

## Lifestyle changes – product changes

Some food industry giants are announcing new initiatives to help address the problem of the rise in obesity.

- 1 How often do you eat fast food? Do you consciously try and eat healthily? Discuss your answers with a partner.
- 2 Read the title of the article and predict the content. Use the items in the box to help you.

Kraft Foods Inc.	McDonalds	obesity	new products	healthy eating	change of image
------------------	-----------	---------	--------------	----------------	-----------------

- 3 Read the article and check your predictions. What are your reactions to the article?

### Healthy new image or marketing hype?

Kraft Foods Inc. has announced plans to set a limit on the size of its single serving packages as part of a new series of company initiatives aimed at encouraging healthy diets. The initiatives, which also include labelling food products with nutritional information, come in response to an increase in obesity in many parts of the world.

The co-CEO has stated that the company is 'committed to product choices ... that will help encourage healthy lifestyles', a message which echoes recent changes in direction at McDonalds. Faced with falling profits, the

fast food chain has introduced new products which target the recent interest in healthy eating. A new range of salads can 'easily fit into a healthy, balanced diet', according to the company's website. CEO Mr Cantalupo has praised the launch of the 'McGriddle' breakfast concept, saying such product innovation is in line with changing lifestyles.

However, some media critics argue that food retailers themselves have contributed to the rise in obesity, and that the strategy of encouraging people to make healthy food choices is merely part of brand promotion. Critics dismiss the strategy as a way of trying to win back the many consumers who have turned their backs on fatty foods. Is this change of image just an exercise in public relations?

- 4 Find words or phrases in the article meaning:

- a scheme, plan (paragraph 1)
- b Managing Director (paragraph 2)
- c creation of new sales lines (paragraph 2)
- d advertising a specific make/type (paragraph 3)

- 5 Discuss the following questions in small groups and report your ideas to the class.

- Are fast food chains to blame for the increase in obesity, or should individuals take responsibility for what they eat?
- Do you think that food retailers aligning their products with healthy lifestyles is a positive development?