Love of Eating. Fear of Food. How to Empower Consumers in an Age of Mistrust

J.J. Jones and Sarah Downs, MBA, RDN

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WHO ARE YOU ???
EARN CONSUMER TRUST IN TODAY’S FOOD SYSTEM

THE CENTER FOR FOOD INTEGRITY

SM
The Center for Food Integrity Strives To:

- Be a Leading Voice in a Balanced Public Conversation about Food
- Align the Culture of Today’s Food System
- Convene, Empower and Support Food System Stakeholders

FoodIntegrity.org    BestFoodFacts.org
WHO ARE YOU ???
A product of northwest Kansas
Overview

- The decline of trust – how we arrived to the situation,
- How to earn and maintain trust,
- Overview of CFI’s foundation research
Consumers are asking more questions about food.
“I’m worried about GMOs in my food. I hear they’re bad for us and the environment.”

I’m concerned about antibiotics that farmers give to their animals. I don’t want antibiotics in my food.

“My friends say processed foods are unhealthy.”
Today’s consumers
Shifting societal attitudes
Many choices, Many voices
Mistrust in food and farming
Desire to know/trust farmers
1968

THE YEAR THAT SHAPED A GENERATION.
The frequency and visibility of violations of public trust have been consistent enough over the last four-plus decades to breed broad public skepticism about whether or not institutions are worthy of trust.
Historical Perspective: Decline of Trust

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEN</th>
<th>NOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authority is granted primarily by office</td>
<td>Authority is granted primarily by relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad social consensus driven by WASP males</td>
<td>No single social consensus, great diversity, many voices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication is formal, indirect (mass communication)</td>
<td>Communication is informal, direct (masses of communicators)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress is inevitable</td>
<td>Progress is possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Big” is respected</td>
<td>“Big” is bad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consolidated, Integrated, Industrialized
The public senses a change in the way food is produced but doesn’t know why.
Food is necessary

traditional

personal
What do consumers think of the food system today?

Consumer Trust Study

www.FoodIntegrity.org
Who We Surveyed

- MOMS
- FOODIES
- Millennials
What were their most concerning life issues?
Women were more concerned about most issues than men.

Additional Food System Concerns*

- Food Safety (62%)
- Enough to Feed U.S. (53%)
- Humane Treatment of Farm Animals (47%)

Lowest concern was for having enough food to feed people outside the U.S. (31%)
1. Rising Cost of Food
2. Rising Health Care Costs
3. Keeping Healthy Food Affordable
4. U.S. Economy
5. Rising Energy Costs

Moms

1. Keeping Healthy Food Affordable
2. Rising Cost of Food
3. Rising Health Care Costs
4. U.S. Economy
5. Rising Energy Costs

Millennials
Top Concerns About Issues by Segment

1. Keeping Healthy Food Affordable
2. Rising Health Care Costs
3. Rising Cost of Food
4. U.S. Economy
5. Rising Energy Costs

Foodies Expressed a Higher Level of Concern

Early Adopter
A top concern was finding healthy affordable food.

Lowest concern was for having enough food to feed people outside the U.S.
## Right Direction/Wrong Track

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right Direction</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrong Track</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Right Direction/Wrong Track 2014/2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Right/Wrong</th>
<th>Moms</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
<th>Foodies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right Direction</td>
<td>36% / 31%</td>
<td>41% / 41%</td>
<td>49% / 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrong Track</td>
<td>35% / 32%</td>
<td>33% / 26%</td>
<td>35% / 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>29% / 37%</td>
<td>26% / 33%</td>
<td>16% / 20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Where do we engage?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Type</th>
<th>Engagement</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Web Sites</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local TV Station</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends-Not Online</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family-Not Online</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Ranked First as Info Source on Food System Issues**
The CFI Trust Model (Sapp/CMA)

Trust research was published in the December 2009 *Journal of Rural Sociology*. 

- **CONFIDENCE**
- **COMPETENCE**
- **INFLUENTIAL OTHERS**
- **Value Similarity**
- **TRUST**
- **SOCIAL LICENSE**
- **FREEDOM TO OPERATE**
What Drives Consumer Trust?

Shared values are 3-5x more important in building trust than sharing facts or demonstrating technical skills/expertise.
Why Values Matter

Ag and food industries talk about *what* and *how*

Science!

Economics!
Change Our Approach

Historically

Research proves it’s ok to do this ...

Financially, it’s in our best interest ...

We need to *SHIFT*

It sounds like food safety is important to you ...

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### Who Should Engage?

