

Iceland further reduces cost of infant formula

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Iceland Foods' campaign to provide greater access to affordable infant formula for non-breastfed babies took a step forward today as the retailer revealed a reduction in the price of Aptamil in its stores – with makers Danone also promising a 7% price reduction across the market.

From 16 January the three 800g Aptamil lines will retail at £11.20 in Iceland stores, a reduction from the already market-leading £12. The products being reduced in price at Iceland are *Aptamil 800g First Infant Milk*, *Aptamil 800g Growing Up Milk*, and *Aptamil 800g Follow-on Milk*.

After months of campaigning from Iceland, Aptamil maker Danone has also confirmed a 7% drop in price across the wider market, with Iceland continuing to offer the products cheaper than any other retailer.

Iceland caused controversy last year by taking a stand and publicly announcing cuts to the price of formula at Iceland and The Food Warehouse stores. The aim was to make customers aware of the savings and support them during the cost-of-living crisis, which the retailer's own research found was placing desperate pressures on parents with 86% concerned about how to afford to feed their non-breastfed babies.

Richard Walker, Executive Chairman of Iceland Foods, said: "I welcome Danone's move to reduce the price of Aptamil across the market and it's only right we again reduce the price even further at Iceland. It's important, however, that this doesn't gloss over the actions which are still urgently needed to support families.

"While we support breastfeeding as the most beneficial way of feeding infants, the millions of families who rely on formula need more support for their choice or circumstances and simply reducing the price won't solve the systemic issues we've drawn attention to.

"2024 is going to be another tough year for families and we need immediate changes to the law to allow retailers to tell customers when they have reduced the price of formula and customers must be allowed to buy formula with loyalty points, gift cards or food bank vouchers."

Iceland Foods has also called on the Government to review Healthy Start vouchers (currently £8.50 per week for babies up to one). These vouchers have not been increased in value since April 2021, and many low-income families depend on them to buy formula, but they currently do not cover the cost of even the cheapest formula after recent price increases.

Dr Erin Williams, Co-Founder & Director of Feed, said: "Whilst it's a welcome move, Danone's infant formula price reduction is by no means a solution to the wider issues facing families struggling to access infant formula, and it remains critical that the UK Government to commit to addressing this at a higher level. This includes an increase to the value of Healthy Start vouchers which, despite this price reduction, still don't cover the cost of a tub of formula. It means reviewing the laws and guidance that restrict families access to infant formula, and it means continuing to press Danone, and other formula

companies, to reverse the exorbitant price increases families have had to endure over the last couple of years.

“We commend Richard Walker and the Iceland team for their continued commitment to support families by offering further formula price reductions and cash equivalent payment methods, and we urge other retailers to follow suit.

“Our research shows that when families are unable to afford infant formula, they are forced into unsafe infant feeding practices, like watering down formula and skipping feeds, so it is critical that this price reduction is the first step of many towards addressing the bigger issues facing the many families who are struggling to feed their babies.”

Notes:

Iceland Foods is taking its commitment to ‘Doing it Right’ seriously with its campaign for more affordable infant formula.

While indisputable evidence – including from the World Health Organisation – strongly recommends that breastfeeding is the best solution for the overall health and development of both mother and child, this isn’t an option for everyone. Many groups, such as adoptive parents, gay couples and those mothers who face challenges for medical reasons, simply aren’t able to breastfeed and must have access to affordable infant formula. Importantly they should also be able to access neutral and factual announcements pointing them to good value on infant formula milk.

Prices on Iceland’s range of formula milks have been reduced by over 20% in line with hundreds of other household staples in stores, part of Iceland’s £26m annual investment to ensure prices stay low for customers.