

Anti-soda factions getting all fizzy over moves by drinks companies

By ACSH Staff — September 24, 2014



According to an [article](#) [1] in the New York Times, the three largest

soda companies, Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, and the Dr. Pepper Snapple Group, have agreed to help consumers limit their caloric consumption by modifying their products. They plan to do this by combining marketing efforts, product distributions, and perhaps most important, by providing smaller portions. The companies will also increase the availability of low-and no-calorie drinks in vending machines, convenience stores, and soda fountain dispensers.

This sounds like a reasonable and responsible move by companies that must make profits from sales of these drinks, yet want to help decrease caloric intake. (These companies have already seen decreased sales of their full-calorie products). Yet, it still isn't enough for industry critics. As quoted in the *Times*, perennial critic Dr. Kelly Brownell says, I suspect they're promising what's going to happen anyway, and he attributes the move to, essentially making lemonade out of lemons. As a long-time proponent of taxes on full-calorie drinks to decrease consumption, perhaps Dr. Brownell, as well as other tax proponents should be just a little more positive about this move after all, the point is to lower calorie consumption and supposedly the risk of obesity.

ACSH's Dr. Ruth Kava has this to say: As someone who recalls small bottles of Coke in hour-glass shaped bottles, I welcome the move to smaller portions. At least consumers will have a choice, which is important since calorie consumption basically depends on consumers' choices.

ACSH's Ariel Savransky adds, The soda companies must also make sure to emphasize the point that when consumers make the choice to limit calories from soda, they must also make sure not to replace those calories saved with something else. In the end, it's all about calories-in versus calories-out and cutting back on soda calories but replacing those with something else is not going to equal a change in weight or health status in the long-run.

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[1] http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/24/business/big-soda-companies-agree-on-effort-to-cut-americans-drink-calories.html?module=Search&mabReward=relbias%3Ar%2C%7B%221%22%3A%22RI%3A9%22%7D&_r=