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By Michael Barker

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## More fruit and veg on McDonald's menus



### Fast-food chain makes major global commitment to improving nutritional content of its Happy Meals

**M**cDonald's has made a major commitment to increase the amount of fruit and veg it sells, with a view to helping kids eat more healthily.

The fast-food chain announced a four-year plan, which it said will make improvements to Happy Meal menus across 120 markets and offer more balanced meals, simplified ingredients, more transparent nutritional information and reinforce responsible marketing to children.

The moves represent an acknowledgement by McDonald's that it needed to respond to growing concerns over childhood obesity. The company has been working with the not-for-profit Alliance for a Healthier Generation since 2013 to develop a plan for 20 major markets, including the UK, to increase customer access to fruit, vegetables, low-fat dairy and water.

The five new commitments announced

this week include a desire for 50 per cent or more of Happy Meal combinations to be 600 calories or less, with 28 per cent currently meeting that criteria. It will also look to simplify ingredients by removing artificial flavours, added colours from artificial sources and removing artificial preservatives where feasible.

Another commitment involves using its size and scale to "leverage innovative marketing, including packaging and promotions and use of new technologies, such as kiosks and mobile apps, to help serve more fruit, vegetables, low-fat dairy, whole grains, lean protein and water in Happy Meals."

McDonald's president and chief executive Steve Easterbrook said: "We recognise the opportunity that we have to support families as one of the most visited restaurants in the world, and remain committed to elevating our food, celebrating the joy of reading, and

helping those in need through Ronald McDonald House Charities."

"Given our scale and reach, we hope these actions will bring more choices to consumers and uniquely benefit millions of families, which are important steps as we build a better McDonald's."

Dr Howell Wechsler, chief executive of Alliance for a Healthier Generation, added: "Today's announcement represents meaningful progress to impact kids' calories, saturated fat, sodium and added sugar in Happy Meal bundles as offered on menu boards – and to promote more water. This sets a high bar, and we hope other industry leaders will follow suit."