



October 29, 2012

Mr. Robert A. Iger  
Chairman & Chief Executive Officer  
The Walt Disney Company  
500 South Buena Vista Street  
Burbank, California 91521

Dear Mr. Iger:

We applaud the Walt Disney Company's progress in improving the nutritional quality of foods it markets to children. Disney took a big step forward this year by deciding that it will no longer accept advertisements for many unhealthy foods on children's television, radio, and online programming, and will update its nutrition standards for licensed characters and sponsorships on the Disney Channel. Your work has made Disney an industry leader in responsible food marketing to children and we look forward to the company's continued progress in this area.

While encouraged by the recent updates to Disney's food marketing policy, we remain troubled that Disney allows its characters to be used on food products that do not meet the company's own nutrition standards under an exemption for special occasion treats. Disney has committed to ensuring that 85 percent of its licensed food portfolio meets the company's nutrition standards, reserving 15 percent of its portfolio for special-occasion products, which are typically released around holidays. While we understand that some children want Disney-themed birthday cakes, the use of characters to promote holiday candy runs counter to Disney's commitment to responsible marketing to children. With so many holidays following one after another—Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Easter—such treats are not only available for special occasions, but rather have become a part of everyday marketing promotions throughout much of the year. Twenty-five percent of all spending on candy, approximately \$7.3 billion worth, occurs around those four holidays. This Halloween, for example, we found several candies and cookies with Disney characters, including:

- *Cinderella* Princess Halloween Shape Sugar Cookies manufactured by Pillsbury;
- Halloween *Mickey Mouse* Mallow Pops manufactured by Flix Candy; and
- Disney Candy Mix manufactured by Frankford Candy featuring characters from *Toy Story*, *Cinderella*, *Cars*, and *Peter Pan*.

We urge Disney to narrow the exemption for licensed characters, and no longer allow the use of its characters on candy and other seasonal foods of poor nutritional quality.

The current exemption is too broad given the large percentage of confections sold at holiday times. As you have often said, Disney's policies on food marketing to children are a journey and that you will continue to move toward a more comprehensive policy. Removing Disney characters from candy is an important next step. We look forward to continued progress and to working with the company as it moves forward.

Sincerely,

Michael F. Jacobson, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Margo Wootan", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Margo G. Wootan, D.Sc.  
Director, Nutrition Policy