



THE 7 MYTHS OF BIG MEAT'S MARKETING

GREENPEACE

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PREFACE

BY ALEX BOGUSKY

As an author of the Truth[®] campaign² to expose the tobacco industry and their manipulative tactics, it is easy for me to see the meat industry has adopted most if not all of the exact same tactics. I doubt the similarity is coincidental. The PR firms that counted on the tobacco industry for revenue had to find new clients to sell their expertise to, and the well-funded meat industry needed their help.

As America's factory farming system exported the philosophy and technology of maximum animal protein per square foot, the consumer was going to have to step up to the plate and eat more meat. This new factory farm wasn't as humane, healthy or safe as the traditional farming it was replacing -- and a careful multi-pronged PR campaign was the only way consumers would swallow the factory meat lie.

When production of meat is up and quality is down you need tried and true PR strategies. Strategies that are right out of the tobacco industry playbook. Appeal to free choice. Align with national pride. Promise social connection. Play on masculine ideals.

If it worked once it will rock again and so far the PR campaign seems to work. Even as young people reduce their meat intake, embrace a plant based diet, or even become vegan, overall meat consumption in Europe is still rising. What we are witnessing is the combined power of PR and dozens of multi-million Euro advertising campaigns playing off the same sheet of music.

Unfortunately, it all comes at a time when society can least afford it. Factory meat's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and global warming are a scientific fact and watching any industry delay and derail our progress is unacceptable.

Society eventually saw through the tobacco industry's lies and placed restrictions on how and where they could advertise. And today there are still people in the world who make the decision to smoke but it is a small fraction of what it was. Now tobacco and tobacco usage occupies a place in society that is more natural.

Eating meat is a personal choice. Ideally free from propaganda. But the unfettered use of PR tactics to manipulate consumers to consume more meat than is healthy for themselves or the planet has become a societal issue.

It may even be a more important societal issue than tobacco or alcohol. Overconsumption of tobacco, alcohol and meat is a well-documented existential risk to the user. And those healthcare costs become a financial burden on society as a whole. But animal based products are different because their production also represents a well-documented existential threat to humanity itself thanks to a runaway carbon footprint that already represents 19% of all greenhouse gas emissions.

It is time to dismantle the meat industry's propaganda machine and introduce advertising restrictions and regulations for the meat industry in line with other categories like tobacco, junk food and alcohol.

The result will be beautiful. Healthier meat, healthier animals, healthier people, and a healthier planet.

ALEX BOGUSKY IS AN AWARD-WINNING FORMER ADVERTISING EXECUTIVE AND PRINCIPAL OF THE FIRM CRISPIN PORTER + BOGUSKY. HE NOW DESCRIBES HIMSELF AS A "RECOVERING AD GUY"

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE WORLD OF MEAT MARKETING IS A HAPPY PLACE. IT'S DOMINATED BY THE COLOUR GREEN AND POPULATED WITH IDYLIC FARMHOUSES AND FREE-RANGE ANIMALS ON LUSH PASTURES. IN THIS WORLD CHILDREN CRAVE VIENNA SAUSAGES, 'REAL' MEN DEVOUR RED MEAT AND WOMEN EAT THIN-SLICED CHICKEN TO STAY HEALTHY. IN THIS WORLD, EATING MEAT BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER. HOWEVER, BEHIND THIS CAREFULLY CONSTRUCTED DREAM THE MEAT INDUSTRY IS SELLING US, LIES A DIFFERENT REALITY.

Growing global meat consumption is fuelling the climate crisis, with the production of animal-based foods (and the feed for those farm animals) accounting for 19% of global greenhouse gas emissions, according to a recent study.³ Animal farming has a disproportionate climate impact compared to plant-based food, accounting for nearly 60% of all greenhouse gases from food production.⁴ But this hasn't stopped the meat industry running campaigns of misinformation and manipulation designed to drive up meat consumption in European markets where vegetarianism, veganism and flexitarianism are on the rise.⁵

This report is the result of research into the culture of meat marketing in France, Poland, Spain, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland. It looks at over 51 brands, and the strategies and symbols adopted by them to exploit people's need to feel accepted, successful, loved, respected and ultimately, to feel 'good'. Their goal is to create new, or reinforce old, attitudes and beliefs towards meat and ensure that consumption of animal products remains cemented in today's society and culture.

IN THIS REPORT, WE WILL SEE HOW THE MEAT INDUSTRY'S ADVERTISING, COMMUNICATION AND PACKAGING:

- Seek to portray the meat industry as a part of the solution to the climate and nature crisis, not one of the causes. They do this often by appropriating ethical or sustainable codes that have little more than symbolic value, but convey to consumers a sense they can continue eating meat without reducing their consumption
- Actively play on health messages as part of what is now largely accepted as the outdated 'Protein Myth'⁶ – fuelling people's fears that animal protein is the best or only source of a healthy protein-balanced diet
- Target children and young people as a way of hardwiring meat-eating as normal and desirable practice for future generations
- Reinforce unhelpful and damaging gender stereotypes by suggesting that eating (red) meat makes you more of a man, and feeding your family meat makes you a better wife/mother
- Link meat to national identity – making eating it a patriotic act that shows your support for your country, culture, farmers and economy
- Bring you together with others – connects you to family, friends and community
- Evoke freedom and choice: eating meat (particularly fast food meat) is presented as a lifestyle choice that is easy, fun and an expression of self-identity.

Science is clear on the increasingly destructive impacts of the meat and dairy industry on the climate ⁷ and on biodiversity ⁸. Respected scientific journals are also reporting on the detrimental health effects of eating too much meat, as the average European currently does. According to studies, processed meats and red meat put people at an increased risk of colorectal cancer ⁹ and a higher risk of cardiovascular mortality ¹⁰.

Every year, vast amounts of meat industry money is pumped into campaigns to keep us hooked on its products, often bolstered by public funds.¹¹ Powerful trade associations also play an important role in the meat trade, as they provide open-source marketing playbooks and fund advertising, conduct lobbying and start lawsuits. The meat lobby has a clear goal of boosting demand for meat, reversing a perceived decline in consumption, as these quotes from applications for EU funding for advertising campaigns show:

“ PORK IS NO LONGER A NATURAL PART OF THE YOUNG SCANDINAVIANS’ DIET. THEY TEND TO EAT LESS MEAT IN GENERAL AND TO AVOID PORK IN PARTICULAR. THE OBJECTIVE IS TO INCREASE CONSUMER DEMAND AND THEREBY HALT AN OTHERWISE FORECASTED CONTINUED DECLINE.”

EU FUNDED LOVEPORK CAMPAIGN ¹²

“ IN POULTRY INDUSTRY (SIC) THE SUPPLY IS OFTEN HIGHER THAN THE DEMAND AND THE SPONTANEOUS GROWTH OF DEMAND IS IMPROBABLE. WE NEED A COMMON STRATEGY OF PROMOTING POULTRY AND PROTECTION OF THE IMAGE OF THE INDUSTRY AS A WHOLE. WE MUST CONVINC POLISH AND INTERNATIONAL CONSUMERS TO INCREASE THE CONSUMPTION OF POULTRY.”

POLISH POULTRY COUNCIL HOMEPAGE ¹³

And – with the budgets and the big creative agencies behind them – the marketing works.¹⁴ A plethora of award-winning case studies show how effectively the advertising

and marketing machine can distort perceptions, in order to promote unhealthy diets¹⁵ and give the audiences targeted positive feelings about eating meat:

- Burger King's 'Moldy Whopper' campaign (launched in 2020) drove 8.4 billion impressions and led to a 14% increase in sales.¹⁶ Their 'US Whopper Detour' campaign (launched in 2018) reportedly drove a 700% increase in products sold through the Burger King app.¹⁷
- KFC's now infamous 'FCK, We're Sorry' campaign apologising for a chicken shortage reached almost 800,000 people through free PR despite running only 2 print ads in national UK newspapers.¹⁸ Their #KFCMakeItLegendary TikTok dance challenge generated almost half a billion hashtag uses amongst a predominately youth audience in Germany.¹⁹
- McDonald's reportedly managed to rebuild trust in its brand during a period in the mid 2000s where the brand was seen as the "villain of the food industry" (only 25% of people trusted it versus 45% who didn't). After ten years of 'brand trust' marketing, more people trusted the brand than distrusted it, resulting in an increase in commercial revenues, according to the Effie Awards case study.²⁰

In light of the impacts on human and planetary health that increased consumption of meat can have, we urgently need a big shift towards more plant-based diets, and advertising and promotion of animal products must change to align with this shift. Politicians, companies, the creative industry and media have a moral obligation to make sure that citizens and consumers are not manipulated to eat more meat.

There is already regulation in other sectors with known health implications like alcohol, cigarettes, junk food or sugar to ensure that vulnerable groups are not targeted, overconsumption is not encouraged, or that

advertising does not contain misleading and false messages. New initiatives are challenging advertising by fossil fuel and other industry products that are inherently harmful to the Earth's climate or nature.²¹ City mayors are also starting to ban or regulate advertising on junk food²², fossil fuels²³ or across multiple sectors²⁴ in their municipal districts.

By the same logic, it's time to start restricting meat and dairy marketing and advertising, to curb consumption and stop the negative impacts that high consumption has on human and planetary health.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

THIS REPORT IS THE RESULT OF A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS, BY SEVEN EXPERT SEMIOTICIANS AND ONE BRAND STRATEGIST AND RESEARCHER, OF 51 MEAT BRANDS IN 6 COUNTRIES IN EUROPE (FRANCE, SPAIN, POLAND, SWITZERLAND, GERMANY AND DENMARK).

Semiotics is a social science focused on the study of meaning, and how it is formed within societies and cultures. It encompasses elements of linguistics, discourse analysis and sign theory.

Semiotic analysis looks for cultural 'codes' that are present in a shared understanding of a sector, idea, object, identity or brand. It starts from a principle that everything (colour, music, shape, form, casting, tone-of-voice, etc.) carries meaning – meaning so deeply embedded and culturally accepted that it is often invisible to us unless pointed out.

One of the more recognised models of applied semiotics is the classification of codes into 'residual, dominant and emergent codes': with dominant codes being the primary point of reference for the subject area – a tacitly agreed 'norm'. 'Red meat = masculinity' would be an example of a dominant semiotic code that is culturally reinforced by brands in the meat industry. It is not a fact, it is a cultural idea.

By expert semiotic analysis of cultural codes we can a) see them b) choose to accept, reject or negotiate with them. But the key is to be aware that they are there:

“ SEMIOTIC METHOD, AS BARTHES ARGUED IN HIS 1957 MASTERPIECE MYTHOLOGIES, IS FUNDAMENTAL BECAUSE, UNLIKE OTHER APPROACHES TO MEDIA, IT FOCUSES ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY ON HIDDEN MEANINGS.”

MARCEL DANESI. UNDERSTANDING MEDIA SEMIOTICS ²⁵

The semiotic analysis focuses on 3 categories of brands and organisations:

- 1.** the meat industry brands that spent the most in 2020 in the countries reviewed (France, Spain, Poland, Switzerland, Germany and Denmark) based on global advertising spend data from AC Nielsen and Kantar Gallup;
- 2.** brands identified by independent cultural analysts to have had a strong cultural impact in the meat category in their country; ²⁶
- 3.** organisations and brands identified by Greenpeace national offices to be either communicating or producing in a way that is environmentally detrimental.

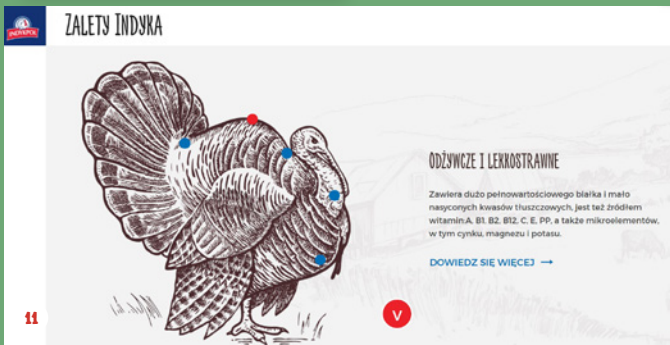
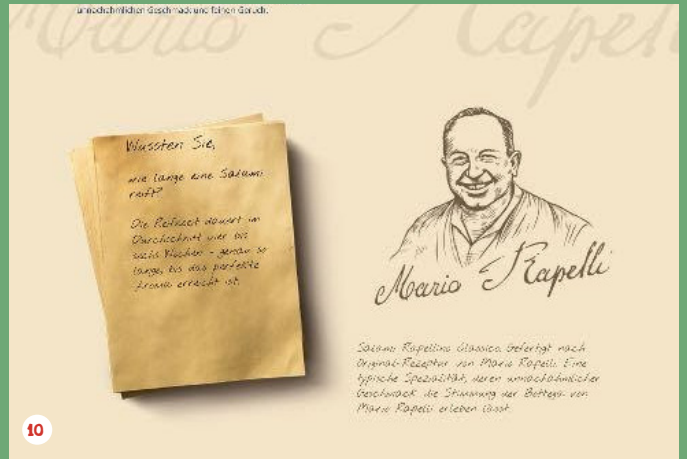
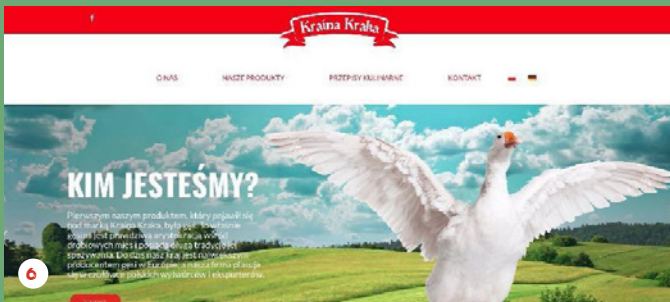
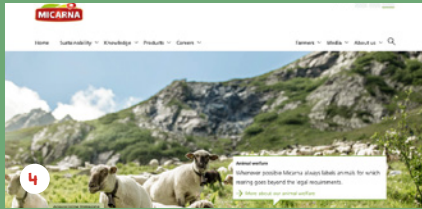
To help explain our findings and give a broader context, we interviewed a number of experts in communications, linguistics, sociology, psychology and culture. We also conducted desktop and literature research on meat consumption, advertising, behavioural science and communication.

