



Broadcasting Bill to crack down on fatty food ads

The government's new Broadcasting Bill, which is anticipated to become law by year end, may lead to unhealthy food ads aimed at children being banned. A spokesperson for the government told ShelfLife: "Section 42 of the Broadcasting Bill gives the proposed new broadcasting regulator, the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI), the powers to revise or draw up a broadcasting code covering children's advertising. This provision is aimed at protecting the interests of children.

"Under Section 42 specific provision is made in relation to the advertising of particular classes of foods and beverages considered by the proposed BAI to be the subject of public concern in respect of the general public health interests of children, in particular those which contain fat, trans fatty acids, salts and sugars, and these may be prohibited."

The new legislation comes as yet another study indicating that obesity in Ireland is on the rise has been published. The Dietary Habits of the Irish Population study, a sub-report from the 2007 Survey of Lifestyle, Attitudes and Nutrition (Slán), affirmed that two thirds of Irish adults are overweight and almost 25% can be defined as clinically obese. Similarly, a recent report by the European Commission funded International Association for the Study of Obesity found that, in Ireland, one in four children aged five to 17 years is either overweight or obese and the number classified as obese is doubling every 10 years.