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### FARM FOUNDATION® FORUM

FARM, FOOD, AND THE POLICIES AND PRACTICES BEHIND AMERICA'S DIETARY HEALTH

MAY 11, 2022



Today's webinar is made possible by a grant from Farm Credit



#FarmFoundationForum



### MARTHA KING

Vice President, Programs and Projects Farm Foundation



### MEET FARM FOUNDATION

A 501(C)(3) NON-PROFIT AT THE INTERSECTION OF AGRICULTURE AND SOCIETY







### OUR MISSION AND VISION GUIDE OUR WORK

### **MISSION:**

To **build** trust and understanding at the intersections of agriculture and society.

### **VISION:**

To **build** a future for farmers, our communities, and our world.



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### **IMPORTANT NOTES**

- Submit questions by clicking on the Q&A Button at the bottom of your screen.
- Please include your name and company so questions may be contextually understood.
- Due to time limits, we may not be able to ask all questions submitted.
- This Forum is being recorded and will be posted on our website at farmfoundation.org as well as the Farm Foundation YouTube channel.
- Please take the short survey at the conclusion of the Forum.





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G. WILLIAM HOAGLAND

Moderator
Senior Vice President
Bipartisan Policy Center







### DR. ROBERT PAARLBERG

Public Policy Adjunct Professor, Harvard Kennedy School Associate, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard Author, *Resetting the Table* 



## Farmers, Agribusiness Organizations, and Dietary Health



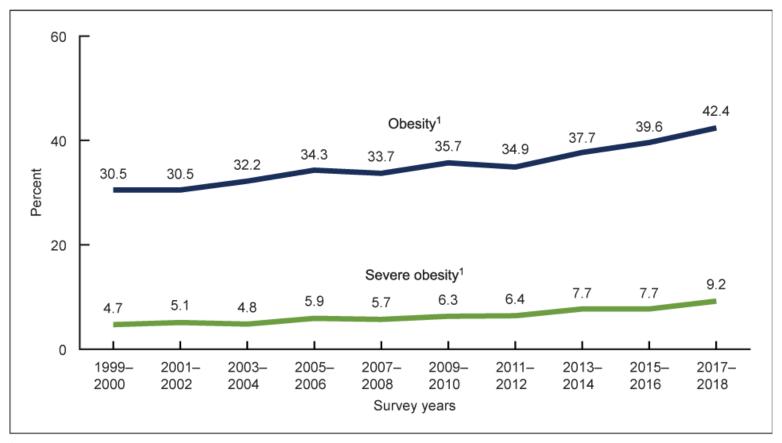
Robert Paarlberg
Farm Foundation Forum
May 11, 2022

# DIETARY HEALTH CRISIS IN AMERICA

- Only 1 in 10 Americans consumes the recommended minimum daily servings of fruit and vegetables
- Meat consumption exceeds healthy levels by 20–60 %
- Too much ultra-processed food, with added sugar, salt, and fat
- 42 percent of adults clinically obese, three times the level of the 1960s
- Obesity contributes to 300,000 deaths every year from diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancers

### Adult Obesity in the United States

Figure 4. Trends in age-adjusted obesity and severe obesity prevalence among adults aged 20 and over: United States, 1999–2000 through 2017–2018



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Significant linear trend.

NOTES: Estimates were age adjusted by the direct method to the 2000 U.S. Census population using the age groups 20–39, 40–59, and 60 and over. Access data table for Figure 4 at: https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db360\_tables-508.pdf#4.
SOURCE: NCHS, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 1999–2018.

# Poor Dietary Health From Farm Subsidies?

"[W]e create incentives for our farmers to grow huge quantities of corn and soy, mostly in the Midwest...Corn and soy is really where the calories in most of the junk food come from...we have inadvertently created a system where the cheapest calories in the supermarket are the least healthy."

---Michael Pollan, 2017

# DO FARM SUBSIDIES MAKE UNHEALTHY FOODS CHEAP?



IT'S THE OPPOSITE:

Government
Policies
Increase the
Price of...

