

**Voluntary Report** – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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**Report Number:** UK2025-0017

**Report Name:** UK to Restrict Ads and Increase Taxes for Products High in Fat and Sugar

**Country:** United Kingdom

**Post:** London

**Report Category:** Agricultural Situation, Beverages, Food Processing Ingredients, Retail Foods, FAIRS Export Certificate Report, FAIRS Country Report, FAIRS Subject Report

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**Report Highlights:**

In the United Kingdom (UK) regulatory changes affecting high-sugar soft drinks and food and drink products high in fat, sugar, and salt food (HFSS) come into effect in April and October 2025. These include an increased sugar tax on high-sugar beverages and stricter regulations on advertising and promotions for HFSS. These changes will affect pricing strategies, product formulation, and marketing campaigns for HFSS products sold in the UK market.

**Overview:** For U.S. companies currently selling products or those planning to export products to the UK that are deemed high in fat, sugar and salt, it's crucial to stay informed about upcoming regulatory changes set to take effect in April and October 2025. Businesses should be aware of the increased sugar tax on high-sugar beverages, which will impact pricing strategies and potentially necessitate product reformulation.

The UK is also implementing stricter regulations on advertising and promotions of products that are deemed high in fat, sugar, and salt, requiring companies to carefully review their marketing campaigns to ensure compliance. Adapting to these changes is essential for maintaining a competitive edge and ensuring continued success in the UK market.

**Background:** The UK government has long been committed to tackling childhood obesity through initiatives like the sugar tax. Initially introduced in 2018, this tax levied duties on soft drinks based on their sugar content. On April 1, 2025, the UK Treasury (HMT) increased this tax for the first time since its inception, significantly impacting beverages with over 8g of sugar per 100ml.

The new rates will increase to \$2.44 (£1.94) per 10 liters for the lower band (drinks containing 5g or more, but less than 8g of sugar per 100ml) and \$3.26 (£2.59) per 10 liters for the higher band (drinks containing more than 8g of sugar per 100ml). As well as fizzy drinks, this will also be extended to milkshakes, Frappuccino's, and sugary coffees. More information can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

The increase means that drink brands will see an increase in costs associated with producing drinks with higher sugar content. This may result in companies reformulating products to avoid these additional charges.

The [British Soft Drinks Association](#) notes that low/no calorie drinks already account for a significant portion of sales (seven out of ten purchases), with this trend expected to continue as companies innovate and reformulate their products to meet new regulations and consumer trends. U.S. companies should consider this shift in consumer preference and explore options for healthier alternatives.

**Restrictions on Advertising and Promotions of Less Healthy Foods:** The UK government is taking additional steps to curb the consumption of products that are high in fat, sugar, and salt (HFSS) with a ban on [volume-based](#) promotions set to take effect on October 1, 2025. Promotions such as "three for the price of two," "buy one, get one free," or "50 percent extra free" will be prohibited for HFSS products, which commonly include sugary drinks, salty snacks, and processed foods.

In addition, a ban on advertising HFSS foods online and on television before 9:00pm will also come into effect on October 1, 2025. These regulations apply specifically to products sold in England. However, Scotland and Wales are currently considering their own regulations regarding HFSS products, with a

potential implementation timeframe mirroring England's 2025 timeline. More information can be found [here](#).

In the UK brands are already reformulating existing products to comply with the regulations and more cost effective than launching a new product. For this reason, new products entering the UK should strive to be HFSS compliant to avoid restrictions on marketing and advertising and to align with UK consumer appetites for healthier eating habits.

The UK government continues to prioritize health and wellness, therefore U.S. companies who adapt to these changes through product reformulation and healthier options will be better positioned to showcase their products to UK consumers.

**Attachments:**

No Attachments.