanish) “La Nueva Mesa” (the New Table), with the goal of improving the nutrition of Mexicans and encouraging healthier eating habits by targeting processed and imported foods. A collaboration between the Secretariats of Agriculture, Economy, Education, Health, and Wellness, the campaign will launch in July on radio, television, and social media outlets.

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The Federal Consumer Attorney of PROFECO, Ricardo Sheffield, presented the first two videos of the campaign alongside Lopez-Obrador, and called for Mexicans to eliminate the consumption of junk food and increase exercise in order to reduce diseases such as hypertension and diabetes. He called for parents to take “greater responsibility” for what is brought to the dinner table, and take advantage of “information now available at our fingertips” to make more informed and healthy decisions, and to stop purchasing processed and imported foods high in sugar and fats. He also called for parents to take advantage of the ‘new normal’, referring to Covid-19 pandemic health measures, and to take this time at home to adopt healthier lifestyles and cook with sustainable local products.

The first video addresses the alleged risks of eating processed products, and claims that the processed food and drinks industry has led consumers to believe that the purchase of these products (that contain high amounts of sugars, fats, and artificial flavors) would save time that could be spent with family. Instead, the video states that these products have only brought on high rates of obesity, hypertension, and diabetes. It claims that Mexican consumers have lost “decision making power”, and vows to reclaim the food system and “reinvent ourselves towards a truly nutritious diet”. The second video promotes Mexican products like avocados from Michoacán, fish from Baja California, and strawberries from Guanajuato, and stating “our land offers us health, growth, and well-being”. Speaking again to parents who are responsible for creating the “new table”, the video goes on to state, “it is in your hands to choose between products made in Mexico- organic, natural, endemic, or consuming imported, processed, high fat and sugar products”. Additionally, the video promotes the consumption of Mexican products to promote the Mexican countryside, and generate growth and development of the agricultural sector throughout the country.

During the question and answer portion of the daily press conference, Lopez-Obrador said that his administration would not restrict or ban the sale of junk food in schools, but will continue to inform the citizenry of the “damage that junk food products can cause”, as determined and recommended by the Federal Commission for Protection of Sanitary Risks (COFEPRIS). Additionally, Lopez-Obrador went on to claim that campaigns promoting the consumption of fast foods (from 1985 on) was supported during the ‘neoliberal period; it was a free market to grow and grow at whatever cost, even while affecting the environment, even affecting health”.

The PROFECO press release can be found [here](#).

Attachments:

No Attachments.