

# Wyeth

## Evidence of violations of the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and subsequent resolutions

Robert Essner  
Chairman and CEO  
Wyeth (American Home Products)  
PO Box 8616, Philadelphia  
PA 19101, USA  
Tel: +1 610 902 4100  
Fax: +1 610 688 6228

### PRODUCTS INCLUDE—

Infant formula: Bonna, S-26, S-26 Gold, S-26 Promil, S-26 Promil Gold, S-26 HA, SMA, SMA 1, SMA White, SMA Gold, SMA Wysoy, Infasoy, Promil, Promil Gold, S-26/SMA HMF, S-26 LBW, LBW Gold, S-26 Gold, S-26 Infasoy, S-26 LF, S-26 AR, S-26 HA, S-26 Prematuros, Nursoy, S-26 Libre de Lactosa, SMA Prematuros, Wysoy, SMA Sin Lactosa

Follow-on formula: SMA Progress, Promil Gold 6, S-26 Toddler Gold, S-26 Progress Gold, S-26 Progress, Infasoy Progress, Promil Gold 2, Promil, Bonamil, Mayorcitos Gold, Mayorcitos, Nursoy Follow-on

### LOGOS & ICONS—



Editorial note: In March 2007, the Foods Standards Agency (FSA) in the UK issued new guidelines which ordered a crackdown against health and nutritional claims on labels and company materials to ensure that mothers are not unduly influenced when deciding their feeding practices. The Daily Mail of 11 March 2007 reported a spokesman for Wyeth as saying "We are changing our packaging in April. We would say the claims are fair and accurate, however the FSA has asked for a change and we will comply."

Box shows changes to the SMA label which breaks all the rules, in insidious ways. ▶

Wyeth, one of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world, started as a small drugstore in Philadelphia in 1860. The baby food division, Wyeth Nutritionals, which goes by the tagline *Reassurance Beyond Nutrition* chalked up US\$1.2 billion in global sales in 2006.

Since 1921, Wyeth claimed a series of firsts, starting with what was to be the first commercial 'infant formula', SMA. In 1933, they introduced Beta-carotene in formula. In 1961, the company launched a whey-dominant infant formula, S-26, claiming it was close to breastmilk. In 1981, the year the Code was passed, Promil was launched as the first 'follow-up milk' (six months – one year) in North America. It was followed by Progress (one to four years) in 1993.

After many years, Wyeth phased out production of its infant formulas for the U.S. market in 1996, due to competition for the spiraling growth of the WIC programme – a government initiative for low-income women and children, funded in part by large rebates from the formula companies.

In 1997 Wyeth re-entered the US formula market, not as a distributor but as a manufacturer for PBM Products which markets formula under the Bright Beginnings label, at prices "20 percent less expensive than other national DHA-enhanced brands."

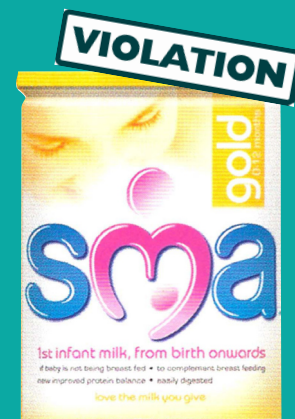
In 2004, PBM purchased Wyeth Nutritionals' infant formula factory in Georgia, Vermont. Wyeth now concentrates on its overseas market in more than 100 countries and enjoys fast growth in Asia/Pacific (60 percent of global sales) and Latin America (16 percent). The company markets its premium product line under the *Gold* banner which rides on the gold standard of breastfeeding.

Wyeth is a member of the Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines which has taken the Filipino government to court to challenge the validity of national legislation which seeks to restrict marketing practices of the baby food industry. Wyeth has a manufacturing facility in the Philippines and its vested interest in the case is obvious.

### LOOK AT THIS!

The new SMA logo circumvents the guidelines on claims issued by UK authorities. The slogan for the SMA label used to be "Now even closer to breastmilk". After being told by the UK Food Standards Agency that this is an illegal claim, as of April 2007 the slogan reads: "Love the milk you give", which competes even more directly with breastfeeding.

In addition, by sandwiching a breastfeeding mom (the letter 'M') within the SMA name and calling the product "1st infant milk", Wyeth implies that breastmilk and formula are one and the same. The image of a woman in the label humanises the product.



From bad to worse