THE 7 BIG MEAT ADVERTISING MYTHS

- 1. THE GREEN MYTH**
- 2. THE 'MEAT IS GOOD FOR YOU' MYTH**
- 3. THE MASCULINITY MYTH**
- 4. THE 'GOOD WOMAN' MYTH**
- 5. THE NATIONAL IDENTITY MYTH**
- 6. THE HUMAN TOGETHERNESS MYTH**
- 7. THE FREEDOM MYTH**

See Annex 1 p. 63 for the full list of brands, companies
and organisations semiotically analysed.

1.
**THE GREEN
MYTH**



SOURCES OF IMAGES ON P. 13

1. [Coren video, Spain](#)
2. [Charal website, France](#)
3. [Böklunder onpack logo, Germany](#)
4. [Micarna website, Switzerland](#)
5. [Optigal website, Switzerland](#)
6. [Kraina Kraka website, Poland](#)
7. [Le Gaulois website, France](#)
8. [Danish Crown website, Denmark](#)
9. [Tarczynski advert, Poland](#)
10. [Rapelli website, Switzerland](#)
11. [Indykpol website, Poland](#)
12. [Sokolow Naturrino website, Poland](#)
13. [Landbrug og Fodevarer, Denmark](#)
14. [Landbrug og Fodevarer, Denmark](#)
15. [Landbrug og Fodevarer, Denmark](#)

ONE OF THE KEY WAYS THE MEAT INDUSTRY GIVES US 'PERMISSION' TO EAT MEAT IS THE CONCEPT OF 'GREEN' MEAT (OTHERWISE KNOWN AS 'GOOD' MEAT / OR 'HAPPY MEAT'). WHILE SOME ORGANIC MEAT IS CLEARLY MORE SUSTAINABLY AND ETHICALLY FARMED, PLENTY OF NON-ORGANIC MEAT MIMICS ITS MARKETING AND PACKAGING DESIGN, WITH THE COLOUR GREEN BEING THE KEY MARKER OF 'GOODNESS' THAT HAS NO OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED MEANING.

From logos that encompass rolling green hills (Micarna, Switzerland) to packaging featuring green stamps, icons, and ubiquitous leaves (Herta, Germany), not all greens are equal, and not all green is 'green'. Upon closer inspection, much of the green symbology is meaningless: from the rolling 'green fields of origin' featured in advertising (Coren, Spain; Krakauer Land, Poland; Malbuner, Switzerland), to the green ticks, stamps and smiles on packaging. They give the appearance of making 'eco claims', without actually making them. Even some of the more explicit 'eco claims' can be tenuous and difficult to prove: from Danish Crown's 'climate controlled' pork²⁷ to their stated lofty climate friendly goals.

Easy green wins are reduction of plastic in packaging – and brands that have innovated here proclaim their green credentials from the rooftops. Packaging that is recycled or recyclable is the lowest hanging fruit in this space: while the packaging heralds the brand's sustainability, the environmentally damaging meat product inside remains

unchanged. The Danish brands analysed – specifically Danish Crown and Landbrug og Fødevarer – lead the way in the terms of the time and space they give to their green meat narrative, but Switzerland and Poland follow closely behind with brands like Schweizer Fleisch and Sokolow Naturrino (Polish brand owned by Danish Crown).

The industry has created a plethora of ‘better’ labels – all distancing the product from industrial factory farmed meat and denoting ‘goodness’ – leaving little to no ‘bad meat’ left: ‘free-range’, ‘artisanal’, ‘small-scale’, ‘committed to animal welfare’, ‘grass-fed’ and ‘farm-fresh’. This leads to a switch in consumer behaviour to buying what is perceived as ‘better’ meat rather than ‘less meat’. And when most meat is labelled as ‘better’ in some way, meat consumption is not reduced, which is the industry’s intended outcome.

“ AMONG THE WORDS AND PHRASES THAT THE MEAT INDUSTRY DOESN'T LIKE ARE “EAT LESS,” AS IN, “EAT LESS MEAT.” OVER THE YEARS THE STANDARD WORD USED BY THE DIETARY GUIDELINES HAS BEEN “CHOOSE” (“CHOOSE LEAN MEAT”) INSTEAD OF “EAT LESS.” CHOOSE DOESN'T BOTHER THE INDUSTRY AS MUCH BECAUSE IT ENCOURAGES PEOPLE TO GO OUT AND BUY MORE CHICKEN OR LESS FATTY BEEF.”

MARTA ZARASKA. MEATHOOKED: THE HISTORY AND SCIENCE OF OUR 2.5-MILLION-YEAR OBSESSION WITH MEAT ²⁸

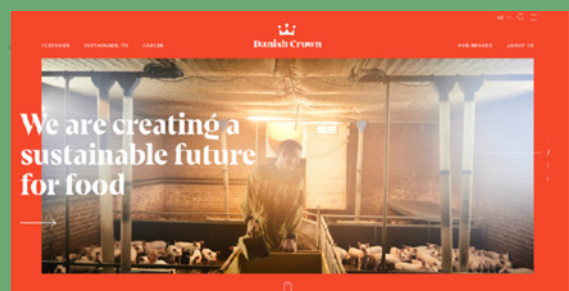
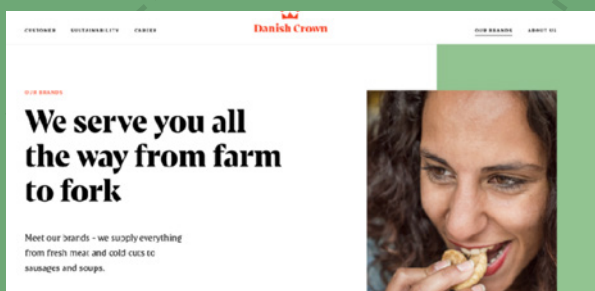
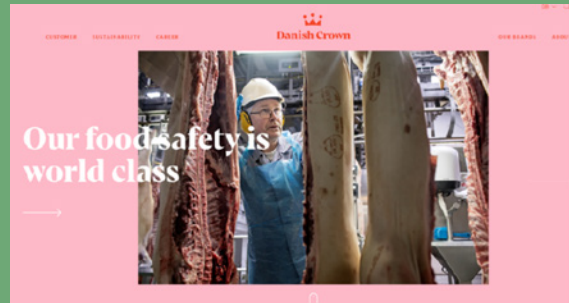
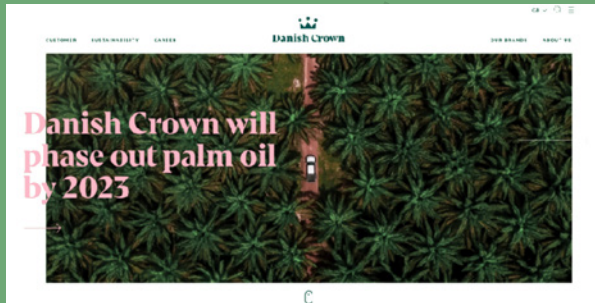
To confuse things further, the triad of environmentally friendly, human health and high animal welfare claims all conflate. If a brand makes a claim for one of the three, we assume the other two are included by semiotic transference. Hence, a green stamp on a package heralding ‘no additives’ – a post-slaughter process that has nothing to do with farming processes – is interpreted as good for the environment too.

The ‘green’ myth takes 3 main forms:

1. BIG GREEN SCIENCE

In Denmark in particular, we see big meat industry corporations talk less like meat advocates, and sound more like NGOs or renewable energy brands. They want us to have faith in science and human ingenuity to ‘solve’ the problem of environmental destruction from industrial meat production, without reducing production or consumption. They want us to think of meat as something that can be infinitely changed and perfected, rather than reduced.

DANISH CROWN (DENMARK)



Company website. August 2021. Danish Crown is Denmark's highest spending meat brand in terms of advertising. The website positions it as at the forefront of sustainable meat production: foregrounding its future carbon-neutral goals.

As an umbrella brand, Danish Crown's strategic communication focus is on their climate, welfare and environmental efforts. Danish Crown claims their goal is not to produce more meat but to produce more profit. In fact, their website looks and sounds like an environmental NGO or renewable energy brand: awash with green buzzwords (often visually prioritised and highlighted): climate, carbon, footprint, sustainability and water measurements. The Danish Crown brand places great emphasis on its goal to be carbon-neutral by 2050, on 'pure pork without antibiotics' and its 'climate-controlled pig', a label Greenpeace Denmark legally challenged in June of this year.²⁹

On the website we see references to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and UN hunger goals. Employee profiles emphasise this idea of a compassionate and 'charitable' vocation: 'when she was a child Anja helped feed her

community from her mother's street food van. Now, she feeds people all over Europe' – perpetuating the concept of meat as the one, true, complete food (the protein myth, in the next section).

Ultimately, Danish Crown has created an umbrella brand that distances itself from the industrial and large-scale production of processed meat. It lets its individual sub-brands take on the more active role of selling more meat to more people (often using cultural tropes such as aligning meat with masculinity (Steff Houlberg, Gøl), family togetherness (Tulip) or social currency (Burger Boost). The umbrella brand positions itself as a solution to the climate crisis, not one of the causes, reinforcing the myth that we can avoid climate breakdown by applying tech fixes to polluting industries without changing behaviours or reducing consumption.

Danish men charge a BBQ (where women are grilling asparagus) to demand their Gøl sausages.

Gøl TV advertising, 2020: identified as one of Denmark's highest spending brands. Kantar Gallup.

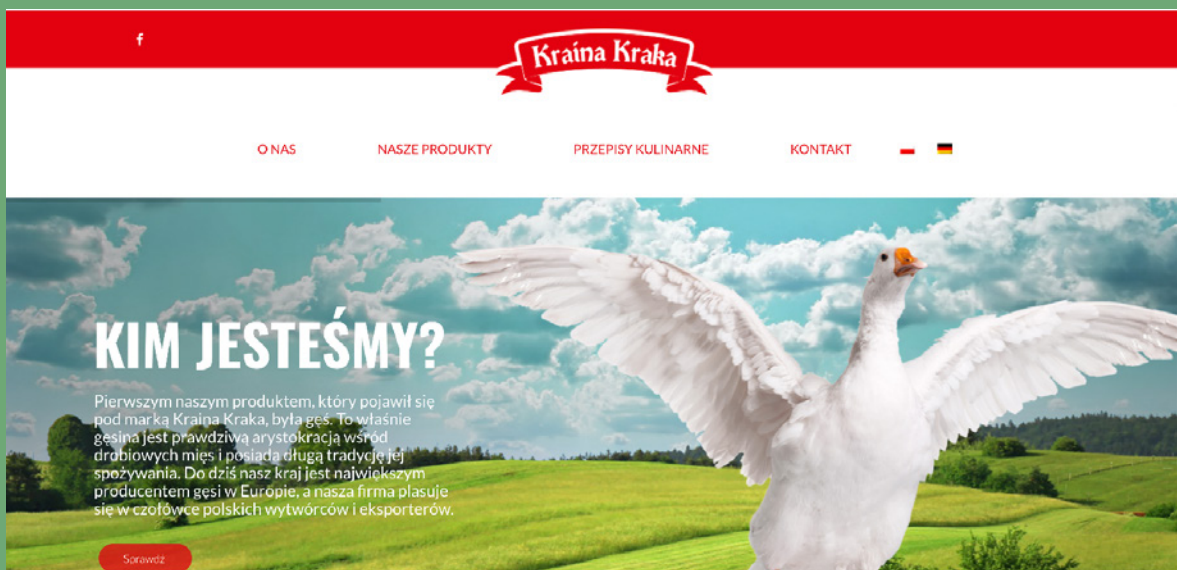


<https://www.goel.dk/>

2. SMALL-SCALE, ROMANTICISED AND INTIMATE

The ‘family run’, small-scale, pastoral idyll farm myth is the opposite but equally powerful part of this ‘eco-friendly’ discourse. It is often implicitly suggested, for example via green packaging and labels with made-up farm names³⁰; happy animals out to forage or pasture (Coren, Spain; Krakauer Land, Poland); or pictures of traditional small farm buildings or old-world butchers and

delicatessens (Böklunder, Germany; Casw, Spain; Rapelli, Switzerland; Morliny, Poland). Farmers are represented as having a physical and intimate relationship with their animals, connoting loving, caring stewardship. Or products are vaguely “inspired by nature” – visualisations include the ubiquitous natural wood, sunrays, waterdrops, raw and imperfect typography, perfect vegetables, green and white colours. This suggests healthy and sustainable slow food, not food from a factory (Sokolow Naturrino, Poland).