- My family doctor
- A university scientist
- A scientist who is a mom
- A veterinarian who treats animals raised for food
- A farmer who raises animals for food
Consumers want Transparency
Transparency Evaluation Areas

- Policies
  - What I’m supposed to do
- Practices
  - What I actually do
- Performance
  - What I did in the past
- Verification
  - What someone else proves I did
### Who Consumers Hold Responsible

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Food Companies</th>
<th>Farmers</th>
<th>Grocery Stores</th>
<th>Restaurants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Impact of Food on Health</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Safety</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Impact</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor and Human Rights</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Well-Being</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Ethics</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What does all this mean?
Trust-Building Transparency Takeaways

• Transparency is no longer optional – it is a basic consumer expectation.
• Consumers want information on company practices – *practices are an illustration of values in action and values drive trust.*
• Consumers want the ability to engage.
Don’t abandon science and facts

Lead with *Shared Values* to Build Trust
City Girl Turned “Agvocate”
Overview

✓ Barriers and frustrations registered dietitians and nutrition professionals face
✓ Why facts AND values are key in communicating about nutrition
✓ Strategies for when and how you should used values-based statements
✓ How values-based communication can be utilized
Barriers and Frustrations

- There are many nutrition “experts”
- Bad science
- Buzzwords
- Media

= Fear of Food!
CANNED or FRESH

NON-ORGANIC or ORGANIC

GLUTEN-FREE or PROCESSED
What’s not working?
Answering the Wrong Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Science Question</th>
<th>Ethical Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAN</td>
<td>SHOULD</td>
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What’s Your Communication Goal?

- PERSUADE
- EDUCATE
Our Goals *Should* Be...

- Embrace the skepticism
- Consumer concerns are real
  *Perception is their reality*
- Share your values
How Do You Effectively Engage With Consumers About Food Issues?
Why are Facts AND Values important to RDs?

• Science-based profession with deep roots in communication
• Often times first line in discussion about food
• Amplifies credibility in profession
• Makes nutrition communications more effective and meaningful
Before you Engage ...

Be committed to having a conversation, not just educating, defending or correcting misinformation.

Be principle-driven: **Know your values** and how values drive you when it comes to ag/food.

**Keep your emotions in check**: conversations are important, but they may get uncomfortable.

**The Golden Question**

Do they recognize my **ethical right** to be involved in farming/food production?
How: Conversations, not Messages

LISTEN

ASK

SHARE
1. Listen –

Without Judgment

“Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply. Seek first to understand; then to be understood.”

- Stephen R. Covey
Not Every Conversation is Meant to Be

MOVEABLE MIDDLE
“What I hear about industrial agriculture affecting our water supply today is very concerning. I just have a lot more trust and respect for local family farmers.”

“All these food recalls are scary. I want to eat more fresh fruits and vegetables, but I’m not sure what is safe anymore.”

“Food prices are challenging. It is so difficult for me to buy healthy, affordable food for my family.”

“I only eat organic foods because they don’t contain GMOs, which I hear are bad for us.”
2. Ask Questions to Invite Dialogue
2. Ask Questions to Invite Dialogue

**Acknowledge**
Shows that you heard the question or statement

**Understand**
Ask questions that show you’re working to understand them better
3. Share Your Perspective through Values
3. Share Your Perspective through Values

Bridging

• That’s a great question, and something we’re constantly thinking about...
• That’s an interesting viewpoint. Another way to think about it is...
• There’s been a great deal of conversation on that issue. What I’m focused on is...
• That’s a popular misconception. The fact is...
• I understand and share that concern. That’s why we should...
• Another way to think about it is...
• Another thing to remember is...
• That’s not my area of expertise, but what I can speak to is...
• You make a good point; I’m focused on...
Choose your words wisely.

Lead with shared values.
Eddie Coli couldn't understand why business was bad.

Words are powerful.
OOPS!
What’s your strategy?
What drives you?

What are your values?
Engaging With An Audience

• You are the expert, post about your life as a dietitian!
• Use events and personal anecdotes as a springboard for ideas
• Give virtual tours (refrigerator, lunchbox, kitchen, etc.)
• Share your personal stories
• Show people where their food comes from
• Perfection? Forget about it!
• Use photos and videos to tell your story
• Create content responding to inaccurate info
Values Based Communication in Different Dietetic Settings
Counseling - Motivational Interviewing

1. Precontemplation
   Definition: Not yet considering change or is unwilling or unable to change.
   Primary Task: Raising Awareness

2. Contemplation
   Definition: Sees the possibility of change but is ambivalent and uncertain.
   Primary Task: Resolving ambivalence/Helping to choose change

3. Determination
   Definition: Committed to changing, still considering what to do.
   Primary Task: Help identify appropriate change strategies

4. Action
   Definition: Taking steps toward change but hasn’t stabilized in the process.
   Primary Task: Help implement change strategies and learn to eliminate potential relapses

5. Maintenance
   Definition: Has achieved the goals and is working to maintain change.
   Primary Task: Develop new skills for maintaining recovery

6. Recurrence
   Definition: Experienced a recurrence of the symptoms.
   Primary Task: Cope with consequences and determine what to do next

Stages of Change: Primary Tasks
Food Service and Management
Research

- The research is done, now what?
- Utilize values when communicating research and when pitching to media
What else can you do?

- **Practice, Practice, Practice**
- **Become involved on social media**
  - Twitter Chats
  - Don’t forget values based communication!
  - Follow those who do it well:
    - @LeahMcGrathRD
    - @RDAmber
    - @BuildUpRDNs
    - @rustnutrition
    - @MiltonStokes
    - @Kevinfolta
- **Build a network of credentialed resources you can rely on**
- **Advocate for your profession!**
You make a difference.

Conversations about food and agriculture are **empowered** and **enlightened** by you: and no one can tell your story and share your values the way you can.
“No one cares how much you know, until they know how much you care.”
- Theodore Roosevelt
Thank you!