

Alcohol Advertising Review Board

Determination Report

Reference number: 723/18
Product: Red Wolf Wine
Advertiser: Howling Wolves

The complaint is **upheld**.

25 October 2018

This determination by the Alcohol Advertising Review Board Panel (“the Panel”) concerns an advertisement for Howling Wolves Red Wolf Wine, which was the subject of a complaint received on 18 September 2018.

The Advertisement

The advertisement was seen at a display at the Winthrop Liquor Store in Winthrop, WA on Saturday 8 September 2018.

The poster was above a stack of wine bottles and stated:

“Red Wolf Healthy Wine

Howling Wolves Wines are excited to announce the release of a brand new product – Red Wolf Healthy Wine.

Red Wolf Healthy Wine is a unique and exciting product, featuring previously unachievable levels of the powerful anti-oxidant Resveratrol. Laboratory testing has shown the Resveratrol level of Red Wolf Healthy Wine is to be 100 times higher than regular red wine.

Laboratory testing was conducted after 1 week, 4 weeks and 6 months, and found that the product does indeed maintain Resveratrol levels measured at bottling.

This substantial increase in Resveratrol is achieved only using natural ingredients.

Studies at Harvard University have shown very strong links between Resveratrol, and the following positive outcomes for human health:

- Slows down the ageing process
- Protects the body from damage at a cellular level
- Fights plaque build up in the brain

- Lowers the risk of heart disease and cancer
- No side effects

BEST OF ALL, THE WINE TASTES GREAT!”

The Complaint

The complainant believes the advertisement contravenes the Code. The complainant stated:

“My local bottle store had this wine display at the entrance promoting a new range of healthy wines, the Howling Wolves Red Wolf Healthy Wine. Given that alcohol is a class 1 carcinogen, I strongly object to wine being promoted as healthy, particularly in such a blatant way. The information sheet describing the product suggests that this product has levels of Resveratrol 100 times higher than regular red wine, and that resveratrol lowers the risk of heart disease and cancer. There is strong evidence that alcohol causes cancer in at least 7 sites in the body, including bowel and female breast, which are some of the most common cancers in Australia. Just recently, research was published that showed any possible beneficial effects of low levels of alcohol intake are outweighed by the increased risk of other adverse health effects, particularly cancers. I believe it is highly misleading to suggest that an alcohol product can be healthy. I saw the display at the Winthrop Liquor Store in Winthrop, WA on Saturday 8 September 2018.”

The Code

The advertisement was reviewed against the Code, and in particular:

Section (4)(j) of the Content Code:

4. Alcohol-specific provisions:

j. Health claims

Alcohol Advertisements may give factual statements about product contents, including comparisons, but must not make any health claims, which include fitness or weight control claims.

The Advertiser’s Comments

The Advertiser was contacted for comment on 10 October 2018. The following response was received on 11 October 2018 and passed on to the Panel for consideration:

“This advertising was not done by our company but by the store owner himself. I will contact him immediately regarding the sign and ask him to remove it. I am sorry that he breached the rules. We will never advertise or sell alcohol in a manner which is against the laws.”

Panel’s determination

The complaint was referred to three Panel members for review. The Panel determined:

1. The advertisement contravened section (4)(j) of the Content Code, on the basis that the advertisement is claiming a health benefit of the wine, including reducing the risk of heart disease and cancer. Several Panel members commented that the claims are inaccurate.

The complaint is **upheld**.

The Alcohol Advertising Review Board thanks and acknowledges the Advertiser for taking action to remove the advertisement.