<http://krakauerland.com/>

KRAKAUER LAND (POLAND)

Polish national pride and an innocent, pure peasant myth continues with the (invented) land of the Krak: a utopian poultry paradise that draws upon idyllic scenes of the Polish countryside. Green and white colours dominate, complemented by innocent hand drawings and rustic illustrations of Polish wheat which transport us to a fairytale world: an idealised and romanticised celebration of pure Polish nature.





<https://schweizerfleisch.ch/stories/rinderzucht-in-der-schweiz>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVwRZyxbLcqXYBB4oh8fHdw>

SCHWEIZER FLEISCH (PROVIANDE, SWITZERLAND)



Proviande represents various national associations for the Swiss meat industry. Schweizer Fleisch is their consumer-facing brand. Proviande's mission is to create demand for Swiss meat, instead of imported meat. The codes around Proviande as a name are already quite obvious: "pro" indicates a positive position, being for something – and not against it. Viande is the French word for meat and gives the organization an elegant and sophisticated touch.

Schweizer Fleisch is the top-spending meat brand in Switzerland. Despite its size, this brand is coded as highly personal, intimate and caring. Its video series shows how animals are raised and live in a natural way. The farmers

form a personal relationship with the animals, and know them from birth to "end" (literally: "Schluss"). 'Animal care' semiotically translates to 'care for the environment' by association, as the brand works hard to communicate a sense of responsibility and good stewardship for one, and consequently the other. There is a lightness of touch here compared to other markets – a quieter and more 'assumed' eco discourse. Health and sustainability are considered intrinsically Swiss, and there is a culturally assumed presence of it in a sector as serious and highly priced as meat.

In communication terms, this is all about the people behind the meat: the value chain becomes human,

and we are persuaded that not eating meat will destroy the passion and livelihoods of real humans. The theme of 'care' is repeated throughout: there is a lot of talk about respect and strong visual reference to farmers handling the animals – representing them not as products to be harvested, but like pets to be nurtured. In caring for them and protecting them from the elements, the human is shown controlling the environment for the animals, raising and protecting them in what feel like small, intimate farms – despite the reality being quite different.

3. MYTHBUSTING: GRABBING THE BULL BY THE HORNS

The meat industry sometimes engages in aggressive efforts to ‘debunk’ arguments for meat reduction, for example: Interporc ‘Let’s Talk About Pork’ and ‘Hazte Vaquero’ in Spain. These campaigns actively set out to position environmental and health objections to high meat consumption as ‘fake news’. It’s unlikely to be a coincidence that the facts, discourse and narrative of these pro-meat campaigns often bear a strong resemblance to the American Meat Institute’s ‘Meat Mythcrushers’ playbook.³¹

The most aggressively ‘pro-meat’ and/or ‘anti-vegetarianism’ campaigns come courtesy of EU-funded initiatives – individual meat producers are not generally this explicit in their defence of meat (indeed as many launch meat-free products they perhaps must find an accepting and conciliatory tone). Claims such as those in the Interporc campaign fly somewhat in the face of the EU’s stated sustainability goals.³²

HAZTE VAQUERO CAMPAIGN (SPAIN)

Hazte Vaquero is a EU-funded ‘manifesto’ that purports to debunk health ‘myths’ around meat consumption and promotes ‘carnism’.

Image on the right: “A real cowboy (un auténtico vaquero) doesn’t take vitamin and protein supplements, because he knows that with a good steak he has all the energy he needs to get through the day”

The ‘Hazte Vaquero’ campaign is also one of the most extreme examples of the appropriation of the ‘flexitarian’ discourse by the meat industry – where meat takes priority over vegetables as part of a flexible, balanced diet.

“If the sound of beef sizzling on the grill brings tears to your eyes, you are a real cowboy (un auténtico vaquero). If you have a balanced diet and do not hesitate to order a side of ribeye with your asparagus, you are a real cowboy. If you support sustainable farming by choosing European beef, you are a Real Cowboy. And remember that a real cowboy also eats salad too.” (Hazte Vaquero campaign video)

#HAZTEVAQUERO
HAZTEVAQUERO.EU
f t y

**DECÁLOGO DEL
AUTÉNTICO
VAQUERO**

#8

**UN AUTÉNTICO VAQUERO
NO ENLOQUECE TOMANDO
SUPLEMENTOS DE VITAMINAS
Y PROTEÍNAS, SABE QUE CON
UN FILETE DE TERNERA TIENE
LA ENERGÍA DE TODO EL DÍA.**

**HAZTE
VAQUERO**

DISFRUTA LA CALIDAD
Y EL SABOR DE EUROPA
CON LA CARNE DE VACUNO DE ESPAÑA

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CON LA AYUDA
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LA CALIDAD DE LOS PRODUCTOS AGRÍCOLAS.

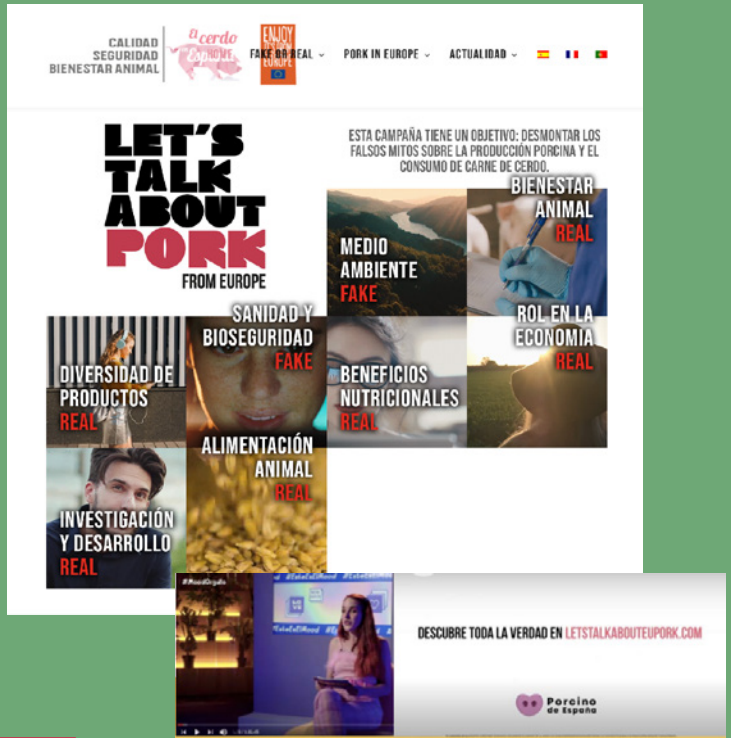
ENJOY
IT'S FROM
EUROPE

<https://haztevaquero.eu/el-decalogo/>

'LET'S TALK ABOUT PORK'³³ CAMPAIGN (INTERPORC, SPAIN)

This EU-funded³⁴ campaign (that also ran in France and Portugal), explicitly sets out to rebuff arguments about the environmental, health and economic impact of pork production and consumption. The campaign is all delivered in a faux mythbusting talk show format. The target audience is young people under 35, and the knowingly ironic style in which it is executed reinforces this.

The campaign suggests that pork eaters are well-informed, smart enough to think for themselves, and not gullible enough to accept standard 'meat is environmentally unfriendly' arguments. It plays to young people's desire to court controversy, rebel against accepted opinion and 'play' with norms. It is part of a wider discourse, to position pork as 'the other white meat' after chicken and attract related healthier connotations, that goes beyond Spain. Pork is technically defined as a red meat, despite its paler colour.³⁵



<https://letstalkaboutepork.com/>

While the campaign claims that European pigs have a limited climate impact, the reality about the greenhouse gas emissions of pig farming is quite different. Interporc cherry-picks scientific data by referring to emissions data by weight (per kilo)³⁶ of meat produced, instead of overall emissions. For example, industrial animal emissions in Spain are increasing, according to the last 2020 Spanish Greenhouse Gas Emissions Preview³⁷, which shows that 9% of Spain's greenhouse gas emissions are caused by industrial animal farming, and mainly because of pork production.

The meat industry's appropriation of the term 'flexitarianism' to mean 'eat vegetables with your meat', rather than instead of your meat is perfectly incapsulated in the EU-funded French 'Naturellement Flexitarien' campaign.³⁸ Indeed, linguists argue that 'reducetarian' is the concept and word needed if the meat industry continue to propose most meat as 'better' in some way:

“ THE EVIDENCE FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF INTENSIVE ANIMAL FARMING IS OVERWHELMING, BUT THE INDUSTRY USES A GREAT VARIETY OF LINGUISTIC TECHNIQUES TO SOW DOUBT ABOUT THE EVIDENCE, OR TO REPRESENT MEAT/DAIRY AS MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENVIRONMENT.”

ARRAN STIBBE (ECOLINGUIST) IN “THE STORIES OF THE MEAT AND DAIRY INDUSTRY”³⁹

The shared discourse prevalent across the trade associations positions the meat industry as the object – the thing that is central to national culture and livelihoods and the thing that must be protected at all costs.

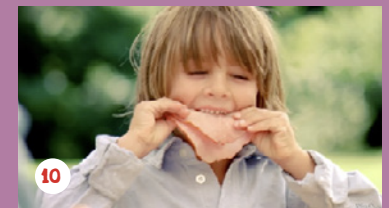
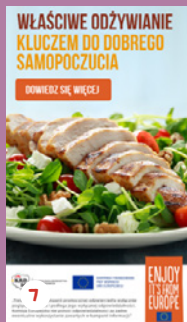
In general, we can see, all over Europe, that the 'eat better, eat less' meat message has been shortened simply to 'eat better' by the meat brands, and if it carries the colour green, it's 'better'.

**ARE YOU
BEING
TRICKED BY
THE MEAT
INDUSTRY?**

**THINGS
TO LOOK
OUT FOR:**

Heavy use of green colours in packaging, logos containing leaves, trees and hills, handcrafted rustic-style fonts, images of happy looking animals out to pasture, pictures of unspoilt countryside, farms that look and sound small-scale, nostalgic-style language and illustration, anti-plastic messaging, labels such as 'grass-fed'/'farm-fresh'. In some instances these types of visual messages do actually refer to more sustainable, organic, small-scale meat-production. In the majority of cases however, they don't.

2.
THE 'MEAT IS
GOOD FOR YOU'
MYTH



SOURCES OF IMAGES ON P. 23

1. [El Pozo, Bien Star, Spain](#)
2. [Citterio packaging](#)
3. [Le Gaulois, website, France](#)
4. [Interbev advert, France](#)
5. [Gutfried advert, Germany](#)
6. [Herta packaging, Germany](#)
7. [Krajowa Rada Drobiarstwa](#)
8. [Madrange advert, France](#)
9. [Herta packaging, Germany](#) (image no longer on website)
10. [Herta digital, Germany](#) (video no longer available on YouTube)
11. [Espetec Casa Tarradellas film, Spain](#)
12. [Sokowa healthy lifestyle advert, Poland](#)
13. [Superdrob, Poland](#) (reference)
14. [Gutfried digital, Germany](#)
15. [Herta, advert, Germany](#)
16. [Indykpol, Poland](#)

“ THE BELIEFS THAT SO MANY WESTERNERS HOLD-THAT MEAT EQUALS PROTEIN AND THAT OUR BODIES REQUIRE VAST AMOUNTS OF THE NUTRIENT-ARE NOTHING MORE THAN A MYTH... IN GENERAL, DIETS THAT ARE SUFFICIENT IN CALORIES WILL ALSO PROVIDE ENOUGH PROTEINS.”

MARTA ZARASKA. MEATHOOKED: THE HISTORY AND SCIENCE OF OUR 2.5-MILLION-YEAR OBSESSION WITH MEAT ⁴²

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT ONE OF THE KEY FACTORS STOPPING PEOPLE FROM REDUCING MEAT CONSUMPTION, BECOMING VEGETARIAN OR VEGAN IS CONCERN OVER THE LACK OF PROTEIN. MEAT INDUSTRY PACKAGING AND COMMUNICATION WORKS TO REINFORCE THIS POWERFUL PROTEIN MYTH. LABELS AND PACKAGING LOUDLY AND PROUDLY MARK MEAT PRODUCTS AS A PROTEIN SOURCE.

