

Coca Cola changes recipe after online petition

9th May, 2014



The Coca-Cola Company, the world's largest beverage maker, is amending the recipe of several of its drinks following an online petition.

The drinks manufacturer will remove a substance called brominated vegetable oil (BVO) from drinks like Powerade and Fanta. BVO is a food additive that helps stop other ingredients from separating. It contains the chemical bromide, which is commonly used as a flame retardant. Coca-Cola spokesman Josh Gold advised consumers that: "All of our beverages, including those with BVO, are safe and always have been, and [they] comply with all regulations in the countries where they are sold. The safety and quality of our products is our highest priority."

In 1970, the USA's Food and Drug Administration removed BVO from its "generally recognised as safe" list but did not ban its use. The substance was the subject of a social media campaign to get it removed from drinks. An American teenager, Sarah Kavanagh, started a petition on the site Change.org. She questioned why the ingredient was being used in what are supposed to be health drinks. More than 200,000 people signed the petition. Ms Kavanagh said: "It's really good to know that companies, especially big companies, are listening to consumers." She added: "I'm glad to know the Powerade sold at my school and consumed by people around the world will be a little bit healthier without BVO."

Sources: *BusinessWeek* / *ABC News* / *Change.org*

Writing

No food should contain any additives. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

beverage / recipe / petition / food additive / ingredients / flame / regulations / priority / safe / social media / campaign / teenager / health drinks / consumers / healthier

True / False

- Coca Cola is changing the recipe of all its drinks. T / F
- The company is adding a substance called BVO. T / F
- BVO helps stop the ingredients of drinks from separating. T / F
- Coca Cola said its top priorities are safety and quality. T / F
- The U.S. government decided BVO was not "safe" in 1970. T / F
- A U.S. teen started an online campaign to get Coca Cola to drop BVO. T / F
- Over 2 million people signed an online petition against BVO. T / F
- A teenager complained that big companies never listen to consumers. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1. beverage | a. theme |
| 2. petition | b. concern |
| 3. remove | c. customers |
| 4. commonly | d. take out |
| 5. priority | e. assumed |
| 6. ban | f. drink |
| 7. subject | g. prohibit |
| 8. supposed | h. slightly |
| 9. consumers | i. appeal |
| 10. a little bit | j. frequently |

Discussion – Student A

- How worrying is it that Coca Cola has used BVO since 1970?
- Why do you think such chemicals are used in health drinks?
- Will you think more from now about buying soft drinks?
- What do you think of the social media campaign?
- What online petitions have you signed?
- How much do big companies listen to consumers?
- What would you like to start a petition about?
- What questions would you like to ask Coca Cola's boss?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. the world's largest | a. additive |
| 2. amending the recipe of | b. good to know |
| 3. food | c. drinks |
| 4. comply with | d. beverage maker |
| 5. The safety and quality of our products | e. the petition |
| 6. a social | f. several of its drinks |
| 7. health | g. bit healthier |
| 8. 200,000 people signed | h. all regulations |
| 9. It's really | i. is our highest priority |
| 10. the world will be a little | j. media campaign |

Discussion – Student B

- Do you worry about what additives are in your food?
- Why do food companies use so many additives?
- How healthy are Coca Cola products?
- What do you think of Coca Cola changing its recipe?
- Do you believe companies that say their products are safe?
- Is safety or profits a company's highest priority?
- Should we only buy food without additives?
- What do you think about the Coca Cola Company?

Spelling

- the world's largest garveeeeb maker
- remove a scasbtneu called BVO
- a food vedidiat
- commonly used as a flame netatrdar
- they comply with all srigtelouan
- our highest roitpyri
- oiencredzg (UK) / roczneidge (USA) as safe
- the subject of a social media macgnipa
- Sarah Kavanagh started a petnitoi
- what are puposdse to be health drinks
- iypaclees big companies
- listening to mncoeruss

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. i	3. d	4. j	5. b
6. g	7. a	8. e	9. c	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Food colouring

You think food colouring is the worst thing to add to food. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so bad about their additives. Also, tell the others which is the least harmful of these (and why): preservatives, flavourings or sugar.

Role B – Preservatives

You think preservatives are the worst thing to add to food. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so bad about their additives. Also, tell the others which is the least harmful of these (and why): food colouring, flavourings or sugar.

Role C – Flavourings

You think flavourings are the worst thing to add to food. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so bad about their additives. Also, tell the others which is the least harmful of these (and why): preservatives, food colouring or sugar.

Role D – Sugar

You think sugar is the worst thing to add to food. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so bad about their additives. Also, tell the others which is the least harmful of these (and why): preservatives, flavourings or food colouring.

Speaking – Drinks

Rank these with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| • Coca Cola | • Sports drinks |
| • Milk | • Tea |
| • Mineral water | • Tomato juice |
| • Coffee | • Lemonade |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.