US Consumer Attitudes and Communicating the Benefits of Foods for Health

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International Food Information Council (IFIC)

2005 CSL/JIFSAN Joint Symposium: Bioactive Food Components
June 28-30, 2005
The Inn and Conference Center
University of Maryland University College
College Park, MD
Today’s Presentation

• About IFIC

• Letting Consumers Have A Say
  – IFIC Attitudinal Research: *Foods for Health or Functional Foods*

• Guidelines for Health Messages
International Food Information Council (IFIC) and IFIC Foundation

Mission:
To communicate science-based information on food safety and nutrition to health professionals, educators, government officials, journalists and others providing information to consumers.

Primarily supported by the food, beverage, and agricultural industries.
IFIC Foundation’s *Food Insight*

- 45,000 circulation
- 7% international
- 6,000 media
- Also available electronically
“Thy food shall be thy remedy”

Hippocrates, > 2,000 years ago
Functional Foods

WORKING DEFINITION

Foods That May Provide a Health Benefit Beyond Basic Nutrition

• Measure consumer interest in and awareness of functional foods and nutrigenomics


• Sample population: randomly selected U.S. Adults (18+)

• Completed interviews/sample size: 1,012 (2005)
How much control would you say you have over your own health?

- Great amount: 66%
- Moderate amount: 28%
- Small Amount: 4%
- No control: 1%
- Don’t know: 1%

IFIC 2005
Q. What are your top three health concerns, listed in order of importance to you? (MULTIPLE RESPONSES)

IFIC 2005
Nutrition Plays a Greater Role in Maintaining and Improving Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Great Role</th>
<th>Moderate Role</th>
<th>Limited Role</th>
<th>No Role</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food and Nutrition</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Health History</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IFIC 2005
Americans Have Positive Attitudes About Their Health, Nutrition and Exercise

88% believe certain foods have health benefits that may reduce the risk of disease or other health concern

IFIC 2005
Most Americans can name a functional food.

91% can name a functional food and its associated benefit

Up from 84% in 2002, 82% in 2000, and 77% in 1998

IFIC 2005
Consumer Awareness of Foods That May Reduce Risk of Disease

**TOP TEN RESPONSES** (unaided):

1. Vegetables and Fruit (17%)
2. Milk (11%)
3. Fish, fish oil, seafood (11%)
4. Fiber (10%)
5. Broccoli (10%)
6. Tomatoes (9%)
7. Whole grain (8%)
8. Oats, oat bran, oatmeal (7%)
9. Garlic (7%)
10. Oranges, orange juice (7%)
11. Green Tea* (7%)

IFIC 2005
## Top 10 Functional Food Components in the News

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omega-3 fatty acids</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiber in general</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lycopene</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin C</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial fatty acids in general</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant Sterols in general</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prebiotics/Probiotics</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant estrogens in general</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin E</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carotenoids</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Number of Stories**

193  299  384

FFTV 2003
### Food Components Thought to Benefit Certain Health Conditions (unaided)

**High Cholesterol/Heart Disease**
- Oats/oat bran: 17%*
- Garlic: 8%
- Fish/fish oil: 7%
- Fiber: 5%
- Whole grain: 4%
- Olive oil: 3%
- Red wine: 2%
- Bran: 2%

**High Blood Pressure**
- Garlic: 7%
- Oats, oat bran: 3%
- Red wine: 3%
- Whole grain: 2%
- Fish, fish oil: 1%

IFIC 2005
Food Components Thought to Benefit Certain Health Conditions (unaided)

**Weight Management/Maintaining a Healthy Weight**

- Water 9%
- Low-fat foods 7%
- Milk 6%
- Green tea 5%
- Fiber 5%
- Whole grain 4%
- Fish, fish oil 3%
- Calcium; yogurt 3%

IFIC 2005
## Food Components Thought to Benefit Certain Health Conditions (unaided)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breast Cancer</strong></td>
<td>• Soy 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Broccoli 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Green, leafy veg. 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Antioxidants 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Flax, flaxseed oil 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prostate Cancer</strong></td>
<td>• Tomatoes 10%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Saw palmetto 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colon Cancer</strong></td>
<td>• Fiber 21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Whole grain 9%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Green, leafy veg. 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Broccoli 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Water 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bran 3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IFIC 2005
Awareness of “functional food”/disease pairs is highest for long-held associations (aided)