Advertisements show children craving their meat snacks and meat sandwiches, with product packaging designed to drive pester power (products designed to appeal to children which in turn persuades the parent to buy). Ads also suggest that pregnant women eat meat for their growing babies (Charal, France). The protein myth has been scientifically exposed as just that – a myth – with studies showing that many wealthy regions are actually over-consuming protein ⁴⁰: something in itself a health risk ⁴¹. In her book ‘Meathooked’, Martha Zaraska highlights:

Meat is (misleadingly) ⁴³ also overlinked to the revered healthy mediterranean diet in markets like Spain, and considered a fundamental part of ‘good eating’ in France.

We see Spanish brands like Joselito explicitly link their hams to a range of health benefits. Charcuterie brands such as Fleury Michon in France and Gutfried/Herta in Germany emphasise a world of lightness and virtue – a fresh and light way of eating (meat is frequently shown in the context of salads and healthy vegetables in advertising and on-pack). Here, meat behaves more like air than flesh: it has become a symbol of modern finesse – with clear semiotic echoes of codes used in menthol slims light cigarette advertising in the 1980s.

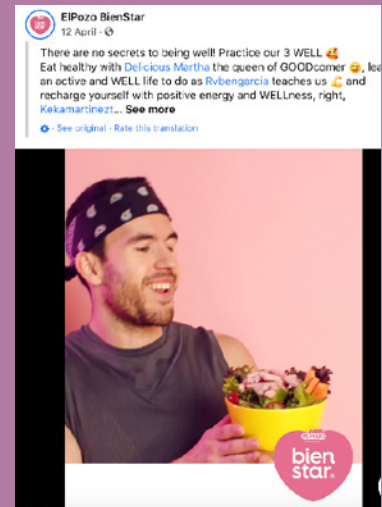
The guilt-free positioning of these brands is shored up by the usual ‘good meat’ checklist: gluten free; no preservatives; ‘source of protein’, ‘100% quality’, ‘only good’. Most of these labels either refer to the physically and chemically obvious: yes, meat is a source of protein and does not contain gluten, to the obtuse and ambiguous (100% quality is arguably a highly subjective phrase and has no legal definition).

BIENSTAR (ELPOZO, SPAIN)

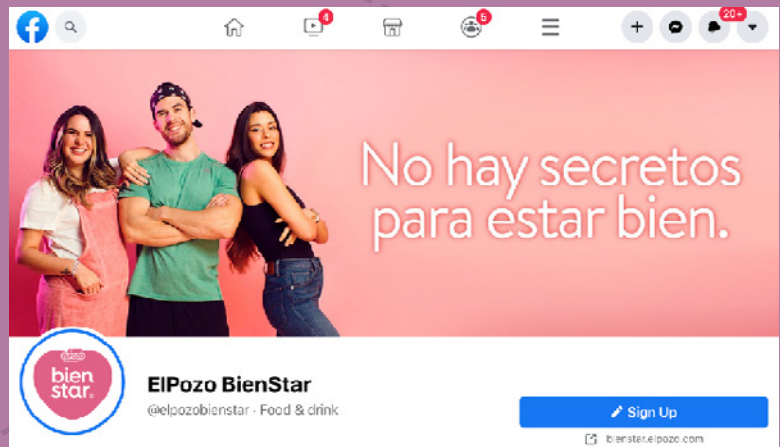
The heart shape, the colour pink and the absence of dark and red environments suggest the product is lighter. It infantilizes meat, makes it harmless. Health terms and icons proliferate: 'fit', 'cardio', 'proteins', 'sin gluten', 'reduced salt' and 'low in fat' are used to sanitise meat into non-existence – meat where everything is removed and all that is left is the magical, airy protein.

The BienStar Ads show an ice-skating champion exchanging 'pro' health tips... whilst the website gives advice on health and nutrition. ElPozo BienStar's messaging embraces modernity and represents 'improvements' to meat by removing salt etc, which is in almost direct opposition to the subbrand ElPozo 1954 discourse that stands for conservatism and says tradition is best. ElPozo 1954 meat presents itself as perfect as it is, without modern intervention. This contradiction is a typical example of portfolio brands covering all the target audience opportunities rather than standing for a consistent set of beliefs or true purpose.

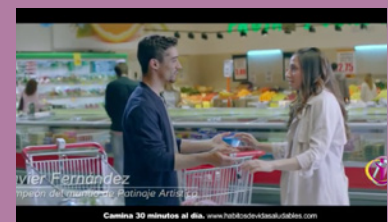
El Pozo is one of the highest spending meat advertisers in Spain (Source Nielsen, 2021), and its Bien Star processed meat range is positioned clearly as a 'healthy' product.



Facebook ads claiming 'there are no secrets to wellness'.



Packaging featuring various health claims. <https://bienstar.elpozo.com/>



2021 TV ad featuring a champion ice-skater exchanging health tips.

'NATURELLEMENT FLEXITARIEN' CAMPAIGN (INTERBEV, FRANCE)

According to French semiotician Luca Marchetti, Interbev's most recent campaign 'Naturellement Flexitarien' "has appropriated the term flexitarian: manipulating it to mean eating a variety of vegetables with quality meat, as opposed to prioritising vegetables over meat and reducing meat consumption. It suggests that by eating this way, you will be in harmony with nature."

Flexitarianism plays to cherished French values such as freedom of choice, self determination and autonomy – all of which are pivotal to aspects of French historical revolutionary identity. It is a powerful concept for the meat industry to own.



<https://www.naturellement-flexitariens.fr/>



GROWING BODIES

A STRONG ASPECT OF THE PROTEIN MYTH IS LINKED TO THE CONTROVERSIAL STRATEGY OF TARGETING CHILDREN AND THEIR CARERS, BUILDING ON PARENTAL FEARS THAT CHILDREN NEED MEAT TO GROW STRONG (AND SECURING A FUTURE MEAT-EATING AUDIENCE IN THE PROCESS).

In most markets, meat is presented as nutritionally important for children and is built into everyday rituals. In Germany and Switzerland, supermarket counters and butchers still have a tradition of giving a child a slice of sausage when the parents purchase meat or sausages. In contrast to sweets, it rarely triggers protective behaviour by parents, who have become much more critical of sugar. Packaging actively aimed at children (and/or their parents) is astonishingly prevalent in Germany (Mini Winis, Ferdinand Fuchs, Gutfried), Poland (Gryzzale, Indykpol, Sokolow) and Denmark (Tulip), where innocent, playful 'sweetie' visual codes are the norm. Meat is not just dinner: it is breakfast, lunch and snacks too.

“ MEAT-EATING BEHAVIOUR IS A HABIT DEVELOPED THROUGHOUT THE YEARS PASSED TO CHILDREN NOT ONLY BY SOCIALISATION - INCLUDING PARENTS, FRIENDS AND SCHOOLING - BUT ALSO REINFORCED BY ADVERTISING.”

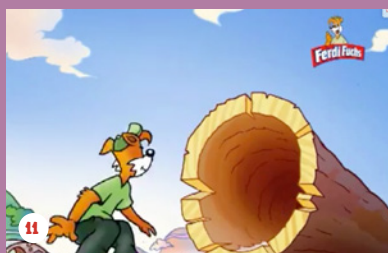
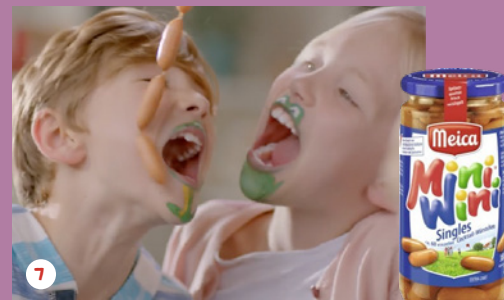
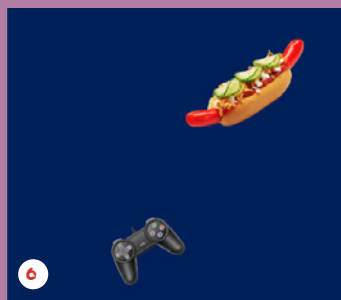
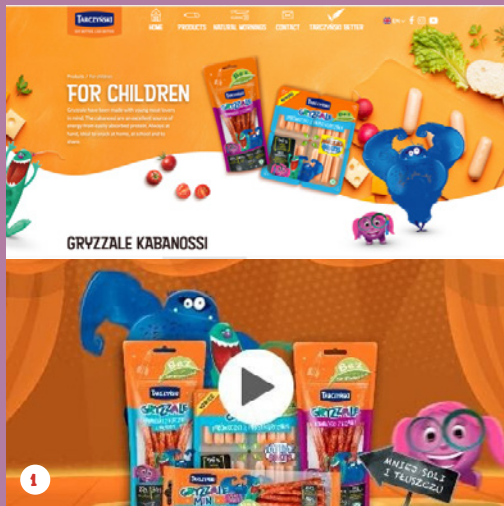
DIANA BOGUEVA, MEAT MYTHS AND MARKETING ⁴⁴

In McDonalds in Poland, Happy Meals are the food that “releases (children’s) super-powers”. Again, cartoon characters and slapstick humour reinforce the ‘innocence’ and playfulness of the product. Health cues are reinforced by carrot sticks instead of potato fries to accompany the meat products.

The targeting of children with cartoon characters, humour and bright colours has become the subject of regulation across other categories (specifically those with high fat, salt and/or sugar content). This follows research proving that children are much more sensitive to advertising tactics than adults, because their advertising wisdom is not yet sufficiently developed.⁴⁵

SOURCES OF IMAGES ON P. 28

1. [Tarczynski Gryzzale website, Poland](#)
2. [Morlinky packaging, Poland](#)
3. [Tulip packaging, Denmark](#)
4. [Sokolow packaging, Poland](#)
5. [‘How to serve meat to your baby? 5 proven ways.’ Online article, Poland](#)
6. [Steff Houlberg, digital gaming, Denmark](#)
7. [Meica, Mini Wini, Germany pack and advertising](#)
8. [McDonalds ‘Release your superpowers’ children’s Happy Meal, Poland](#)
9. [Gutfried Junior logo, Germany](#)
10. [Indykpol \(gaming snack\) advert, Poland](#)
11. [Ferd Fuchs packaging and advertising, Germany](#)
12. [Cultural packaging reference, Konspol Poland \(not on list\)](#)
13. [Bell advertising, Switzerland \(published on YT in 2018\)](#)
14. [Ferd Fuchs packaging and advertising, Germany](#)
15. [Cultural packaging reference, Poland \(not on list\)](#)
16. [Tulip packaging, Denmark](#)
17. [Indykpol packaging, Poland](#)



FERDI FUCHS (GERMANY):

The German meat producer Stockmeyer has a sub-brand, Ferdi Fuchs, aimed at children. Its packaging and cartoon advertising follow the traditional pattern of children's stories, with a group of friends and an adversary, the good ones always win – and here the 'good ones' are characterised by being in possession of meat, which is stolen by the 'bad ones'. In their benevolence, the good characters share the meat as an act of forgiveness, weaving stories of desire (meat is stolen) with forgiveness (meat is used as a bridging element between the 'enemies'): meat divides, meat unites.

Primary colours and educational content (matching shapes, learning the 'right' behaviour like forgiving and sharing) make Ferdi Fuchs an easy choice for parents. Alongside the nutritional information highlighted, Ferdi Fuchs is effectively saying that meat consumption is as necessary for a child's development as learning these key social and moral skills.



Ferdi Fuchs TV ad



Ferdi Fuchs Mini Würstchen packaging



Ferdi Fuchs Facebook post

GRYZZALE (TARCZYŃSKI, POLAND)

“Naturally rich in protein... (Gryzzale) gives children the strength to play and learn.” Here the advertising contains a gang of cartoon characters representing the qualities meat supposedly confers on children (like intelligence and strength). The campaign claims that “there is strength in a group” (wordplay on ‘group’ in Polish), and

reinforces the idea that children need meat to be strong, and that children who do not eat meat are not part of the pack. We see clearly how parental concerns around meat and protein are effectively harnessed here: a healthy child in Poland is one who eats meat.

FOR CHILDREN

Meat snacks adored by kids!

Gryzzale have been made with young meat lovers in mind. The cabanossi are an excellent source of energy from easily absorbed protein. Always at hand, ideal to snack at home, at school and to share.

Check out Gryzzale



<https://tarczyński.pl/en/categories>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTQhFAqiagc>

ARE YOU BEING TRICKED BY THE MEAT INDUSTRY?

THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR:

HEALTH:

Almost all of the 'green meat' codes in the first section also stretch to the health space. In addition: white, blue and pink colour palettes; metonymic, rational and text heavy information on pack, often visually prioritising 'health' benefits over taste, provenance or brand messages. The messages often focus on what is absent (salt, fat, additives) rather than what is present. The packaging uses symbols like ticks and hearts. Products are pictured accompanied by salad or fresh vegetables, and in small portion sizes. In some markets (Poland, Switzerland, Spain), a focus on artisanal and time-honoured traditional production methods to connote 'natural' and 'unprocessed'. Food from your own country is presented as more healthy.

CHILDREN:

Meat products are marketed with playful characters, bright colours, cartoon style illustrations, comic-book or hand-drawn fonts. The products will sometimes have interactive packaging with cut-outs, puzzles or games. There is heavy use of 'good source of protein' / 'no artificial additives/colours/flavourings' claims on packaging. The products themselves may come in small, 'snackable' portion sizes and finger food formats, or in playful shapes, often animal shapes. Advertising for the products will often be aired during children's programming or the products placed at child's eye view in shops.

