

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Michael Kors marks milestone in philanthropic effort

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Hailee Steinfeld in Michael Kors' Watch Hunger Stop T-Shirt. Image courtesy of Michael Kors

By SARAH RAMIREZ

U.S. fashion label Michael Kors is celebrating the fifth anniversary of Watch Hunger Stop, its anti-hunger initiative that partners with the United Nations World Food Program.

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Since 2013, Michael Kors has released special-edition watches as part of the campaign, donating 100 meals to the WFP for each watch sold. When designers front philanthropic programs, it can bring their personal values to light while showing consumers that their brand is not only in the business of selling products.

"A five-year anniversary shows dedication, traction and commitment to the Watch Hunger Stop program from Michael Kors," said Neha Kapasi, luxury sales director at [Wealth Engine](#), New York. "It also shows a successful growth track and progress towards the goal of zero hunger."

Stopping hunger

Michael Kors has revealed this fall's Watch Hunger Stop pieces in anticipation of World Food Day on Oct. 16. In 2017, WFP provided school meals to more than 18 million children across 60 countries.

Lending their celebrity support, actresses Kate Hudson and Hailee Steinfeld will also participate in the campaign.



Kate Hudson has been involved with the Watch Hunger Stop campaign since 2015. Image credit: Michael Kors

This year, the Michael Kors Runway watch has been updated with a world map on a turquoise dial. Earlier special-editions of the Bradshaw and Runway are also available on the label's ecommerce site, retailing for \$295.

Last fall, Michael Kors introduced special activity tracker designs for the cause. Priced at a more accessible \$145, the bracelets for men and women will be sold only through the brand's channels, including its stores and ecommerce site, with each tracker purchase donating 100 meals to the WFP's school meals program ([see story](#)).



Special-edition Watch Hunger Stop activity trackers. Image credit: Michael Kors

Limited edition Watch Hunger Stop T-shirts will also be sold online and at Michael Kors lifestyle boutiques. Created by multimedia artist Eli Sudbrack, the shirt design features a prominent "0," which represents the United Nations' goal of achieving zero hunger by 2030, accented by colorful paint splashes.

To further engage shoppers, Michael Kors will donate 100 additional meals for every selfie shared with the #WatchHungerStop hashtag and featuring the special edition tee. A Watch Hunger Stop Snapchat geofilter will also be available starting on Oct. 1, allowing users to contribute 25 meals for every snap at a Michael Kors location.

Charitable campaigns

Michael Kors kicked off its long-term partnership with the WFP in 2013, initially partnering with actress Halle Berry. The campaign's early goals included reaching more than 5 million consumers and influencing them to talk about the campaign directly or via social media, as well as convincing them to donate money or their time ([see story](#)).

To-date, Watch Hunger Stop has delivered 15 million meals.

According to the Responsible Luxury Initiative, companies should promote philanthropic efforts to positively benefit society as well as engage more investors and consumers.

In particular, millennials expect brands to be more value-conscious. The five most important values to millennials are honesty, reliability, helping family, compassion and commitment ([see story](#)).

"Younger generation consumers have shown they are increasingly interested in social causes or impact, and have a general concern for their fellow citizens," Wealth Engine's Ms. Kapasi said. "These concerns drive their every day decision making processes, whether that means buying water in a box or purchasing from one luxury brand versus another because they know that that brand is aligned with their core values and beliefs.

"The more luxury brands communicate philanthropic efforts in their messaging, the more they will reach the hearts

and minds of consumers and build lasting relationships."

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