Nutricia Code violations (Danone)

Nutricia was established in 1896 in the Netherlands as a small dairy producer. It went on to specialise in milk and cereal products and from the 1980s commenced a spate of acquisitions. Companies like Lijempf (Netherlands), Cow & Gate (UK) and Milupa (Germany) were brought under the umbrella of NUMICO. In 2007, NUMICO was acquired by Danone. Nutricia continues to operate under its own name and act as Danone’s manufacturing and marketing arm for products of its former subsidiaries. Their shared lineage is discernable from the intermingling of their marketing tactics, slogans and logos.

In July 2009, the UK Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) ruled, on a complaint that was lodged by the National Child Birth Trust UK that two Cow & Gate ads entitled “Still building their self-defences” and “Immune system under construction” were misleading because of a claim in the ads that their follow-on milk “supports your baby’s natural immune system”. The ASA held that the claim was unsubstantiated and based on a study that was not relevant for the product and that the ads must not appear again in their current form. Nutricia was also told to produce robust evidence to support their claims in future ads. Nutricia is reported to have accepted the ruling in its entirety.

Trading as Milupa, Nutricia also came under fire from the British public for similar promotion. See Aptamil ad above and write-up under Milupa details for the ASA ruling.