3.
**THE MASCULINITY
MYTH**



1



2

Pour votre santé, mangez au moins cinq fruits et légumes par jour. www.mangerbouger.fr



3



4



5



3



6



BEEF!

MÄNNER KOCHEN ANDERS

FREUDENRAUSCH
Die stärksten meien Biere, Weine und Whiskys

ICH BIN DANN MAL SPECK!
Lardo: das weiße Gold aus Italiens Bergen

DIE 150 BESTEN GRILLTIPPS ALLER ZEITEN

Von Anzündern bis Zubehör: Grillgötter verraten ihre Tricks – und das Geheimnis der perfekten Kruste

T-TIME NACH MÄNNERART
Um ... mit T-Bone Steaks vom Lamm

7



TARCZYŃSKI

{ PROTEIN }

TARCZYŃSKI PROTEIN
TEAM CHALLENGE

TRENING MISTRZA
Z TAIEM WOFFINDENEM

8



DECÁLOGO DEL
AUTÉNTICO
VAQUERO

#8

UN AUTÉNTICO VAQUERO
NO ENLOQUECE TOMANDO
SUPLEMENTOS DE VITAMINAS
Y PROTEÍNAS, SABE QUE CON
UN FILETE DE TERNERA TIENE
LA ENERGÍA DE TODO EL DÍA.



DISFRUTA LA CALIDAD
Y EL SABOR DE EUROPA
CON LA CARNE DE VACUNO DE ESPAÑA

El contenido de la presente publicidad representa únicamente la opinión de su autor y no respaldamos ni hacemos responsable a nadie por el uso que pudiera hacer de la información contenida en ella. La carne española proviene de animales sometidos a controles de bienestar, salud, higiene y seguridad alimentaria, no animal ni vegetal, respaldados por el IACS que garantiza la calidad de la información que contiene.



9



10

„Hier: Bruzzler Steaks von Wiesenhof!“



11

SOURCES OF IMAGES ON P. 33

1. El Pozo, 1954, Spain
2. Charal advert, France
3. Bifi advert, Germany
4. Madej Wrobel digital, Poland
5. Staff Houlberg digital, Denmark
6. Gol advert, Denmark
7. Beef! Barbecue magazine, subtitle: "Men cook differently", Germany
8. Tarczynski Protein, Poland
9. #haztevaquero advert, Spain
10. Bruzzler advert, Germany
11. Stryhns digital, Denmark

THE CULTURAL MYTH THAT EATING MEAT (PARTICULARLY RED MEAT) MAKES YOU (MORE OF) A 'MAN' IS A PERSISTENT ONE.

The theme of associating meat with values such as male strength, assertiveness, dominance and virility could be seen across every market analysed (Schweizer Fleisch, Switzerland; Hazte Vaquero, Spain; Charal, France). We see here that the man-as-hunter narrative is alive and well, despite the fact that meat 'hunting' these days is conducted almost exclusively in the supermarket (and not necessarily by men). Many brands went further: actively using humour to position vegetarianism as weak or feminine (Stryhns & Gol, Denmark; BiFi, Germany).

Cultural anthropologists suggest that when a certain identity (e.g. national identity or masculine identity) is threatened, it must find ways to hyper-express itself in other places.⁴⁶ This perhaps goes some way to explaining the predominance of 'real men eat meat' messages we see across all markets, even those at the higher end of the gender equality index, although in these markets irony and humour play a stronger role.

“ MEAT CAN OPERATE AS A (MALE PROLETARIAT) OUTLAW SIGNIFIER: FULLY ACKNOWLEDGING AND PLAYING WITH MEAT-EATING AS A SIGN OF UN-SOPHISTICATED, UNHEALTHY EATING, OF GOING AGAINST SOCIETAL TRENDS IS A KIND OF COUNTER-REBELLION AGAINST THE OH-SO-HAUGHTY AND INTELLECTUAL SOCIETY. MEAT SITS ALONGSIDE BEER AND BIKES AS A SIGN OF 'DON'T GIVE A X' MASCULINITY.”

DR KATRIN HORN, GERMAN SEMIOTICIAN

A way of 'fitting in' (Bruzzler, Germany), an enabler of male bonding (Madej Wrobel, Poland), a marker of primal strength (Charal, France), a signifier of sexual success (BiFi, Germany) – meat marketing perpetuates damaging gender stereotypes that are harmful across the entire gender spectrum. In a landmark step two years ago, the American Psychological Association published guidelines⁴⁷ specifically for working with men (historically not considered a vulnerable group). The guidelines posit that males who are socialised to conform to 'traditional masculinity' are often negatively affected in terms of mental and physical health.

“ WE SEE THAT MEN HAVE HIGHER SUICIDE RATES, MEN HAVE MORE CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE AND MEN ARE LONELIER AS THEY GET OLDER...WE'RE TRYING TO HELP MEN BY EXPANDING THEIR EMOTIONAL REPERTOIRE, NOT TRYING TO TAKE AWAY THE STRENGTHS THAT MEN HAVE.”

FREDRIC RABINOWITZ, LEAD WRITER AND PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF REDLANDS⁴⁸⁻⁴⁹

Ironically, this 'real man' code plays out most strongly amongst processed meat brands, which arguably carry higher risks for men's health, despite being sold as an enabler of male strength and power.

WIESENHOF, BRUZZLER (GERMANY)

<https://vimeo.com/524215536>

Bruzzler is a very successful sub-brand of Wiesenhof that is exclusively focused on barbecue sausages and positions itself clearly as an ultra-masculine brand. They have a tradition of spokesmen who “barbecue for Bruzzler”, often using sports personalities like Oliver Kahn, former goalkeeper of the German football team. Current cult character, Atze Schröder has been developed to embody masculinity in its most basic form, and is defiantly anti-politically-correct. The exaggerated lack of any introspection and the reassured



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7BZfmh7JM68>

masculinity of Bruzzler characters translate into the brand’s take on meat-eating: something that doesn’t require any debate or thought. For consumers, this is a welcome break from a world that requires too much consideration and deliberation over every ethical choice.

There are some uncomfortable portfolio contradictions here: Bruzzler as a sub-brand is markedly different to its masterbrand Wiesenhof, with its strong messages and associations of regionalism and sustainability.



Mach doch, was dir schmeckt.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XwhdFISdIRs>

BIFI (GERMANY)

BiFi is about being independent, strong, self-assured, self-sufficient and wants very much to be a signifier of masculinity. Its humorous ads play to the stereotype of a meat-eating, non-talkative male. Eating meat is presented as an urge that cannot be controlled, even in situations where it might be unusual or not entirely socially acceptable. The ads unquestionably contain lots of phallic innuendo, albeit this hyper-masculinity is softened by ironic humour and modern everyday lifestyle accoutrements (sunglasses etc) in the end-frame of the TV ad. Ultimately, though, BiFi is about (male) hunger, drive and ambition.

PROTEIN (TARCZYŃSKI, POLAND)

The presentation of meat protein as the ultimate source of strength continues with this range of uber-macho, jerky meat strips. Its raw, chewy texture evokes hunter/caveman analogies. The sporting/boxing codes and black/grey/orange colourways take us into the world of the male gyms, deodorants and body builders, while the raw, grainy (even dirty) aesthetics and paramilitary style badging leave us in no doubt that this is the brand eaten by 'tough men'.



<https://tarczyński.pl/en/product/beef-jerky>



STRYHNS (DENMARK)



https://www.adsoftheworld.com/media/film/stryhns_food_for_men

Stryhns primarily focus on meat-centred simplicity and tradition. Their branding plays out very traditional gender roles, using a dry Danish male humour that posits vegetarianism as unsatisfying and weak. In one of their more memorable ads we see grown men cry when they are packed meat-free lunches by their wives.

Women are almost only ever seen preparing the food. The woman's main role in the ads is to adequately feed her husband and children, all of whom crave the Stryhns pâté on their bread. It represents her love and care for them.

Here, pâté is presented as a smooth, calm, mood-altering substance that restores normality, 'difference' and harmony. This is a world away from farms, meat or animals – it is meat as opiate, meat as family harmony, meat as the status quo.

ARE YOU BEING TRICKED BY THE MEAT INDUSTRY?

THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR:

Products are often marketed with black/grey and red/orange colourways, images of fire, knives, barbecues, large meat portions (often with the bone in). Meat is pictured eaten with hands (whether burgers, sausages or salami), wide open mouths anticipating 'the bite', and strong/muscular men (fit and healthy), often in an outdoors or gym context. We see men consuming meat rather than preparing it, with the barbecue

being the exception. We see groups of men, bonding through shared activities and appreciation, implying that meat helps men belong to their tribe. The marketing uses nostalgia and simplicity, often referencing a need to continue tradition or maintain the past. In some places, the marketing uses irony and humour to create semiotic distance from the gender stereotypes being played with.

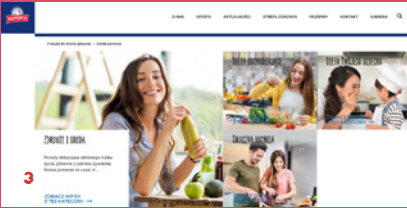
4.
THE
'GOOD WOMAN'
MYTH



1



2



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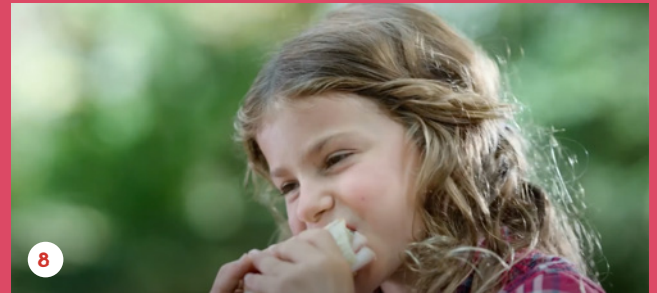
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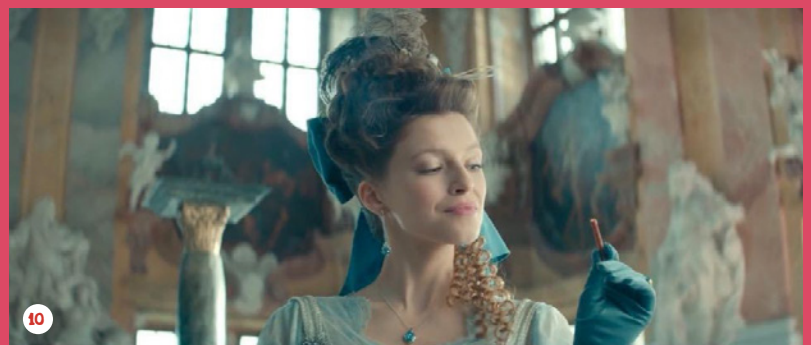
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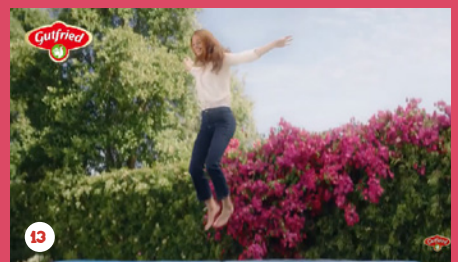
11

nestle-marktplatz.de



12

nestle-marktplatz.de



13

SOURCES OF IMAGES ON P. 39

1. [Indykpol film, Poland](#)
2. [Steff Houlberg digital, Denmark](#)
3. [Indykpol website, Poland](#)
4. [Stryhns film, Denmark](#)
5. [Herta digital, Germany](#)
6. [Charal dancing baby ad](#)
7. [Sokolow Naturrino film, Poland](#)
8. [Herta, digital, Germany](#)
9. [Cultural reference, Poland](#)
10. [Tarczyński film, Poland](#)
11. [Herta digital, Germany](#)
12. [Herta digital, Germany \(image no longer online\)](#)
13. [Gutfried film, Germany](#)

THE WORLD OF MEAT ADVERTISING IS LARGELY STILL FIXED IN A BINARY GENDERED WORLD, UNLIKE SOME MORE PROGRESSIVE SECTORS SUCH AS FASHION, BEAUTY OR PERFUME WHERE WE SEE GENDER IDENTITIES AND 'RULES' AS BECOMING MORE FLUID.

Women therefore occupy the opposite space to men in the world of meat marketing: in short, they are rarely seen eating meat, and when they are it tends to be white meat or thin charcuterie slices (as Dr Katrin Horn, German semiotician for this project, says: “air not flesh”). This association of white/light meat links to cultural ideas of virtue and restrained appetite – the view that women must not give in to primal urges, they must remain ‘clean’.

Secondly, women are almost always depicted in the feeder role – preparing and serving food to their families: the nurturing provider or passive servant. Meat is presented as the centrepiece of any family meal, the thing that makes a woman a good wife and a caring nurturing mother. The thing that makes the family ‘work’, and creates harmony: her primary role.