Sugar

Wheat

Corn

Soybeans

Meat

**Dairy** 

**Diets Have** Not Worsened Because of Lower Access to Healthy Food

### 1970-2014:

- Fresh fruit availability p/cincreased 40 percent
- Fresh vegetable availabilityp/c increased 21 percent
- Fresh tomato availability
   p/c tripled and fresh
   broccoli availability p/c
   increased thirteen-fold

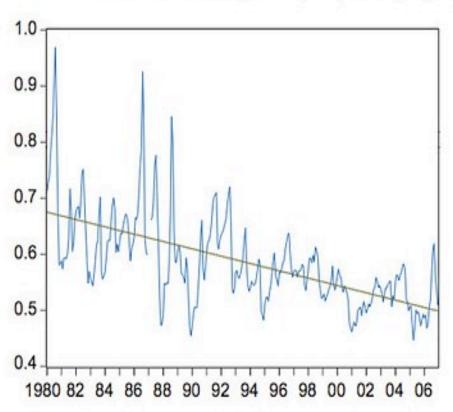
# High Price of Healthy Food Not the Problem

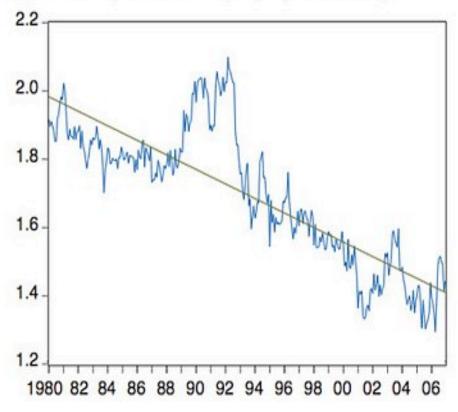
### 1980-2006:

Average retail price for healthy foods fell at same rate as for calorie-dense foods, once adjusted for inflation, quality, seasonality, according to USDA calculations

### Annual Average Change in Inflation Adjusted Prices

## APPLES vs CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES





## LOW ACCESS TO SUPERMARKETS IS NOT THE PROBLEM



Unhealthy Eating Not Caused By Food Deserts

- 2011 study: No connection found between grocery store access and healthful diets (Archives of Internal Medicine)
- 2014 study: Low-income Americans enjoy a closer proximity to supermarkets than Americans who were not so poor (Int'l Food and Ag Mgmt Review)

# The Real Problem: "Food Swamps"

- Food Swamp: "a neighborhood with at least four times as many fast-food restaurants and convenience stores compared to supermarkets and grocery stores."
- Food swamps are a stronger predictor of obesity than food deserts
- The contribution of food deserts to obesity becomes statistically insignificant once you control for food swamps (Int'l Journal of Env Research and Public Health 2017)

# Supermarkets Are Part of the Swamp

### 2018 RWJ Foundation study:

Only 30 percent of food company product offerings are healthy.

### 2019 Parker-Pope study:

Added sugars are found in nearly 70 percent of packaged foods today, including breads, yogurts, sauces, and even health foods.

### • 2019 Northwestern University study:

Almost nine out of ten packaged food products are ultraprocessed.

## Pharmacies and Department Stores are also Part of the Swamp



# WHO CREATED THE SWAMP?

- Irresponsible eaters? NO!
- Food companies? YES!

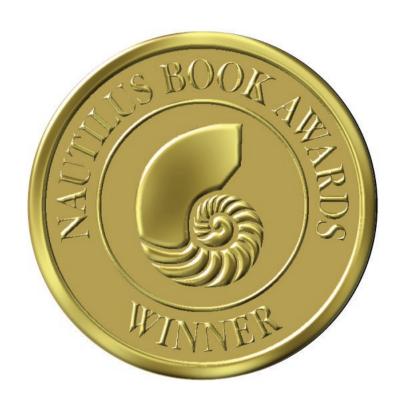
### Companies design addictive foods:

- with too much added sugar, salt, and fat
- ultra-processed
- formulated to trigger the reward circuit in our brain
- heavily advertised, including to children

Advice to
Farm
Organizations
and
Agribusiness
Companies

- Loosen your political alliance with food companies
- Reach out to public health and medical community
- Alter your message:
  - Stop stressing abundance, safety, choice
  - Start stressing nutrition and dietary health









### DR. MICHAEL F. JACOBSON

Co-founder, Center for Science in the Public Interest Author, *Salt Wars* 



### Farm Foundation Forum

## Food and Farm Policies to Improve Americans' Dietary Health

May 11, 2022

Michael F. Jacobson, PhD

Author, Salt Wars: The Battle Over the Biggest Killer in the American Diet

Co-founder, Center for Science in the Public Interest

# Dietary Prescription for Improving Health

- Eat LESS sugar drinks, processed foods reduce obesity and prevent diabetes
- Eat LESS saturated fat, cholesterol (meat, dairy)
- prevent heart attacks and strokes
- Eat LESS salt prevent heart attacks and strokes
- Eat LESS processed meat, alcohol prevent cancer of the colon, mouth, throat, breast, liver, colon
- Eat MORE whole grains, beans, vegetables lower weight, lower blood cholesterol, etc.