- Calcium for the promotion of bone health (93%)
- Fiber for maintaining a healthy digestive system (92%)
- Vitamin D for the promotion of bone health (88%)
- Whole grains for reduced risk of heart disease (83%)
- Fiber for reduced risk of cancer (83%)

IFIC 2005
Awareness for Those “Gaining Ground”

- Antioxidants for protection against free radical damage (79%)
- Omega-3 fatty acids for reduced risk of heart disease (78%)
- Monounsaturated fats for reduced risk of heart disease (73%)
- Potassium for reduced risk of high blood pressure/stroke (70%)
- Folate/folic acid for reduced risk of birth defects and heart disease (63%; 61%)
- Lycopene for reduced risk of prostate cancer (57%)

IFIC 2005
Awareness of lesser-known “functional food”/disease pairs (aided)

Probiotics or Prebiotic fiber for maintaining a healthy digestive system (49%; 47%)

Probiotics for maintaining a healthy immune system (46%)

Soy for reduced risk of heart disease and cancer (41%; 54%)

Plant sterols for reduced risk of heart disease (30%)

IFIC 2005
Are you aware of an association between:

- Calcium & Osteoporosis: 79% Yes, 20% No
- Antioxidants & Cancer: 54% Yes, 45% No
- Soy Protein & Heart Disease: 35% Yes, 64% No

IFIC 2002
Perceived Effectiveness of Food Component and Disease Link

- **Calcium-Osteoporosis 2002**
  - Definitely Effective: 14%
  - Probably Effective: 52%
  - Total: 66%
  - Total with Definite Effectiveness: 91%

- **Antioxidants-Cancer 2002**
  - Definitely Effective: 12%
  - Probably Effective: 47%
  - Total: 59%

- **Soy Protein-Heart Disease 2002**
  - Definitely Effective: 12%
  - Probably Effective: 47%
Calcium/Osteoporosis: Consumption by Level of Awareness

IFIC 2002
## The Gender Gap

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Concern</th>
<th>Women (%)</th>
<th>Men (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mention weight as top health concern</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mention heart disease/attack as top concern</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adding healthy elements to diet</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interested in learning more</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietitian advice impacts food decisions</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health association advice impacts decisions</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information in magazines impacts decisions</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information from TV news impacts decisions</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IFIC 2005
“Changes for the Ages”

Americans 25-34 yrs are more likely to:
- Say they have done **nothing** to improve their well-being (33%)
- Say they have made **NO** changes to their diet (35%); particularly men (50%) vs. women (28%)

Americans 45-54 yrs are more likely to:
- Say they have changed their diet (40% over the past 5 years)
- Have removed less healthful elements/ingredients from their diet (67%)

IFIC 2005
“Changes for the Ages”

Women 18-24 yrs are most likely to:

• Have added healthy elements/ingredients to their diet (48%)

• To have started eating more vegetables (35%) and fruit (27%) in an effort to improve or maintain their health
Consumers Want to Learn More

83% of consumers are interested in learning more about the health benefits offered by foods that have health benefits beyond basic nutrition.

IFIC 2005
The New Food Label: Health Claims vs. Dietary Guidance

DIETARY GUIDANCE

Nuts / Heart Disease
Omega-3’s / Heart Disease
Olive Oil / Heart Disease
Fruits & Vegetables / Cancer, etc.
Vegetable Oils vs. Solid Fats / Heart Disease
Qualified Health Claims (QHC)
Consumer Research Objectives

1) Measure consumer reaction to the FDA-proposed 4 levels of health claims on basis of:

- Strength of scientific evidence
- Overall healthfulness of the product
- Perception of product quality
- Perception of product safety
- Purchase intent
QHC Consumer Research Objectives

2) Determine whether consumers differentiate between dietary guidance and health claims.

3) Examine the impact of structure-function claims and alternative language versus qualified and unqualified health claims.
QHC Consumer Research Highlights

1. Claim type, claim level, and perceptions of a product and/or awareness of a nutrient collectively impact consumer perceptions.

