



CANADIAN FOUNDATION FOR DIETETIC RESEARCH

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CFDR STUDY REVEALS CONSUMER CONFUSION RELATED TO NUTRITION INFORMATION

National survey results presented at Dietitians of Canada national conference

WINNIPEG MB, June 9, 2016 – The Canadian Foundation for Dietetic Research (CFDR) today released the latest findings from Tracking Nutrition Trends (TNT) at the Dietitians of Canada (DC) national conference. The survey revealed a number of trends that are concerning to dietitians, including: a drop in the number of Canadians committed to improving their diets; a reduction in the number of Canadians following a specific diet; and continued confusion regarding credible sources of nutrition information.

The TNT survey polled over 1,500 Canadians from coast to coast in July and August 2015. The poll exists to investigate self-reported knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of the adult Canadian population with respect to food and nutrition. It stands as the longest standing nutrition tracking study in Canada, having first been conducted in 1989.

Respondents noted that “maintaining good health” was the most influential factor when making food choices (86%), far surpassing “weight management” (67%), “to get energy or stamina” (62%), “to live longer” (62%) or “following a special diet” (37%). However, all five of these factors decreased in importance since the 2013 iteration of the survey.

From a related question, 92% of respondents in the 2013 TNT indicated that they had made a change to improve their eating habits in the past 12 months, such as consuming less sugar, salt or fatty foods. In the 2015 survey, only 57% of respondents made the same claim. Among those who have made changes in to their eating habits in the past year, a majority indicated that they have made an effort to consume more fruits and vegetables, fibre and whole grains and protein.

In the 2013 TNT, 49% of respondents claimed to follow specific eating habits and patterns, such as using the Canada Food Guide, avoiding red meat or following a Mediterranean diet. In 2015, this dropped to 41%.

Through questions regarding Canadians’ sources of diet and nutrition information and their perceptions of the credibility of various sources, the survey showed another related trend. While 88% of respondents see Health Association materials/websites and dietitians as the most credible sources of nutrition information, they were consulted by only 38% and 20% of respondents in the preceding 12 months, respectively. Conversely, while the Internet, social media and blogs are only deemed credible by 40% of respondents, half of those polled used them to gain nutrition info over the previous 12 months. These results are consistent with those from the 2013 poll.

“These trends suggest that perhaps Canadians are overwhelmed with the sheer volume of diet-related information in the media and shared online,” said Greg Sarney, Executive Director of CFDR. “With so many recommendations that are often conflicting, it’s not surprising that people might stop trying to figure out how to eat healthier.”

The Tracking Nutrition Trends report is now available to the public. For more information on the poll, visit: <https://www.cfdr.ca/Sharing/Tracking-Nutrition-Trends.aspx>.

About Tracking Nutrition Trends

A total of 1,500 adult Canadians across Canada were surveyed online by Leger, The Research Intelligence Group in July and August of 2015. The margin of error is +/-2.2%, 19 times out of 20.

The survey was funded in part by General Mills Canada and the Dairy Farmers of Canada who provided support for the poll and its dissemination.

About the Canadian Foundation for Dietetic Research

The Canadian Foundation for Dietetic Research (CFDR) was created by Dietitians of Canada, the professional association for dietitians, and incorporated in 1991 as a charitable foundation.

Our mandate is: enhancing the health of Canadians by contributing new knowledge about food and nutrition. CFDR funds research in several nutrition and dietetic practice areas. To date, CFDR has funded more than 130 research teams across the country, awarding close to \$2 million in grants.

For further information, contact:

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