

Consumer Research: Tracking Nutrition Trends



presented by

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Consumer Surveys

Tracking Nutrition Trends (TNT) is the only Canadian Consumer focused research of its kind

- 7 iterations of TNT (TNT I – VII) since 1989
- All provide insight of Canadians on food and nutrition

Tracking Nutrition Trends

TNT provides policy makers, health professionals, academics and the food industry with insight into Canadians' perspectives on the importance of nutrition and their self-reported knowledge and behaviours.



20 Year History Report: TNT

Reviewed prior findings in light of two questions:

- “Is there a trend that remains interesting and valuable to people concerned about food and nutrition?”
- “Do the findings help paint a picture of a broader theme?”

TNT 20 year history report – key themes

Need to know more about:

- “the anti-nutritionist”
- Shift in factors affecting food choice
- Food labels
- “very knowledgeable” not consistent with findings

Ethnography - Adding 'Colour' to the TNT Findings

Ethnographic approach – 'a portrait of people':

- Social science research method
- Observing tasks and actions rather than recall
- A way of learning *from* people

TNT Ethnographic Study - Methodology

30 Canadians carried out daily life tasks for 5 days (solo meal, shopping, cooking)

- Photos of tasks uploaded
- Revelation (online immersive research facility)
- Total Fieldwork: July 15 – 27, 2010

Participants

Canadians, aged 18 – 65

- Responsible for grocery shopping
- Internet savvy
- Broad representation
- 12 French, 18 English

Participants' tasks

- “Getting to know You”
- Food diary
- Photo essays
- “You and Food”
- Final Day Exit Questionnaire
- Joint discussion board

Sharing Results

Homeplate: final report

- Prepared by a panel of RD's
- Included photo diaries and photo essays

Some examples



Participant profile - Susan



Susan's photos



“The most difficult thing about eating well is always having to prepare fresh meals instead of just picking up some takeout”

Key Insight: convenience

TNT VII showed nutrition was important, ahead of cost and convenience but behind taste

- Ethnographic study supports the importance of nutrition and the supremacy of taste but shows **convenience** emerging as a **more prominent** factor

Participant profile: Rhonda



Rhonda's photos



“chicken fingers are frozen all white meat and the meal is at home .. this is just what we were in the mood for and our little girl enjoys them as well”

Key insight: Rise of pre-packaged foods, eating out

The food records indicated:

- Many packaged, processed, convenience foods
- Eating out: 1 meal/day (Ethnographic Study); TNT VII: 1 meal/week

Tasty photos



Key Insight: Taste is King

- Taste trumps nutrition, cost, convenience
 - Taste reigns supreme but convenience is emerging as a prominent factor
 - Consumers may select the more nutritious option, when choosing from among taste favourites

Photos: nutrition information



Few provided comments or images about reliable sources of nutrition information, other than food labels

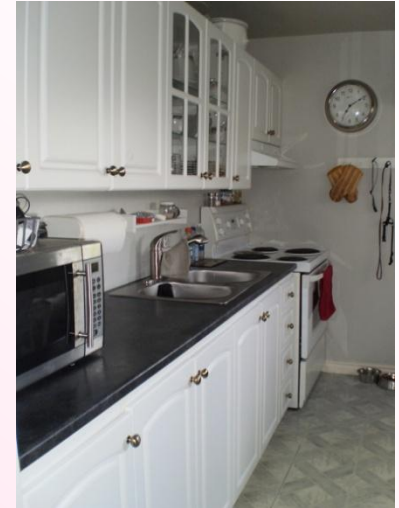
Key insight: food labelling; “Good nutritional packaging?”

- Images are of the Nutrition Facts table... why?
 - Because it seems to **reassure** consumers that someone is making manufacturers disclose
 - Helps those committed make good food choices

Comments on Food Labelling

- *"As a consumer it's important for me to be able to trust nutritional information and labelling standards in order to make informed decisions. With the abundance of chemicals and modified genetics in the food industry I firmly believe those standards should be taken more seriously and punishment for non-compliance severe."*
- *"As a weight watcher I need to know the calories, fat and fibre. These 3 things are the most important to me."*

Photos: food prep areas



Food prep areas 2



Canadian Foundation
for Dietetic Research

Key Insights: Impact of Infrastructure and skills

- Infrastructure issues
- Skill needs i.e. cooking

Photos: Solo meals



Key Insights: Solo meals present challenges

When the participants ate on their own:

- Food choices were poorer than when they ate as a family
- More convenience-type foods
- Fewer food group choices were consumed
- Meals were regularly eaten with distractions

More key insights

- Reality check
- Gaps in awareness

Key Insights: photo diaries lead to self awareness

“I would like to see me take more time to prepare healthier foods. I thought I ate pretty good until this week.”

“Only one thing sticks out like a sore thumb and that is all the pop I drink. I should be drinking less of that and replace it with water, juice or milk”.

“I found that I could really use more fruits and dairy products. I never noticed how little of those I was consuming in a week until I wrote it down.”

Key Insight: Not adding up

- TNT reports that consumers view 'maintaining good health' as an influential factor on food choice
- Cannot be reconciled with the images and stories in this ethnographic study

Opportunities for change

- Campaign to boost self awareness
- Good tasting food needs to be part of the solution
- Change of the food supply to support health
- Education campaign(s) – build on
 - Food product label knowledge
 - Cooking skills
- Further study to dig deeper

The next steps

CFDR is committed to carrying on the important legacy of TNT

- Next TNT focus: Ongoing research? Adolescents? Obesity? More ethnography?
- Watch for more - 2013