2. Consumers have difficulty distinguishing among 4 levels of scientific evidence, especially with language-only claims.

3. Consumers can distinguish among 4 levels of science using report card graphic; but with negative consequences observed in consumer perception of product safety, quality, and healthfulness at lower level claims in some instances (report card graphic and text).

4. Consumers rate the scientific evidence and other attributes of a product containing an unqualified claim similar to that of products containing a structure-function claim or dietary guidance statement.
Factors in Health Message Effectiveness

- Knowledge of health concern
- seriousness of concern
- Knowledge of component
- Multiple benefits of component
- Association of component with supplements
- Availability of component
Dietary Guidance: Then and Now

- Food Guide Pyramid
  - “One size fits all”
  - Vehicle to represent all dietary recommendations

- MyPyramid.gov
  - Simplified
  - Personalized
  - Interactive
  - Incorporates energy balance
Substantiation: Maintaining Credibility

- Cite need for credible scientific criteria
- Place new research findings into context
- Use “may reduce risk” vs. “will prevent”
- Don’t “bet the ranch” on health claims
- Ensure off-label communication is reasonable, responsible information
Top Source of Health and Nutrition Information

Americans aged 18-54 are more likely to name media as one of their top sources of information on health and nutrition (75%) than those aged 55 plus (66%)

IFIC 2005
Communicating the Emerging Science of Dietary Components for Health:

1. Raise the bar on how health professionals, journalists, and other opinion leaders communicate the benefits of functional foods.

2. Better describe the state of the science on any given food or nutrition issue.

3. Develop and document guidelines to be used as tools to help influencers interpret emerging science.
Guidelines for Communicating the Emerging Science of Dietary Components for Health

**Partners**

IFIC Foundation
Purdue University

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
University of Missouri, Columbia

**Advisory Committee**

Agricultural Research Service, USDA
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Heart Association
Centre for Food and Health Studies
Federal Trade Commission
Food and Drug Administration
Foundation for American Communications
Missouri School of Journalism, MU
National Cancer Institute, NIH
Office of Dietary Supplements, NIH

Purdue University
Robert Mondavi Institute, UC Davis
Rutgers University
St. Joseph’s University
Tufts Health and Nutrition Letter
Tufts School of Medicine and Nutrition
University of Southern California
University of Massachusetts
University of Missouri, Columbia
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
Guidelines for Communicating the Emerging Science of Dietary Components for Health

1. Enhance public understanding of foods, food components, and/or dietary supplements and their role in a healthful lifestyle.
   
   **Serve up plain talk about food and health.** Advise consumers that dietary components are not magic bullets that work alone, but may promote good health when included as part of a healthful diet and lifestyle.

2. Clearly convey the differences between emerging and consensus science.
   
   **Scientific research is evolutionary, not revolutionary.** Tell consumers where new findings fall on the research continuum and within the overall body of evidence.

3. Communicate with accuracy and balance.
   
   **Carefully craft your communications.** Advise a healthy skepticism for potentially misleading headlines, such as “medical miracle” or “scientific breakthrough.” Suggest looking beyond dramatic language to get the full story. Explain that facts are facts, but experts may differ in opinion about how to interpret them. Present a complete picture of a study’s results, rather than select findings.
Guidelines for Communicating the Emerging Science of Dietary Components for Health

4. Put new findings into the context needed for an individual to make dietary decisions.
   Make your messages meaningful. Translate the latest research into what is on the consumer’s dinner plate. Spell out to whom new findings apply and what impact, if any, the findings should have on eating habits.

5. Disclose all key details about a particular study.
   Cite the specifics. Discuss the study design (such as characteristics of participants and quantity of food component consumed) to help the public understand research results and their validity.

6. Consider peer review status.
   Point out peer review as a key measure of a study’s credibility, although it is not the only key. Peer review is not a guarantee of conclusive results—it is one piece of a larger puzzle made up by the overall body of evidence.

7. Assess the objectivity of research.
   When assessing a study’s objectivity, consider the full facts—including not only disclosure of funding sources, but also peer review, methodology, and conclusions.
Guidelines for Communicating the Emerging Science of Dietary Components for Health

• For more information, please visit:

http://www.ific.org/nutrition/functional/guidelines
Questions?

reinhardt@ific.org

THANK YOU!