



For immediate release: May 14, 2026
Contact: Michael Jacobson – 202-780-5005
mjacobson@nationalfoodmuseum.org

National Food Museum Announces New Exhibitions

[Washington, DC]—The [National Food Museum](#) today launched two fascinating new virtual exhibitions.

[Selling Candy to Kids](#) is an exciting tour that explores how the food, beverage, and restaurant industries have enticed children to buy their products. Unfortunately, almost all the foods marketed to kids are ultra-processed and high in sugar, salt, or saturated fat. The exhibition features scores of food packages, TV commercials, social media and internet ploys, product placement in movies and video games, in-school marketing, and other forms of marketing. Perhaps the earliest gambit was the stuffing of the “Kellogg’s Funny Jungleland Moving Pictures” booklet into boxes of Corn Flakes back in 1909.



In recent years, companies have largely abandoned conventional television advertising, their long-standing major advertising medium, and are now fully invested in digital media and artificial intelligence-driven marketing. Companies track kids through their social-media, cable-TV, and web-surfing habits to individually target their advertising.

Marlene Schwartz, PhD, Director of the Rudd Center for Food Policy & Health at the University of Connecticut, said, “Years ago, parents could block food commercials by turning off the TV. Today, children see personalized ads seamlessly woven into the content they watch alone on the tiny screens in their hands. Parents can’t even see—let alone stop—this targeted marketing.”

Selling Candy to Kids notes that 1980 was both the year that Congress killed the Federal Trade Commission's proposal to ban food advertising aimed at young children *and* that marked the beginning of the obesity epidemic. Obesity rates in children 2–19 soared from 5 percent to 21 percent in the early 2020s.

- [The Food Impact Meter](#) is an online calculator that asks users 16 questions about their diet—how often they eat vegetables, meat, dairy, grains, etc.—and the calculator quickly informs users about:



- **Health Impact:** How their diet might affect their long-term wellness.
- **Environmental Impact:** How their diet affects our planet based on greenhouse-gas emissions and other factors.
- **Personalized Advice:** Recommends key dietary changes users could make.

Currently, the American diet causes half a million premature deaths every year due to obesity, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer. Moreover, agriculture, refrigeration, food waste, and other factors account for one-fourth of America's greenhouse-gas emissions, as well as cause other serious environmental problems.

Dr. Pamela Koch, Mary Swartz Rose Associate Professor of Nutrition and Education at Columbia Teachers College, said, "One simple calculator. Two big impacts. See that the food choices that help us thrive also help our planet thrive. It's simple, so great for children. It's thoughtful, so will inspire teens and adults alike."

The launch of this digital tool comes at a critical time as more consumers seek "planetary health diets"—eating patterns that are both personally healthy and environmentally sustainable. The Food Impact Meter serves as an educational

bridge, turning complex agricultural and medical data into actionable personal insights.

Another popular feature is the [Museum's Video Vault](#)—a collection of over 100 short videos on all things food, from comedic sketches on *Saturday Night Live* to Senator Cory Booker's views on farm policy to misleading and sexy food and restaurant commercials. The videos are great starting points for parents and educators to discuss the nature of our food system, the balance between personal choice and government regulation, and what ultra-processed food actually is.

"The National Food Museum views the world through the lens of food. Our goal is to inform and energize people about topics ranging from the history of the human diet to the perils of ultra-processed food," said Michael F. Jacobson, PhD, Founder of the National Food Museum. "Our new exhibitions are just a start and will gradually be joined by other exhibitions and programs."

* * *