

Controversy: Expand your Mind, Question the Status Quo and Think Critically

Presented by Heather McColl
heathermccoll@shaw.ca
www.freshsheetnutrition.com

Our Nutrition Messages Are Driving Un-intentional Consequences such as Food Waste, Environmental Damage & Even Worse Eating Habits:

What's up with our fascination on chicken breast! Did you know dietitians tend to recommend chicken breast as the healthiest choice because it's the lowest in fat? And we always say to remove the skin - because of that fat of course! Have you ever eaten plain cooked skinless boneless chicken breast? Do you find it flavourful? The skin is what keeps chicken breast moist and tender and more flavourful. Most recipes feature skinless boneless chicken breast – why is this? Have you noticed that the food industry changed their poultry production to give consumers more chicken breast – this means growing them faster to have larger chicken breasts and adding water solutions to frozen breasts to make them appear larger. What does this do to animal welfare? Have you ever wondered what we do with all the chicken thighs, chicken skin and bones that doesn't sell – is it thrown in the garbage, wasted or what? Did you know chicken breast is the most eaten protein and the most expensive part of the chicken? Think about your eating habits or what you recommend to your friends and family right now – do you recommend chicken breast as the best choice? What's really wrong with the rest of the chicken? How does this impact our taste preferences, the public's view of dietitians?

Dietitians recommend eating fish 2 times a week because salmon contains omega-3 fatty acids to promote heart health. Did you know that if everyone in Canada ate 2 servings of salmon a week, there would be no salmon left in the ocean? Can you imagine a world without salmon? What's the environmental impact of this message? Are we as dietitians conscious of the greater impact of our messaging?

Fat Phobia created by Health Professionals: In the 90's, the main nutrition message presented to the public by health professionals was: fat is bad and eat a low fat diet. This messaging created a whole host of fat phobia that still causes confusion for consumers today. This message also meant food companies removed fat from foods and replaced it with sugar. Now we have a food market that is high in carbohydrates and sugar. The average Canadian eats about 30-40 teaspoons of sugar a day? Is sugar the new fat? How does the 'sugar is bad' messaging impact us today? Singling out one nutrient as the "bad one" has created a whole host of unintentional consequences and challenges for us today. What can we do to ensure this doesn't happen again in the future? How can we regain a balance?

The Health Paradox:

- The Japanese eat a fairly low fat diet. On the other hand, the French eat a fairly high fat diet. Both have a lower risk of heart disease than North Americans and the British.
- The Italians drink plenty of wine, while the Japanese drink very little wine and both have a lower risk of heart disease than North Americans and the British.
- The cheeky response to this paradox would be that it isn't the fat and it isn't the wine, the risk for heart disease must be speaking the English language!

But really...what does this paradox tell us? Or what questions does this paradox raise?

The Popularity of Gluten-Free: Is there truth in the popularity of the gluten-free diet? Are we eating too much wheat? Is our wheat too highly processed? Has GMO affected our wheat and our genes? Is gluten-free simply the new low-carb trend? Does a special diet like gluten-free give us the will-power to control our eating? Is gluten-free a healthy approach? *Let's discuss what you think about gluten-free...*