“ TO REJECT MEAT IS LIKE A REJECTION OF HER FAMILY ROLE. IT IS ALMOST TO REJECT THE MARITAL BOND.”

PAULINA GOCH-KENAWAY, SEMIOTICIAN,
CULTURE TELLERS (POLAND)

As Kate Stewart says in her Conversation article⁵⁰ on gender stereotypes in meat advertising:

“ GIRLS ASPIRE TO PREPARE AND SERVE COOKED ANIMALS AND SONS ASPIRE TO SHARE THE ADULT MALE PLEASURE OF CONSUMING THOSE ANIMALS”



Sokolow Naturrino film, Poland

Semiotically, red meat is visually and linguistically coded as the female body (we can reflect here on terms like ‘meat market / fresh meat’). Author and eco-feminist Carol J Adams has spent decades collecting examples of women featured in advertising as either symbols for the meat itself, or in the subservient role of providing meat for male consumption. Feminist analysis argues that meat is a huge part of patriarchal power structures, a reinforcer of toxic masculinity (ideas about the way that men should behave that are seen as harmful) that causes harm to all genders.⁵¹

Of the countries examined by this report, we see the gender differentiating role that meat plays most strongly in Poland. In the Polish market, ‘real men’ are represented as eating red meat (and ‘good women’ eating white meat), and advertising still strongly reinforces the role of the traditional housewife – she is almost always seen cooking, preparing and serving meat to her family.

Sokolow plays strongly in this space, with its Naturrino brand reinforcing this further: a pregnant woman eating Naturrino not for herself, but her unborn child: “For those who take care not only of themselves”.

“ALONG WITH THE ANALYSED BRAND SOKOLOW, YOU WILL ALSO SEE DOBROWOLSCY, SUPERDROB, PROFI AND GLOBAL (CONSIDERED LOCAL) BRAND WINIARY PLAY OUT THIS TRADITIONAL FAMILY NARRATIVE: ONE WITH MEAT AT THE CENTRE, COOKED AND SERVED BY THE ARCHETYPAL CAREGIVING FEMALE.”

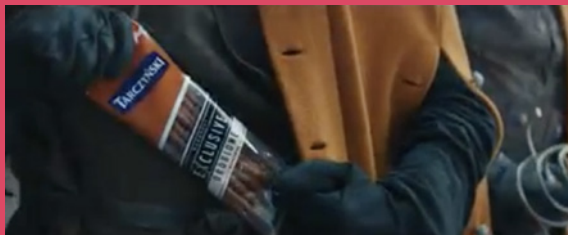
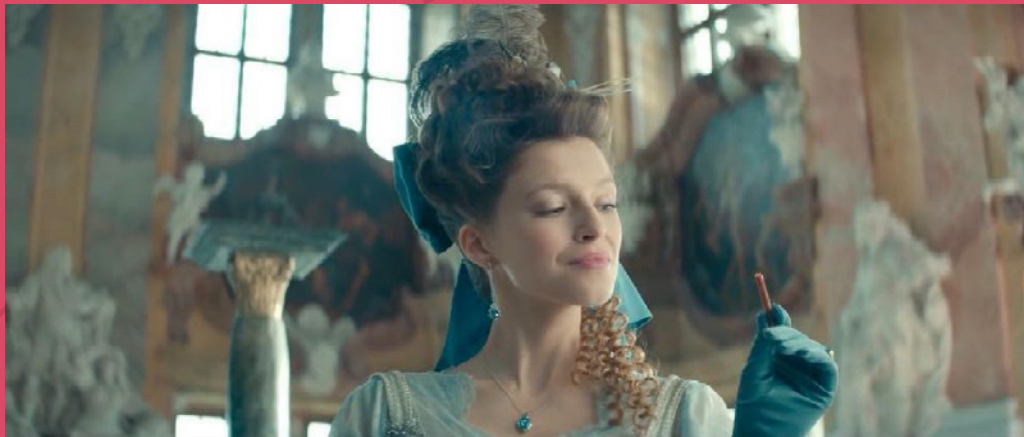
PAULINA GOCH-KENAWAY, SEMIOTICIAN, CULTURE TELLERS (POLAND)

CHARAL (FRANCE)

In Charal's dancing embryo ad, we see the mother's meat-eating as the way to transfer Charal's primal energy and strength to her unborn child. Charal is the link between the productiveness and fertility of French terroir (refers to a unique environment and farming practices) and the mother's fertility. Albeit using humour to 'soften' the message, it suggests that meat is necessary for the embryo's healthy growth, and that good motherhood is symbolised by eating meat not for one's own pleasure, but to 'grow' a healthy baby.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Joav4LK6G0Q>



Tarczynski - Muszkietierowie - tv advert
<https://www.facebook.com/giftedtalentagency/videos/1143738496118062/>

TARCZYNSKI (POLAND)

In this tongue-in-cheek musketeers spoof ad, we see clearly that red meat and fighting (sausage sword metaphors at play here) are for men, whilst refined art, music and vegetarian sausages are for women. Women are passive objects of beauty and restraint, the 'prize', whilst men are the archetypal warriors, eager to impress with their superior strength and skill.

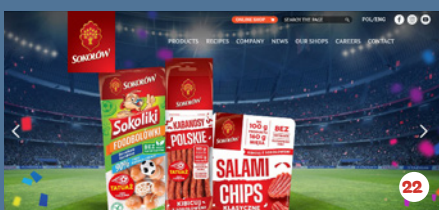
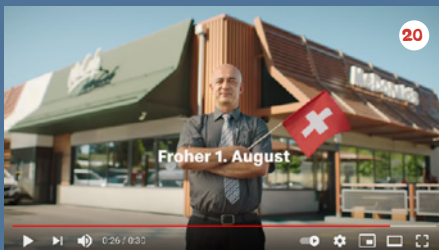
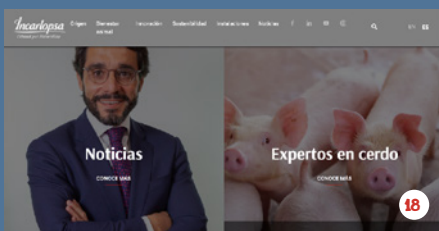
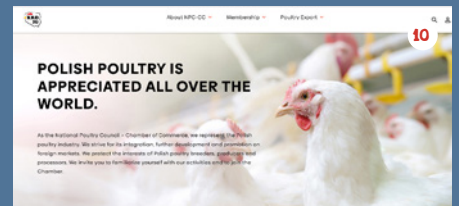
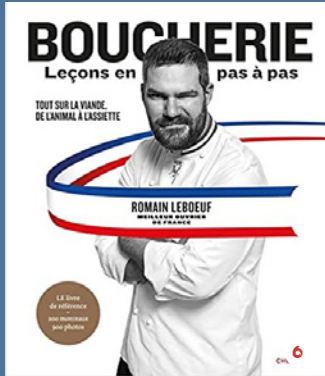
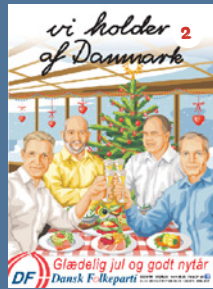
ARE YOU BEING TRICKED BY THE MEAT INDUSTRY?

THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR:

Women are depicted preparing and serving food to men and children, less frequently seen eating it themselves. Meat brands present themselves as offering the 'solution' to this oppression by offering (processed) meat as an emancipator, a time-saver and a working woman's ally. We see the delicate, conscious and controlled consumption of white / thin charcuterie meat in small bite-sized portions – women are rarely

seen attacking a hamburger and never seen demanding meat in the way men do. Lightness prevails in this marketing – light colours, light movements and light atmosphere. Women are seen taking a back seat when meat is cooked outside over fire. Pregnant women are shown eating meat to nurture their growing child. For women as mothers/wives, the absence of fat (in both the product and the women themselves) is highlighted.

5.
**THE NATIONAL
IDENTITY
MYTH**



SOURCES OF IMAGES ON P. 45

1. [Cultural reference, Poland](#)
2. [Cultural reference, Denmark](#)
3. [Swiss quality logo, Switzerland](#)
4. [Stryhns logo, Denmark](#)
5. [Gol logo, Denmark](#)
6. [Trade magazine, France](#)
7. [Schweitzer Fleische logo, Switzerland](#)
8. [Micarna logo, Switzerland](#)
9. [McDonald's 'Peasant Burger', Poland](#)
10. [Krajowa Rada Drobiarstwa, Poland website, Poland](#)
11. [Krajowa Rada Drobiarstwa, Poland advert, Poland](#)
12. [Landbrug & Fodevarer website, Denmark](#)
13. [APVF website, France](#)
14. [APVF digital, France](#)
15. [Label Rouge, digital, France](#)
16. [Malbuner CH website](#)
17. [Cultural reference, Poland](#)
18. [Incarlopsa website, Spain](#)
19. [McDonalds Label Rouge eggs, France](#)
20. [McDonalds film, Switzerland](#)
21. [Cultural reference, Spain](#)
22. [Sokolow digital, Poland](#)
23. [McDonalds, Deutschland Burger film, Germany](#)
24. [Label Rouge logo, France](#)

THE RECENT GLOBAL RISE IN PATRIOTIC POPULISM SERVES THE MEAT INDUSTRY WELL. MANY BRANDS AND LABELS DISPLAY THEIR COUNTRY'S FLAG (LITERALLY ON-PACK OR INSTORE) TO DENOTE MEAT-EATING AS A PATRIOTIC ACT.

They represent eating meat from your country as a way of holding on to a traditional identity in the face of multiculturalism, and a way of protecting economies and promoting global influence.

For countries with a strong regional structure, meat can both differentiate and unite.

“MEAT OFFERS A NATIONAL IDENTITY BEYOND REGIONAL RESISTANCE. MEAT SYMBOLISES A SPAIN THAT HAS SPACE FOR MANY SPAINS... MEAT CAN SIGNIFY BOTH DIFFERENCE AND UNITY, REGION AND NATION.”

MALEX SALAMANQUES, SEMIOTICIAN (SPAIN)

In some markets (e.g. Germany), processed meat is humorously used as a flag for an emergent pro-proletariat, pro-individualistic culture. Meat is used almost as a symbol of push-back against the culture of 'political correctness' – Bruzzler, as referenced above, being a clear example. National identity is the prominent and explicit discourse in the Polish meat advertising, where some conservative politicians, including those from the current government, frame vegetarianism as contradictory to 'national' values.⁵² This is part of a much wider (and long-standing) European cultural discourse around vegetarianism as anti-establishment, a badge of protest against capitalism, consumerism and human entitlement – a pushback against the belief that humans have an innate 'right' to dominate other species and nature itself.

The national identity myth is strongly present in the other markets this report analysed, with the exception of Germany. Meat continues to be politicised by the political right as a marker of freedom and preservation of tradition – with some parties even drafting bills to ensure it remains enshrined in the national cuisine. For example in Denmark, meat is a political pawn in the fight to defend traditional Danish culture in the face of multiculturalism. Conflicts around vegetarian choices in Danish schools are fertile ground for right-wing traditionalists who have taken steps to try and embed pork-eating into law.

We see the same pattern emerging in France, where to make vegetarian ‘compromises’ in schools is seen as a slippery slope away from the traditional ‘sophisticated’ meat-based ‘vrai gout’ (true taste) of French culture.⁵³

“ IN FRANCE, MEAT IS MOSTLY REPRESENTED AS THE FINISHED TRANSFORMED DISH - IT IS RARELY SEEN AS THE RAW INGREDIENT... MEAT IS THE ULTIMATE TRANSFORMATION OF LIFE TO DEATH TO LIFE AGAIN. IT'S PART OF THE NATIONAL FLESH, PART OF OUR VERY LANDSCAPE.”

LUCA MARCHETTI, SEMIOTICIAN (FRANCE)

LE GAULOIS (FRANCE)

One of the oldest brands in the French market, the ‘La Gaulois’ name itself reinforces the idea of this brand as the national poultry meat brand. The French flag was included in the logo in 1984, French landscape constantly appears in marketing alongside other typical national products, such as croissants, and ingredients are certified 100% French. In one of the ads, a character plants a French flag on a raw chicken fillet – an echo of revolutionary victory – equality and liberty for all. To reject meat, and poultry specifically, is suggested to be to reject Frenchness itself.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_bPdrPflqtl

SCHWEIZER FLEISCH (PROVIANDE, SWITZERLAND)

Here, meat is presented as standing for the cultural heritage of Switzerland and signals that it is worth preserving regions and their cultures. The actual meat product becomes a physical representation of a bigger and more important concept: Swissness. The historical strapline for Schweizer Fleisch (Swiss Meat) was “Alles andere ist Beilage” (Everything else is a side dish).



Die wichtigsten Fakten
zum DNA-Herkunfts-Check
von «Schweizer Fleisch».

Swiss tax money is used to promote Swiss meat, although one could question how “Swiss” this meat really is. There are for instance no minimal organic standards for production required: the meat could come from intensive animal farming – detached from the natural environment (see also the French concept of terroir).

