

THE CHRISTMAS ADVERT THAT NEVER MADE IT TO TV: ICELAND'S BANNED AD LAUNCHES ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- Bold advert failed to secure advertising regulatory approval and will now launch on YouTube
- Advertising regulators banned advert on grounds of it being seen to support a political issue
- Iceland shuns commercial, product-led adverts in favour of lead Christmas campaign to highlight an important rainforest issue

As not seen on TV: Iceland's banned Christmas advert can be found here:

<https://youtu.be/JdpsplIW12o>

Retailer Christmas adverts have been the source of much anticipation in the weeks building up to the big day in recent years, with retailers blowing their advertising budgets to ensure their advert becomes the most talked about of the season.

For many consumers, the first screenings of the biggest adverts now herald the start of the festive build-up, a key milestone in the Christmas calendar.

However, this year, Iceland's advert will not appear on TV alongside those of other leading retailers – as its anticipated advert hasn't made it to our screens. Following a year of leading the retail industry in sustainability initiatives, Iceland had elected to do something different with its advertising spend.

Earlier this year, Iceland committed to remove palm oil from all its own label food by the end of 2018 in response to continued deforestation in South East Asia. As the retailer nears completion of the project, offering consumers the choice of an orangutan friendly Christmas, it had planned for a Christmas advert to raise awareness.

The retailer had hoped to use a short film, Rang-tan, as its main Christmas advert. Rang-tan is an emotive animation telling the story of rainforest destruction caused by palm oil production, and its devastating impact on the critically endangered orangutan.

It was hoped that the advert would improve shoppers' understanding of the widespread rainforest destruction for palm oil production, which appears in more than 50% of all supermarket products. The advert would have seen Iceland committing over half a million pounds of media spend to ensure that it was seen by millions of consumers – a bold move away from the usual commercial, product-led advertising in order to highlight an important issue causing climate change and biodiversity loss. However, this may have proven a brave step too far as the advert was banned by advertising regulators.

Richard Walker, Managing Director at Iceland said: “Throughout 2018 we have led the retail industry to take action in areas such as rainforest destruction for palm oil and plastic pollution of our oceans. This year we were keen to do something different with our much anticipated Christmas advert. The culmination of our palm oil project is offering our customers the choice of an orangutan friendly Christmas, and we wanted to reflect this in our advertising.

“Whilst our advert sadly never made it to TV screens, we are hopeful that consumers will take to social media to view the film, which raises awareness of an important global issue. Our commitment to help protect the home of orangutans remains extremely close to our hearts. We are proud to be encouraging consumers to make more sustainable choices, even without the support of TV advertising, ahead of the Christmas shopping season.”

Iceland, the UK’s leading frozen food specialist, is offering consumers an orangutan friendly Christmas range. The range has been carefully crafted, with recipes reworked to ensure that the removal of palm oil has no effect on quality or taste.

Iceland made the decision to demonstrate to the food and retail industries that it is possible to reduce the demand for palm oil until the industry stops destroying the rainforests by seeking alternative ingredients. Growing demand for palm oil for use in food products, cosmetics and biodiesel is devastating tropical rainforests across South East Asia. Expanding palm oil and wood pulp plantations are the biggest driver of deforestation^[1], many species are being threatened with extinction, including the orangutan, already critically endangered.

For more information about the Iceland Christmas range and the palm oil commitment please visit <https://www.iceland.co.uk/environment/>

- ENDS -

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ABOUT ICELAND

Iceland is recognised as the UK’s leader in frozen food and operates over 900 stores across the country, together with a multi-award-winning online shopping service. It prides itself on being a convenient and friendly place to do the family’s weekly shop, as well as meet everyone’s daily top-up shopping needs for fresh, chilled, frozen food and groceries. For more than 20 years Iceland has also offered a unique, free home delivery service for in-store purchases.

Iceland has won multiple awards for the quality of its food and service. Recent honours including being named Best Online Retailer and Best Frozen Food Retailer at the Retail Industry Awards 2018, best UK supermarket for customer service in the 2018 UK Customer Satisfaction Index, Community Retailer of the Year at the Retail Week Awards 2018, Online Retailer of the Year at the IGD Awards 2017, and Online Supermarket of the Year at the Grocer Gold Awards 2017. Iceland's online shopping

^[1] <http://www.wri.org/blog/2017/07/drivers-deforestation-indonesia-inside-and-outside-concessions-areas>

service was also named the UK's best in the 2016, 2017 and 2018 Which? supermarket surveys. Iceland has ranked as one of the UK's Best Big Companies to Work For in each of the last 12 years, and was number one in both 2012 and 2014.

Since 1970, Iceland has been proudly demonstrating to shoppers just how the Power of Frozen can deliver an extensive choice of high quality, great-tasting food from fine sources around the world at great value prices, while naturally generating low levels of food waste. Always committed to doing the right thing for customers, communities and the environment, Iceland was a pioneer in removing artificial colours, flavours and non-essential preservatives from its own label food in the 1980s, and in banning genetically modified ingredients in the 1990s. In 2018 it committed to becoming the first major retailer, globally, to eliminate plastic packaging from all of its own label foods by the end of 2023, and to remove palm oil as an ingredient from its own label range by the end of 2018.