

What's in your chocolate milk?

By ACSH Staff — May 14, 2013

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If you're in Washington, D.C., you may have seen [ads](#) [2] on the city buses accusing the dairy industry of trying to pollute our milk, and dose our children on the sly with deadly aspartame. Well, this is not really the case and not just because aspartame is perfectly safe and diet beverages will not cause children to become addicted to sugar. The dairy industry simply wants to change the way these additives are listed on the package. They're already allowed to add government-approved, zero-calorie sweeteners to flavored milk.

Currently flavored-milk products containing artificial sweeteners must list the sweeteners as part of the product's ingredients list, but with an asterisk stating that they are not contained in regular chocolate milk. Also, the front of the package must say something such as Reduced Sugar, or Reduced Calories. The petition by the dairy industry to the FDA seeks to eliminate these requirements.

Why would the dairy industry want to remove those labels? Advertising regulations for foods and beverages marketed to children have gotten much stricter with the hopes that this will help to reduce rates of childhood obesity. And the majority of school systems in the United States have begun to put calorie limits on drinks served to kids during the day. So now, the dairy industry wants to stay in the game by reducing calories in their flavored milks, but market them as if they have not changed, similar to what Coca-Cola has done with Sprite and Fanta.

The dairy industry is simply struggling to navigate a pair of contradictory consumer fears: of sugar on the one hand, and sugar substitutes on the other, [writes](#) [2] Daniel Engber in Slate.

ACSH Senior Nutritionist Ruth Kava comments, What's really being proposed is simply a change in the rules in how packages are labeled. There will be no addition of sugar or artificial sweeteners, or aspartame. Milk always strikes such an emotional chord with people because when you think of milk you think of the perfect food for children, and anything that affects children is going to get people very much involved and interested and sometimes defensive.

The post [What's in your chocolate milk?](#) [3] appeared first on [Health & Science Dispatch](#) [4].

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