Also, research has shown that Swiss meat production, especially chicken and pork, is predominantly reliant on environmentally destructive feed imports. Half of the arable land in Switzerland is already used for animal feed production, and a similar amount of land (ca 200,000 hectares) is used in other countries to produce feed for livestock in Switzerland. 1.4 million tonnes of feed are imported every year to produce these ‘pure’ Swiss products.⁵⁴



<https://konsum.ch/de/wie-beweist-man-dass-schweizer-fleisch-aus-der-schweiz-stammt/>

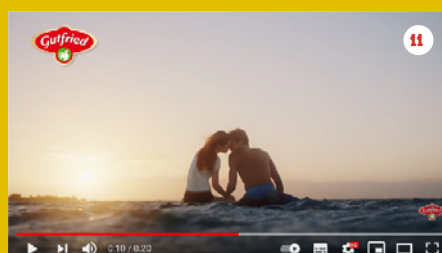
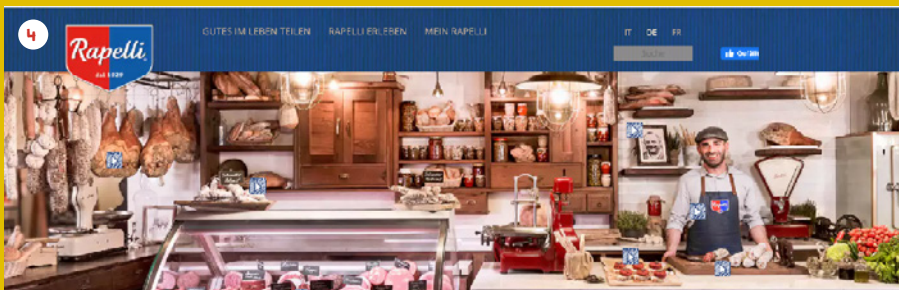
ARE YOU BEING TRICKED BY THE MEAT INDUSTRY?

THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR:

Flags, country-specific colours, typical national landscapes, origin labels: 100% French, 100% Swiss and so on. Origin brands like Schweizer Fleisch or Label Rouge are designed to certify national provenance. Marketing shows local people with integrity (salt of the earth farmers),

treasured national icons (celebrities, places, anthems) and shared cultural passions (football). Ads will have knowing nods and 'in-jokes', with ironic plays on national stereotypes – but with the sense that only those of that national identity are allowed to poke fun at themselves.

6.
**THE HUMAN
TOGETHERNESS
MYTH**



SOURCES OF IMAGES ON P. 51

1. [Casa Tarradellas pizza advert, Spain](#)
2. [Le Gaulois advert, France](#)
3. [Ferdi Fuchs digital, Germany](#)
4. [Rapelli digital, Switzerland](#)
5. [Cultural reference, Poland](#)
6. [Coren TV advert, Spain](#)
7. [Espetec, Casa Tarradellas film, Spain](#)
8. [Tulip digital, Denmark](#)
9. [Campofrio #enjoylife film, Spain](#)
10. [Madrange film, French](#)
11. [Gutfried Germany](#)
12. [McDonalds 'Come as you are campaign', France](#)
13. [Cultural reference, Spain](#)
14. [KRD digital, Poland](#)
15. [McDonalds advert, Spain](#)
16. [McDonalds advert, Switzerland](#)

IN MANY MARKETS, EATING MEAT IS DEPICTED AS A COLLECTIVE, RITUALISTIC ACT (OFTEN LINKED TO RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS AND NATIONAL DAYS) THAT BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER.

It is shown as resolving political discord and restoring generational harmony. For every European country analysed, celebration days (from Christmas to weddings) feature meat as the centrepiece. Even election night in Denmark has meat-heavy traditions and its own dish.

Adverts reinforce the idea that meat is the thing we share as humans – human exceptionalism places us at the top of the food chain, with dominion over nature and animals.

For countries with a Judeo-Christian history, meat is the divine favour confirmed upon us by God, our natural right.⁵⁵ Many brands play on this semi-spiritualistic story, sometimes humorously. Meat is presented as the most transcendent of foods that historically evolved us and continues to elevate us. This is on show in Switzerland (Schweizer Fleisch), Germany (Gutfried) and Spain (the ubiquitous Serrano ham legs hanging in restaurants and homes across the country as the legacy of public displays of pork-eating – prohibited by Judaism and Islam – by new/pretending Christians hundreds of years ago).



ESPETEC (SPAIN)

This Espetec salami brand advert aims to resolve the anxieties around loss of cultural heritage by showing how tradition (eating meat) co-exists with modernity (the grandfather who does yoga, keeps up with times and is a whizz with technology). It presents an older generation's masculinity not as aggressive, but as sensitive and caring. The story is one of reassurance and familiarity: everything can change, but meat is always there for us, it stands for continuity and love (family and home). Even if it is processed salami.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9CGAObU1IZY>

TULIP (DENMARK)



<https://www.tulip.dk/enjoy-together/>

Denmark's oldest brand, Tulip, has a primary focus in its marketing on the wholesome nuclear family, bonding and togetherness. Here, meat is not presented as meat (it is rarely seen in animal/meat form), but as love, compassion, sensitivity, generosity and togetherness.

Processed/pre-prepared meat (though packaged as rustic and a little rough around the edges) is shown as a guilt-free way of providing a family dinner that is 'as good as homemade' or 'as if you had made them yourself'. The message we are given is that a meal is not a

meal without meat, a family is not fed without meat. In advertising terms, we see a strong use of sharing rituals and gestures across symbolic family dinner tables to consolidate this idea.

MCDONALD'S (SWITZERLAND)

Across every market we see it in, one of McDonald's marketing tactics is to promote its restaurants as places to gather and to unite people. Nowhere is this more visible than in Switzerland, where one of its more remarkable ads shows strangers in the McDonald's restaurant singing the Swiss national anthem together.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WJbm346se4Y>



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xA4_SVDxrmw

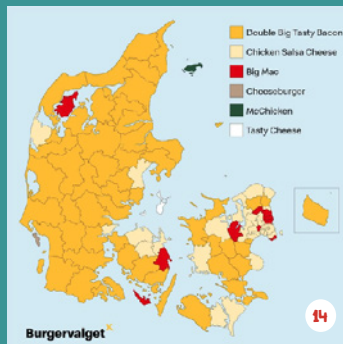
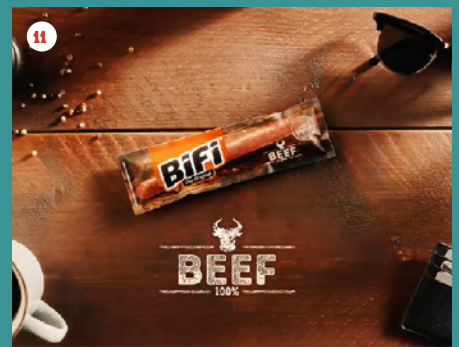
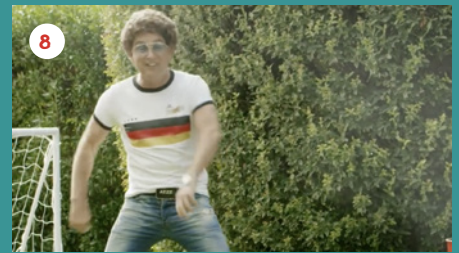
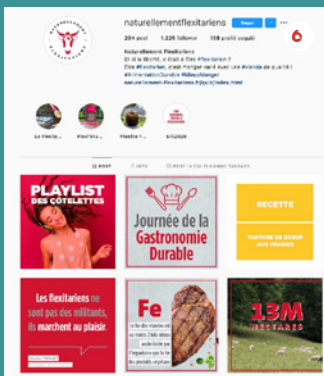
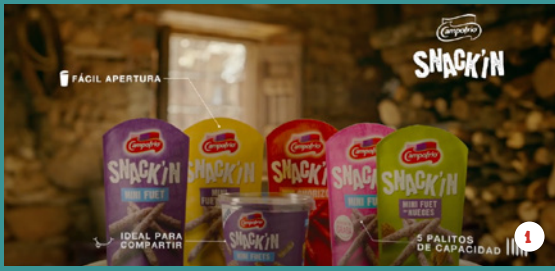
McDonald's is represented as a brand that can act like a nation and unite people based on their shared love for McDonald's. This is a powerful patriotic claim that is (subtly) inclusive of different nationalities and ethnicities. Another Swiss ad shows a harassed father working alongside a daughter that needs his attention (a familiar lockdown experience for many). McDonald's is shown as the bridge for them to find the time and space to reconnect – as something that prioritises human connection above all else.

ARE YOU
BEING
TRICKED BY
THE MEAT
INDUSTRY?

THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR:

Marketing materials feature feasts with meat centrepieces, and groups of people (particularly family) bonding over meat-based meals. We see harmony restored through meat, connections made (romantic, social, intergenerational) through meat, and nations, regions or 'tribes' united in meat. The family dinner table, the picnic, the barbecue, the fast food chain, even the car bonnet are shown as places for people to gather around and consume meat together. Meat is presented as a reinforcer of our shared values and our shared humanity.

7. THE FREEDOM MYTH



SOURCES OF IMAGES ON P. 56

1. Campofrio snack in sticks, Spain
2. Herta Knacki, Pourquoi pas campaign
3. Danish Crown, Burger Boost digital, Denmark
4. Steff Houlberg digital, Denmark
5. Malbuner party sticks packaging, Switzerland
6. Naturellement flexitarian campaign, InterBev, France
7. Naturellement flexitarian campaign, InterBev, France
8. Bruzzler advert, Germany
9. Sokolow packaging, Poland
10. McDonalds advert, Poland
11. Bifi advert, Germany
12. Cultural reference, KFC 'The taste of freedom advert', Poland
13. Gol website, Denmark
14. McDonalds advert, Denmark
15. McDonalds advert, France
16. McDonalds 'Create yourself and opportunity' advert, Poland

LIKE ALCOHOL, SUGAR OR TOBACCO, PRODUCTS THAT ARE BAD FOR OUR HEALTH CAN BE DEFENDED WITH ARGUMENTS AND MESSAGING ABOUT FREEDOM, CHOICE AND INDIVIDUALITY.

The lower the quality of the product, the more likely the brand is to use emotional metaphor rather than describing the features of the product in order to sell it. Think of premium chocolate proclaiming its cocoa percentage 'quality status' (metonym) versus mainstream chocolate brands offering you identity or lifestyle benefits (metaphor). Meat is no different, and American meat brands (as encapsulated in fast food burger brands like McDonald's) are the leaders in this field. In every market, the McDonald's marketing playbook is to create a 'glocal' brand (a global/local blend – it can ironically be seen to play heavily in the national identity myth space above). It presents its brand as offering an inclusive, diverse

space where everyone is welcome. It fuses traditional with modern, male with female, local with global and health with indulgence. McDonald's is suggesting to us that 'all choices are fine – no need for any angst' (literally, 'no drama' in its Polish adverts).

McDonald's positions itself as the brand that allows you to be yourself, eat however you like, and often advertises its non-meat products as evidence of this. McDonald's ceases to be a meat brand in people's minds – it is a lifestyle brand that offers a conciliatory, non-threatening and easy freedom – in contrast to increasingly polarised politics and culture.

This shift in positioning to a lifestyle brand can be interpreted as an attempt to drive deeper connections with the audience or, more cynically, to distract from a potentially unhealthy product. As seen historically in the alcohol and tobacco sectors, once a brand moves beyond its product category and becomes a lifestyle brand, it can create new platforms and branding opportunities that could circumvent any future regulation for the original product category. (For example, brand extension loopholes in the world of tobacco marketing historically allowed brands to be promoted through sponsorship or non-tobacco-related items such as clothing.⁵⁶)

MCDONALD'S

McDonald's ads rarely show people eating. McDonald's presents itself as an enabler, not through their food, but through their space. It claims to allow people to break from their daily grind and connect, have fun and relax. The actual food is generally presented as less important than the experience, so that the question of eating meat or not eating meat becomes unimportant too – it is almost a non-topic. It is the ultimate conclusion of the McDonald's strategy as a 'glocal' lifestyle brand that unites us in our desire for freedom.



Polish TV ad

MCDONALD'S DENMARK

In Denmark, where opting out of meat eating is still culturally awkward, McDonald's presents itself as bridging the divide – offering whole food vegan salads next to bacon burgers in a relaxed 'everyone's catered for' way. They sell the idea that no one needs to take sides – individuality, inclusivity and freedom of choice is the name of the game.

Danish semiotician Enya Trenholm said: "This is less a food brand, and more a lifestyle one that is modern, malleable and – ironically – an identity badge that says you are an open-minded, tolerant and progressive person."

Vejrudsigt for hele Danmark	
Føles som	Fredag
Nedbar	0 mm
Sol op	06:31
Sol ned	19:54

<https://www.instagram.com/p/Bv33igbAVp3/>

In Denmark McDonalds ads are as likely to humorously reference the weather, politics, tax, the weather, head aches as they are their food.

MCDONALD'S FRANCE



https://www.adsoftheworld.com/media/outdoor/mcdonalds_come_as_you_are

The French 'Come as you are' campaign has now become a standard and is updated season after season. Interestingly, it offers an alternative to the French cultural injunction of chic and constant appearance-curation. The campaign suggests a welcome liberation from more formal French eating codes, and social structures in general.

