

HFMA statement following Channel 4's Licenced to Kill programme October 2025

7th October 2025

Following the broadcast of the Channel 4 programme Licenced to Kill featuring Joe Wicks and Professor Chris Van Tullekin creating a protein bar called 'Killer Bar' to highlight the issues with consumption of ultra processed foods, Martin Last, Director General of the Health Food Manufacturers' Association had released the following statement.

It was disappointing that the documentary showed Joe Wicks to be misguided from poor advice around him based on unsubstantiated statistics.

The frantic way in which the bar was created with intent to cause harm and then to be promoted with Chris van Tullekin stating 'I want people to more or less get sick when they eat it,' was totally irresponsible and cannot be defended.

Manufacturing this bar had nothing to do with reasonable, acceptable food practices and took no account of current Government food regulations, including the comment from the chef that Nutrition and Health Claims stating 'contributes to' were 'just marketing ploys.'

The advice and encouragement given to Joe was highly questionable and to suggest that this would somehow be an effective Government lobbying action was ill advised and naïve, and inappropriate to expose the population to harm in the process.

The documentary was extremely negative and disheartening and did nothing to help educate the public on ultra processed foods in a positive or practical way. The documentary was unnecessarily sensational, with alarming imagery, and with confused messaging. The disjointed way in which the documentary unravelled displayed an isolated view of the topic which was not balanced.

Whilst it is always good to make the public aware of ingredients and food processes, it is also up to a manufacturer to be responsible and show due diligence in manufacturing and presentation to the consumer.

We and other commentators have considered that the labelling and the product could be challenged legally and this remains to be seen.

In line with the CAP code, any packaging or advert should not be presented to the consumer to use, '...improper, alarming or misleading terms...'.

The programme presented the topic and the ingredients used in a way that could cause alarm and concern to the general public. We do not believe that this is in line with the CAP code.

We would always recommend that a responsible manufacturer would have the labels assessed by either Trading Standards or our HFMA regulatory team to ensure the product is legal and correctly labelled prior to sale.

At the HFMA we are always available to discuss branding and product formulation with manufacturers to support them in creating a safe and legal product. Anyone wishing to get in touch can contact us via the [website](#) or at hfma@hfma.co.uk.

****ENDS****

Notes for editors:

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The HFMA The Health Food Manufacturers' Association (HFMA) is the voice of the UK's natural health industry and represents around 120 manufacturers and suppliers of natural health products. The HFMA is available as a resource to journalists when fact checking information or looking for a reliable and accurate source, including supplying experts for opinion or comment. Please get in touch at comms@hfma.co.uk if we are able to offer assistance.

Founded in 1965, the HFMA is a not-for-profit organisation which operates long-standing codes of practice to ensure that member companies adhere to high standards and offer good quality, safe products supported by responsible, lawful information. For further information about the HFMA, visit www.hfma.co.uk