Perspective from Direct Consumer Communication on Inherent Contaminants

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Consumer Reports

JIFSAN-CFS3 Advisory Council Virtual Annual Symposium
Understanding of the Impact of Arsenic, Cadmium, and Lead Across the Food Supply
Who is Consumer Reports?

Consumer Reports is an independent, nonprofit organization that works side by side with consumers to create a fairer, safer, and healthier world.

CR’s science-based food safety research and testing advances our mission by:

- Testing where there is little to no testing being performed.
- Providing information to consumers on the food safety system.
- Requiring accountability of:
  - Food producers
  - Governments
  - Label claims
Recent Studies

**Study of Listeria monocytogenes in Turkey Meat Samples from Independent, Urban Delis Provides a Critical Triangulation Point for a Multistate Outbreak Investigation**

Sara Majzner and Jonghee Rhee

**ABSTRACT**

**RESULTS**

Listeria monocytogenes in turkey meat samples from independent, urban delis provides a critical triangulation point for a multistate outbreak investigation. The L. monocytogenes outbreak in the U.S. was associated with turkey meat products. The outbreak was linked to a specific deli in a city in the Midwest. The deli was the only deli in the city that offered turkey meat products. The deli was located in a city that had a high number of independent delis. The deli was the only deli in the city that offered turkey meat products. The deli was located in a city that had a high number of independent delis.

A lab technician preparing samples in Consumer Reports’ recent tests of leafy greens.

**Leafy Greens With Listeria Sold at Major Supermarkets**

Consumer Reports found the bacteria in prewashed and unbagged products. Here’s how to stay safe when eating greens.

By Trisha Calvo

July 26, 2019

**Arsenic and Lead Are in Your Fruit Juice: What You Need to Know**

CR finds concerning levels of heavy metals in almost half of tested juices. Here’s how to protect yourself and your family.

By Jesse Hirsch

Last updated: January 30, 2019

192 SHARES
Exploring Effective Messaging Strategies for Changing Consumer Food Behaviors

Behavior Change Strategies in the Field

Jeff Niederdeppe, Cornell University, Professor and Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Communication, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

1. Clear messages*, repeated often, through multiple channels, from diverse sources, over a long period of time

2. Think about the outcome you want to achieve and work backwards

* As simple as possible, but recognizing that sometimes complexity is essential
### Population distribution in the United States in 2019, by generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Birth Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Greatest Generation</td>
<td>before 1928</td>
<td>.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Silent Generation</td>
<td>1924-1945</td>
<td>6.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Baby Boomer Generation</td>
<td>1946-1964</td>
<td>21.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation X</td>
<td>1965-1980</td>
<td>19.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Millennial Generation</td>
<td>1981-1996</td>
<td>21.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation Z</td>
<td>1997-2012</td>
<td>20.46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statista, 2019
CR Food Safety Reporting

- Selection of samples is based on market analysis data of the most purchased brands + samples of importance + location of sales
  - Spices from bodegas, African and Middle Eastern stores

- Identification of brands, including pictures of the products in the story

- Recommendations based on testing results of what products to consider to purchase/avoid/reduce
A Risk-Based Approach to Select and Design Studies on Microbial and Chemical Food Safety Hazards

- Publication review, internal and external consultations
- Study Design
- RFP-contract laboratories and/or academic laboratories
- Testing-published methods, FDA BAM, USDA MLG
- Internal data analysis
- Publications-CR content, conferences, peer-reviewed journals
- Advocacy
The Consumer Reports Model

• The W’s and the H’s
  • What did we test?
  • Why did we test?
  • How did we test?
  • What did we find?
  • What does it mean to you as a consumer/mom and dads/etc?
  • What can you do?
  • How can you get involved?
CR Food Safety Reporting

• General consumption advice

• If manufacturers reformulate and retest, so will we, if informed
  • Earth’s Best Organic Infant Rice Cereal, Gerber’s Single-Grain Rice Baby Cereal and Organic Single-Grain Rice Baby Cereal

• Alternatives to products that tested high
  • Grow your own spices
  • Substitutions
# Report Results Using Graphics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern Level</th>
<th>Basil Varieties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Concern</td>
<td>Simply Organic Basil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Concern</td>
<td>365 Whole Foods Market Basil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Concern</td>
<td>Great Value (Walmart) Basil Leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Concern</td>
<td>McCormick Culinary Ground Basil (Albahaca Molida)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sausage Maker Ground Basil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Litehouse Freeze Dried Basil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Morton &amp; Bassett Basil*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spice Islands Sweet Basil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What can Parents Do?

• Limit the amount of infant rice cereal your child eats.

• Choose the right rice.

• Rethink rice prep.

• Limit packaged snacks.

• Seek out whole foods low in heavy metals.

• Be wary of fruit juice.
What can Parents Do?

• Go easy on the chocolate.

• Pick the right fish.

• Take a pass on protein powders.

• Check your water.

• Eat a broad array of healthful whole foods.
What Manufacturers Should Do

• Children’s food manufacturers don’t have to wait for the FDA before they reduce the heavy metal content of their products.
  • Self-regulate

• One step they can take is to source their ingredients from areas that are less likely to be contaminated.
  • Usually based on our testing data of multiple brands
How Can I Get Involved?
https://advocacy.consumerreports.org/issue/food/

Get Involved

Be in the Know
Join our Consumer Impact Newsletter list to stay on top of the issues that matter most to consumers.
Sign up now

Here's What We're Working On
Download our Consumer Agenda to learn more about the issues we're working on today.
Download
Frame Your Food Safety Message on Multiple Levels

Testing Data
Initial Analysis
Content

General Audience
Magazine and Website

“"If you want additional information”
Deeper Dive via links to more information

Facebook
Twitter
LinkedIn
Instagram
Pinterest
TikTok

CR Video for the web/Consumer 101 TV Show

Interviews on national TV, Radio

Partnerships

Scientific Presentations and Publications

Social Media
• The magazine readership skews Older (along with Facebook)

• Cannot get too “science-y”

• Must write at the appropriate level

• Accept that not all messaging will have broad audience appeal
  • Baby Food appealing to parents only?
CR Social

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ConsumerReports/
  • Facebook Live

Twitter: https://twitter.com/ConsumerReports
  • Twitter Chats

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/consumerreports/

Pinterest: https://www.pinterest.com/consumerreports/

TikTok: https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMJAt254W/
External Partnerships


How do we Protect our Children from Lead and other Heavy Metals in Food? – Pure Earth Expert Panel Discussion – Twitter Spaces - https://www.pureearth.org/twitter-spaces-discussion/

Extends the reach of the results and messaging to areas we normally do not have access to
Choose Your Tools Wisely

More and more, people will not pay for Television
- Streaming is king
- “As far as TV goes, we just wouldn’t use it,”

Americans now check their phones 96 times a day –
- Once every 10 minutes,
- It has increased over time and for some, is the primary source of information
- Be ready to address inaccurate information
- Your messaging has to fit the platform
- Consider apps, automatic pushes, for food safety messaging

Choose Your Tools Wisely

Use the right person(s) for engagement
• Not every CEO is camera or microphone-ready
• Some communities are more receptive to messaging from people that look like them

Communication has become “Tribal”
Mommy Bloggers
• Get their information on what products to or not to buy via Facebook and blogging platforms
• The moms are more likely to listen to other moms than to public service announcements
• These groups form, dissolve, and can reform spontaneously
