

Email subject: Hoax: False Information Circulated on Starbucks Dairy Policy

Hi,

“News” circulated about our policies on dairy and non-dairy milk may have reached you today, and we’re writing to tell you that this announcement was not made by Starbucks corporate communications. It is a hoax aimed at confusing the public and damaging our exceptional reputation and profits. Here is the false announcement:

<https://starbuckscares.com/press-release/>

Below is a statement on this issue that we appreciate you sharing with your audience.

“It has come to our attention that false information has been released to press about Starbucks raising prices on beverages made with dairy milk, and removing upcharges on non-dairy milks, based on the prevalence of lactose intolerance in people of color versus white people. This was a hoax.

“Understandably, this has caused much public concern. We assure our most valued customers that we would never place the burden of a dairy upcharge on them.

“Further, we categorically deny the accusations of ‘dietary racism’ in this false announcement. Starbucks is and always has been a vigorous defender and promoter of people of all the colors.

“We have known about ethnicity-related lactose intolerance for many years and taken every measure to offer alternatives. Starbucks began adding a modest charge to beverages ordered with soy milk in 2012, when it became clear that customers were increasingly interested in non-dairy versions of their favorite Starbucks experiences. We have added new options such as oat, almond, and coconut milk (at additional charge) to meet the needs of all customers including those who have ethnicity-related lactose intolerance. As evidence of our commitment we now manufacture our own almond, soy, and coconut milks rather than using third-party suppliers.

“We do offer multiple initiatives to further racial equity—such as our [Community Resilience Fund](#), which we launched in 2019 as our commitment to invest \$100 million by 2025 in support of small business and community development in primarily BIPOC neighborhoods. Changing our pricing policy, however, is not in our racial-equity plans, nor will it be.

“While we have openly acknowledged that [dairy products](#) are the single biggest source of carbon dioxide emissions across our operations and supply chain, and the second highest contributor to water withdrawal, we do not intend to address this by penalizing customers who prefer dairy.

“Finally, and this is so ridiculous we hesitate to mention it, we have no plans to introduce a Justice Cup as a symbol of support for BIPOC customers. We hope customers enjoy our four legitimate new holiday cup designs, all created by our diverse team of graphic artists.”

Thank you for understanding,

Jerelyn Curlew
Starbucks Communications Deputy Head
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