#### Trans Fat

- Source: partially hydrogenated vegetable oil (PHO)
- 50,000-100,000 fatal heart attacks annually
- 8 billion pounds a year
- FDA ban in 2018
- Replaced with high-oleic canola and soy;
   palm oil

## Front-of-Pack Warning Labels (Chile)

Chilean "High in Sodium" warning (similar ones for calories, sugar, saturated fat)



"High in Sodium" Products – change after labeling

Cheeses 55% decrease

Savory spreads 45% decrease

Soups 11% decrease

Sausages 64% decrease

## Farm Policies to Reduce Cardiovascular Disease

Encourage lower-fat cattle by tax/reward

Reduce fat in milk through pricing incentives

## Food Policies to Improve Health

- SNAP: bar use for sugar drinks; give bonus for fruit/vegetable purchases
- Healthier school breakfasts, lunches
- Healthier foods on government property
- Tax sugar drinks
- Limit the use of obesogenic pesticides, plastics, other synthetic chemicals





#### **EVE TUROW-PAUL**

Founder and Executive Director, Food for Climate League Author, *Hungry* 



## Food Systems & Human Truths:

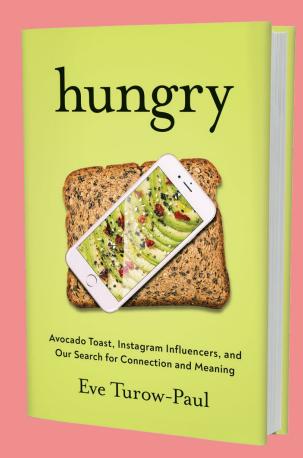
How Cultural Forces are Reshaping Food Culture

**Eve Turow-Paul** 



### **Eve Turow-Paul**









## What is the "why" behind today's biggest trends?





## Introduction

**Food Culture** 



84% 86% Millennial s
Passionate about food
Hungry Study





### Back to Basics

What needs motivate human behavior?





## Human Truths

CONTROL

COMMUNITY

**PURPOSE** 





How does our environment impact our abilities to meet these vital needs?





#### Human Needs Reflected in Food Trends

CONTROL / ANXIETY

COMMUNITY / LONELINESS

PURPOSE / POWERLESS

TRANSPARENT

SIMPLE

**ORGANIC** 

**NATURAL** 

FREE-FROM

REAL

**ANTI-GMO** 

**SHARED** 

**COMMUNAL** 

**BOUTIQUE** 

**INFLUENCERS** 

"LIKES"

**DIET TRIBES** 

**CO-LIVING** 

DIY

SOURDOUGH

**COLORING BOOKS** 

CAMPING

**HOUSE PLANTS** 

SUSTAINABLE

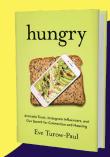
**FARMING** 





Food has became a coping mechanism, a way to feed all of our well-being needs.





The pandemic has amplified many of these existing trends.



#### Post 2020 Food Trends

**CONTROL** 

**COMMUNITY** 

**PURPOSE** 

CONVENIENCE
TOUCHLESS
VICTORY GARDENS
IMMUNE-BOOSTING
COMFORT
LESS FOOD WASTE
PLANT-BASED

HASHTAG COMMUNITIES
LOCAL FARM SHARES
VIRTUAL CLASSES
TIK TOK
SOURDOUGH
FOOD SOVEREIGNTY
INDIGENOUS

COOKING
GARDENING
PLANT PARENTHOOD
CAMPING
REGENERATIVE
CARBON NEGATIVE

## Many of these trends connect directly with sustainability.





## 89%

say they'd be "somewhat" or "very" interested in purchasing and eating foods that help their local community and farmland become more resilient to climate change.







So why is climate-smart food culture niche instead of the norm?





### Mistaken Assumptions

- Most people don't care about the climate crisis.
- Most people don't like plant-forward eating.
- We have to talk about the climate to spark sustainable food trends.





#### It's All Connected



Carbon Sequestration

#### Sustainable Food Systems

(Plant-forward, regenerative, zero waste)

Farmland Resiliency

(Soil health, business diversification)

Well-Being

(Control, community, purpose)



(Obesity, diabetes, heart disease)

**Nutrition** 

## Caught In the Cycle

Farmers Farm What Will Bring in Income

Food Companies Make
Products With Great
Margins

Eaters Eat Based on
Affordability, Accessibility
& Values





How might we break out of this cycle to better support farmers and eaters?



#### Thank You

**Eve Turow-Paul** 

**EveTurowPaul.com** 

FoodForClimateLeague.org

TheHungryBook.com









#### THANK YOU

#### **Support our Mission**

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We hope to see you at a future event!