Campaigns like this help McDonald's target a more youthful and liberal audience, suggesting that anything goes and all are welcome.

MCDONALD'S POLAND

Considered almost a Polish brand, McDonald's cleverly mixes popular US culture and Polish folklore to be a truly "glocal" brand. It doesn't threaten Polish pride because it assimilates into it (see its recent launch of the 'Peasant Burger': Wies Mac). It aims to show a gateway to a new free world without asking Poles to give up or change anything.

The campaigns present the idea that the easy casualness of McDonald's frees you from social strictures and allows you to be authentically you ("Wies Mac, you can be truly yourself.").



McDonalds Peasant Burger: you can be truly yourself.

ARE YOU BEING TRICKED BY THE MEAT INDUSTRY?

THINGS
TO LOOK
OUT FOR:

The marketing features diverse and inclusive groups that span ages, ethnicities and genders. The people dress and move casually, with easy laughter, spontaneous action and fast, fluid movement. We see depictions of rule-breaking, messy eating and an 'anything goes' informality. The ads have American cultural echoes that need

only the lightest of touches to connote freedom: the use of words and phrases like 'fries' and 'have a good day'). We see modernity, phones, drive-throughs, as well as slang and youth sub-culture codes such as skateboarding and manga. The ads show weirdos and tribes, telling us that everyone is welcome - because this is McDonalds.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

BY EUROPEAN GREENPEACE ORGANISATIONS

WHILE MANY OF US MIGHT BE CONSCIOUSLY AWARE OF ADVERTISING'S MACHIAVELLIAN APPROACH TO SHAPING PURCHASE DECISIONS, THIS REPORT ILLUSTRATES THE DEPTH OF THE COGNITIVE MANIPULATION OCCURRING IN OUR BRAINS WHILE WE HAPPEN TO SEE A BILLBOARD, FACEBOOK AD OR YOUTUBE VIDEO DURING OUR BUSY LIVES.

We all fall victim to advertising on a daily basis, but some segments of the population are more vulnerable than others. Children, whose cognitive functions are still developing, and are not fully capable of processing the information in front of them, can be particularly affected. Young adults who are facing the first (sometimes uncomfortable) questions about their sexual identity, or women under societal pressure to perform in every role and identity (professional, mother and wife) can be particularly impacted. Marketing strategies also target vulnerable groups in countries transitioning towards increasingly multicultural societies, and parents trying to do the right thing for the future of their children in the middle of the deepening climate and nature crisis.

This manipulation comes at an unbearably high cost to the health of the planet and its inhabitants, when it's geared towards increasing our consumption of climate impacting products like meat. Our overconsumption, of animal products especially, heavily contributes to making our planet warmer, destroying our forests and polluting our water and air. Overconsumption of animal proteins also increases our chances to develop, among others, metabolic and cardiovascular diseases at some point in our lives.⁵⁷

Scientific consensus is clear on the need for more plant-based diets, for the sake of both human and planetary health. In high consuming regions like Europe, we need to consume (and produce) at least 70% less meat and dairy, and the remainder that we continue to consume must come from ecologically raised animals.⁵⁸

Instead of facing this reality, companies and organisations jump on the opportunity to meet the emotional needs people have, and sell them meat in the process. Their brand stories promise meaning and identity, and policy makers give them free rein to do so, sometimes even financing their campaigns.

We urgently need a big shift in our diets, but that won't happen if things are left as they are. Advertising and promotion of animal products needs to align with this shift. Politicians, companies and media need to make sure that citizens and consumers are not manipulated to do the opposite.

It would not be the first time that marketing practices are regulated for the well-being of people. As one of the most prominent examples, once the false and misleading marketing by the tobacco industry was exposed, policy makers came together and took action.

“BANNING TOBACCO ADVERTISING IS ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS OF REDUCING SMOKING. THIS DIRECTIVE WILL SAVE LIVES AND REDUCE THE NUMBER OF EUROPEANS WHO SUFFER FROM SMOKING RELATED ILLNESSES.”

FORMER EU COMMISSIONER MÁRKOS KYPRIANOU, ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TOBACCO ADVERTISING DIRECTIVE IN JULY 2005.

Now, an international convention under the World Health Organisation (WHO)⁵⁹ calls for “comprehensive ban of all tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship”, and EU directives⁶⁰ ban different forms of tobacco advertising and sponsorship across all media and events.

There is also regulation in other sectors with known health implications like alcohol, junk food or sugar.⁶¹ Rules across these categories have been implemented to ensure that vulnerable groups are not targeted, immoderate consumption is not encouraged, that advertising does not contain misleading health messages, or, in the case of alcohol, suggest that consumption of the product drives social or sexual success.⁶² Evidence shows that such regulation in the cases of sugar⁶³, tobacco⁶⁴ and alcohol has been effective in curbing consumption.⁶⁵

Political decision-makers from local to European level, as well as the private sector from retailers to the creative industry, must stop enabling the marketing of meat, spreading the manipulative myths of the meat industry. The food industries must commit to, and be held accountable for, transparency regarding the information provided on the origin, health impacts and environmental impacts of their products.

GREENPEACE ORGANISATIONS ACROSS EUROPE ARE CALLING ON EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS, CITY AND LOCAL COUNCILS AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO:

- End public funding for any advertising or communication aiming to promote and increase the consumption of meat and dairy products. Instead, this funding should be shifted to promote plant-based diets.
- Ban advertising, sponsorship and publications by meat companies and producer organisations in public spaces (owned, managed, rented, organised by public authorities), in any publications disseminated in public institutions (e.g. school textbooks) and start further restrictions with protection of children and youth.
- Ensure that legislation against misleading advertising on the EU and national levels is effectively applied to false claims on climate, sustainability and health by food industries across all online and offline media, including packaging, with specific scrutiny on the meat industry.

AND ON RETAILERS TO:

- Ban advertising and promotional offers of meat and of dairy products in shops and marketing. Instead, commit to transparent and truthful marketing and increase the promotion of and access to healthier, plant-based food or ecologically produced animal products.

AND ON MEDIA TO:

- Ban meat advertising, sponsored editorials, product placements and sponsorships targeting children and teenagers on all media online and offline, including product packaging, books and comics, schools and medical communication material etc.

AND ON THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY:

- **For agencies:** introduce internal policies that steer clear of climate- and biodiversity-damaging brands, such as the meat and dairy industries as clients.
- **For staff:** reject working on climate- and biodiversity-damaging brands, including specifically the meat and dairy industries.

IT'S NOW TIME TO START RESTRICTING MEAT MARKETING AND ADVERTISING TO CURB CONSUMPTION TO PROTECT NATURE AND PEOPLE'S HEALTH.

ANNEX 1

BRANDS LIST

	BRANDS AND ORGANISATIONS	COMPANY
GERMANY	Gutfried	Noelke
	Mini-winis	Meica Ammerländische Fleischwarenfabrik Fritz Meinen GmbH & Co.
	Bifi	LSI – Germany GmbH
	Herta	Nestle
	Edeka	Edeka
	Böklunder	Böklunder Fleisch- und Wurstwaren GmbH & Co. KG
	Ferdi Fuchs	Westfälische Fleischwarenfabrik Stockmeyer GmbH
	Bruzzler	WIESENHOF Geflügel-Kontor GmbH
SPAIN	El Pozo (including Bien Star)	ELPOZO ALIMENTACIÓN S.A.
	Casa Tarradellas (inc Espectec)	Casa Tarradellas SA
	Navidul	Campofrío Food Group
	Grupo Coren (inc Coren Grill)	A cooperative of cooperatives for poultry, eggs, pork and cattle.
	Incarlopa	INDUSTRIAS CÁRNICAS LORIENTE PIQUERAS, SAU
	Interporc	Represents and promotes the Spanish pork sector internationally
	Campofrío	Campofrío Food Group
	Joselito	Cárnicas Joselito S.A.
	Hazte Vaquero	Eu funded campaign to promote EU beef
SWITZERLAND	Schweizer Fleisch	Proviande Genossenschaft
	Malbuner	Herbert Ospelt Anstalt
	Micarna	Micarna SA
	Bell	Bell Food Group AG
	Optigal	Micarna SA
	Coop	Coop Genossenschaft
	Rapelli	Rapelli SA
	Citterio	Giuseppe Citterio S.P.A.

FRANCE	Label Rouge	Synalaf
	Bigard Socopa	Group Bigard
	Le Gaulois	LDC Group
	APVF	Organisation for the promotion of French poultry
	INTERBEV	National Interprofessional Association of Cattle and Meat
	Madrangé	Compagnie Madrange SASU
	Charal	Groupe Bigard
	Herta	Nestlé
	Fleury Michon	Fleury Michon
POLAND	Berlinki	Animex Food
	Morliny	Animex Food
	Tarczynski	Tarczynski S.A.
	Krajowa Rada Drobiarstwa	National Poultry Council - Chamber of Commerce, Poland
	Cedrob/Gobarto Group (inc KrakauerLand)	Gobarto S.A.
	Sokolow	Sokolow SA, Danish Crown
	Madej Wrobel	Madej Wróbel Sp. z o. o
	Indykpol	indykpol S.A.
	DENMARK	Danish Crown
Friland		Danish Crown
Tulip		Danish Crown
Goel Polsner		Danish Crown
Landbrug & Fødevarer		
Steff Houlberg		Danish Crown
Stryhns		Stryhns Gruppen
Burger Boost		Danish Crown
ALL COUNTRIES		McDonalds

ANNEX 2

SEMIOTIC GLOSSARY

ARCHETYPE

An original, typical model after which other similar things are patterned. Semiotically: images, figures, character types, settings, and story patterns that are generally understood and shared by people within and across cultures.

BINARY OPPOSITION

A simplified system of meaning, embedded habitually in language and culture, by which things are reduced down to contrasting pairs. Eg Natural vs Artificial. Good vs. Bad

CODE

A set of clustered signs which work together to create a larger meaning. Eg. Red as a sign takes on a larger meaning (of masculinity) when clustered with other signs such as fire, knives etc.

CONNOTATION

The broader, symbolic or mythic meaning of a sign (often emotional)

CONTEXT

The situation—physical, psychological, and/or social—in which a sign or text is used or occurs, and which adds further meaning and association

DECODING

The semiotic process of analysing a text on the basis of the codes and context. Looking specifically for the built in cultural assumptions the text relies on

DENOTATION

The primary, intentional meaning of a sign, text (often rational)

DISCOURSE

Written or spoken communication using recognised codes that make the message meaningful to a specific group. For Example, male bonding discourse

ICON

A semiotic sign that more literally depicts that which it refers to: eg a letter or phone icon on a form

IMAGE

Representation of a product or service in order to enhance its value aesthetically, socially and culturally

IDEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

A top down semiotic analysis that identifies, draws attention to and questions cultural assumptions around gender, class, power etc.

IRONY

The use of words to express something different from and often opposite to their literal meaning.

MEDIUM

The physical means or process by which a message is delivered. For example, packaging, advertising channel, spokesperson

METAPHOR

A thing that is understood as representative of symbolic of something else to which it is not literally related. For example, meat as a metaphor for strength

METONYM

A thing used as a substitute for something else with which it is closely associated. For example, % cocoa solids as a metonym for quality in chocolate

MYTH

A traditional story, whose historical purpose was to explain unknown phenomena - also, a widely held but false belief

NARRATIVE

Something narrated, told, or written, such as an newspaper report, story, or piece of advertising

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE

Recognisable elements of plot, character, and setting in storytelling practices

PARADIGM

A structural (often oppositional) relationship between signs that keeps them distinct and therefore meaningful (see also binary opposition)

RESIDUAL, DOMINANT AND EMERGENT CODES

A way of classifying codes into those which are culturally accepted / the norm (dominant), those which have historically maintained a presence and are perhaps in the process of being negotiated (residual), and those which are new and evolving (emergent)

SEMIOTICS

A research method often defined as the study of signs and their shared meanings across cultures

SIGN

A small unit of communication that carries meaning, and/or stands for something else in any capacity. Anything from a colour, a gesture, a sound, an image etc can be a sign

SIGNIFIED

The part of a sign that is referred to; also called image, object, or concept

SIGNIFIER

That part of a sign that does the referring/the physical part of a sign

STRUCTURE

Any repeatable or predictable aspect of signs, codes, and texts

SUBTEXT

A concealed system of connotative meanings within a text

SYMBOL

A semiotic sign that has an arbitrary relation to a material object or concept in the real world. Eg a heart as a symbol of love

SYNAESTHESIA

The evocation of one sense modality (e.g., taste) by means of some other (e.g., hearing). The sizzle of steak on a grill is an example of synaesthesia

TEXT

A piece of communication that contains multiple signs. Eg a brand advertisement or piece of packaging

TROPE

A figure of speech: used regularly, can often refer to cliches and truisms

ENDNOTES

- 1 Natasha Delliston is an independent semiotician, and her contribution to this report was only the aspects relating to semiotics, and excludes environmental and health claims by Greenpeace organisations.
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