



The Alliance for a **HEALTHY TOMORROW**

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Bad Grades Given to Food and Beverage Companies On Toxic BPA in Packaging

Boston— Fourteen of the largest public packaged food companies still use Bisphenol A (BPA) in their packaging despite studies linking BPA to developmental problems, cancer, heart disease and diabetes, according to a scorecard released today by shareholder groups. Seven companies got a grade of “F”, including Campbell, Coca-Cola, Kraft, Hershey and Del Monte because they are not taking any action to protect consumers from BPA in their can linings or other packaging. In fact, no food or beverage company got better than a “C”.

BPA is used in can linings and some hard clear plastics. It is known to leach from packaging into food and beverages. Previous testing of infant formula has found the potent hormone disrupter in the formula, causing danger to vulnerable developing babies. Scientific studies on animals have demonstrated that BPA can cause numerous health problems including heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and metabolic disorders. **All the food companies surveyed use BPA and are taking insufficient steps to move toward alternatives.**

This lack of action from food sellers caused the Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow (AHT) to again urge the state to step up to protect consumers:

“With infant formula, soda, soups, vegetables and other canned foods contaminated with this potent hormone disrupter by irresponsible packaging, and no private action in sight, the Mass Department of Public Health must take action as other states are beginning to do,” states Erin Boles of the Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition.

AHT is asking the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) to ban the sale of all products containing BPA, intended for use by children 3 years of age and under, that may be mouthed or ingested, and also to issue a consumer warning to avoid products containing BPA directed to pregnant women, woman planning to become pregnant, and those going through chemotherapy for breast cancer.

To prepare the scorecard, *Seeking Safer Packaging: Ranking Packaged Food Companies on BPA*, Green Century Capital Management and As You Sow, asked twenty companies, the largest public packaged food companies, to identify the actions they are taking to address concerns regarding BPA. Fourteen of the companies replied and the scorecard is based on their responses. The scorecard ranks the companies on three factors: 1) efforts to find and implement alternatives to BPA 2) plans to phase out BPA in products for which alternatives exist, and 3) transparency on the issue.

“Given the number of studies linking BPA to serious diseases and developmental disorders, its continued use poses unnecessary risks for companies in the packaged food industry,” states Amy Galland, who helped conduct the survey as Research Director of As You Sow.

“Over 100 studies from rodents suggest that exposure of humans to low doses of BPA could contribute to diseases and disorders including ADHD, obesity, infertility, and cancers of the prostate and mammary gland, among others,” said Laura Vandenberg, PhD, a Research Scientist at Tufts University who has published extensively on Bisphenol A. “The FDA’s standard for safety is that there is ‘reasonable certainty’ in the minds of scientists that a chemical is ‘not harmful’ when used appropriately. This cannot be said for BPA.”

There were no flying colors in this report card as the highest grade was only a “C”. The companies that received the highest scores were Hain Celestial (C), Heinz (C-), and Nestlé (D+) because they are all involved in researching and testing alternatives to BPA. They also have plans to phase out the chemical in some of their products. Heinz, also stood out because it was the only company surveyed that is currently using an alternative to BPA in some of its can linings. The seven companies who responded to the survey who got an “F” because they are not taking steps to replace BPA are: Campbell, Coca-Cola, McCormick & Company, Kraft, Hershey, J. M. Smucker, and Del Monte. Six more companies did not respond to the survey, and thus also got an “F”: Chiquita, Dean Foods, Hormel, Sara Lee, SYSCO and Unilever.

There is only one company in the U.S., Eden Foods, that has sold all of its products (except tomatoes, which present special problems because of their acidity) in cans free of BPA. Alternative packaging materials exist for many products.

The pressure from consumers, public officials, and the media to phase out BPA has pushed six of the largest manufacturers of baby bottles in the U.S., Wal-Mart, Toys R Us, and Whole Foods, to voluntarily eliminate BPA. However, the continued use of BPA in can linings, where alternatives are available is still occurring and poses potential risks to companies and shareholders. Not one of the companies surveyed stands out as a clear leader in addressing the risks of BPA or presented a clear plan for phasing out BPA from all applications for which alternatives exist.

“Yet again, it is clear that we cannot shop our way out of this problem because the companies are not working to provide us with alternatives to BPA,” said Namasha Schelling, Environmental Health Organizer for Clean Water Action. “This is where the Department of Public Health needs to step in and REQUIRE these companies, and all who are using BPA to replace it with safer alternatives.”

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) has been working on issuing a consumer warning on BPA, but this effort has been delayed repeatedly. The Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow (AHT) has called on the Governor and the Department of Public Health to protect children’s health from BPA.

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The Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow (AHT) is a coalition of citizens, scientists, health professionals, workers, and educators seeking preventive action on toxic hazards.