



# news release

Paris, 28 January 2016

## **Bel Group commits to responsible food marketing communications through the EU Pledge programme**

On 1 January 2016, Bel Group, a leader in branded cheeses for families worldwide, joined the EU Pledge, a voluntary initiative to limit food and beverage companies' advertising to products complying with common nutrition criteria based on accepted scientific evidence and/or applicable national and international dietary guidelines. This commitment responds to calls from EU institutions on the food industry to communicate in a way that helps parents make the right dietary and lifestyle choices for their children.

Bel Group commits to applying the EU Pledge principles in all its marketing communications across the European Union:

- No advertising of products to children under 12 years on TV, print, company owned and third-party internet media, except for products which fulfill common nutrition criteria. For the purpose of this initiative, "advertising to children under 12 years" means advertising to media audiences with a minimum of 35% of children under 12 years old.
- Where no reliable audience measurement data is available, Bel Group will not design the marketing communications in a way that directly appeals to children under 12.
- No communication related to products in primary schools, except when specifically requested by, or agreed with, the school administration for educational purposes.

The EU Pledge initiative is a voluntary commitment by the World Federation of Advertisers (WFA) to the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health. The Platform was set up by the European Commission in 2005 in order to foster coordinated action by a variety of sectors in order to tackle overweight and obesity in Europe.

### **A strict commitment monitored annually**

The EU Pledge has defined strict nutritional criteria as global guidelines for the products that can be communicated to children under 12. A balanced approach was sought across the EU, using existing European and international guidance as a basis.

In line with the Terms of Reference of the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, Bel Group is required to monitor and report on its implementation of these commitments and will

therefore carry out independent, third-party compliance monitoring annually in a representative sample of EU Member States.

## A continuous improvement process

Bel Group sees its responsible marketing approach as a continuous improvement process. This mindset is shared by all EU Pledge members, who have announced plans to extend the scope of their commitment to additional media, including radio, cinema, DVD/CD-ROM, direct marketing, product placement, interactive games, and mobile/SMS marketing by the end of 2016.

## Bel Group, a responsible and committed company

With 400 million consumers in more than 130 countries worldwide, Bel Group markets cheeses that have long been part of everyday life for parents and children. To maintain consumers' trust, Bel Group is committed to continually improving its products to suit their evolving lifestyles and health guidelines.

By putting single servings at the heart of its activity, Bel Group offers healthy, safe products designed to meet consumers' expectations and food needs. Constantly reformulating and adapting its recipes, Bel Group combines its nutritional approach with responsible communications to help families eat well day after day. The company's commitments, as described in its responsible communications charter, are strengthened by its decision to join the EU Pledge programme.

Céline Richonnet, Nutrition and Responsible Marketing Director for Bel Group, commented: *"At Bel Group, we are sensitive to the influence that marketing has on children's food preferences. We are convinced of the need to communicate responsibly that why we decided to join EU Pledge programme, which mirrors our commitment to stay in tune with consumers' needs and adapt to evolving communications practices"*.

### Public relations

#### Burson Marsteller i&e Agency

Alice Dalla Costa/Alix Bonnet

[alice.dalla-costa@bm.com](mailto:alice.dalla-costa@bm.com)

[alix.bonnet@bm.com](mailto:alix.bonnet@bm.com)

Tel : +33 (0)1 56 03 12 12

### Bel Group

The Bel Group is a world leader in branded cheese.

Its portfolio of differentiated and internationally recognized brands, including such products as The Laughing Cow®, Kiri®, Mini Babybel®, Leerdammer®, and Boursin®, as well as some 20 local brands, enabled the Group to generate sales of €2.8 billion in 2014.

Nearly 11,000 employees in some 30 subsidiaries around the world contribute to the Group's success.

Bel products are prepared at 28 production sites and distributed in about 130 countries.

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