KEY TRANSITIONS IN NUTRITION COMMUNICATION

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The Netherlands Nutrition Centre

Provides information on, and encourages consumers to make, healthier, safe and more sustainable food choices.

Information based on scientific consensus

Independent foundation (since 1941)

100% funded by the Ministries:
- Health, Welfare and Sport
- Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality
What do people in the Netherlands eat?

This picture is part of the Hungry Planet project. © Peter Menzel & © Faith D’Aluisio. www.menzelphoto.com.
Nutrition is hot
From scarcity
To abundance
Strategy Netherlands Nutrition Centre

- Providing **consumers** with tools to make healthier and sustainable choices
- Making **food environments** healthier
Key transitions in Nutrition Communication

1. Key transitions in Nutrition Science

2. Key transitions in Nutrition Communication
Question to audience:

What are your first associations with Nutrition Science?
Nutrition Science: from foods, to nutrients to foods and food patterns

< 1900  Relation foods and diseases (scurvy, beri-beri)
1800-1900  Macro nutrients, energy
1900-1930  Identification of vitamins
1943  Physiology and macro- & micronutrients
2015  Nutrients, foods and food patterns
Wheel of Five, the Netherlands: “More plant-based and less animal-based food”

- New in protein part
  - Meat: max. 500 grams/week
  - Fish: 1x/week from sustainable sources
  - Eat weekly a portion of pulses
  - Eat daily a handful of nuts
‘Green’ visual models
Nutrition Science: more behavioral science

Complexity of changing health behaviour
Drivers of food choice: health and sustainability are different

Temporal

Social

other
them
us
mine
me

Taste
Price
Convenience

Health
Sustainability

now
soon
later
ever?

Source: Prof. van Trijp WUR (2015)
I CAN RESIST EVERYTHING EXCEPT TEMPTATION.

Oscar Wilde
Irish Writer
(1854-1900)
Low motivation to think

Unhealthy stimuli in environment

Unhealthy food choices
TAKE SMALL STEPS
Key transitions in Nutrition Communication

1. Key transitions in Nutrition Science

2. Key transitions in Nutrition Communication
Nutrition communication: dialogue

From Sending

To Dialogue

word geen suikertrien!

Wijn? Je vindt dat een goed idee?

Wijntje bij de kapper? Bier bij het tankstation?

Vind je dat een goed idee?

Wine at the hairdresser? Beer at the fuel station? Good idea?
Nutrition communication: tools for behavioral change

Kies Ik Gezond app

Eetmeter

Sugar cubes per portion (150 grams)
Nutrition communication: tools for behavioral change
Challenge to reach everyone
Go beyond communication: Change the Environment to facilitate healthier choices

Example: School canteens, sport canteens
Broader approach needed: supermarket, restaurants, public spaces
Nutrition communication: from information to entertainment

Corpus, The Netherlands
Start early

‘Food literate’ children have better relation with food, make better choices.

- Food literacy, e.g. knowing what is healthy and sustainable; how to prepare a meal; how much you need
How many EU countries have an independent institute to inform the public on nutrition?

- a. all
- b. majority
- c. 7-15
- d. 2-6
- e. 1
Members:
Austria
Belgium
Bulgaria
Denmark
Germany
Greece
Latvia
Malta
Netherlands
Poland
Portugal
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland

Blue: interested

European Public Health Nutrition Alliance (Since 2014)

Leadership in nutrition & health communication

Voedingscentrum
Optimising Nutrition Communication

- Ensure access for consumers to:
  - Objective, science based nutrition information
  - State of the art website & materials
  - Effective, tested tools
- Find synergies
Food Based Dietary Guidelines (Plates)

- same science, different models -
Food Based Dietary Guidelines (Pyramids) - same science, different models -

- Germany
- Austria
- Switzerland
- Belgium
- Spain
What can nutrition scientists do?

- Engage in the debate
- Publish
  - Transparent
  - Critical on funding
- Train
  - Debating skills
  - Leadership skills
    - ENLP, ANLP, etc.
Wrapping up

Key science transitions:
- From foods, to nutrients, to foods and food patterns
- Nutrition = health & sustainability
- More behavioural science

Key Nutrition Communication transitions:
- From sending to dialogue
- From information to behavioural change
- From information to entertainment
- Individuals AND environment
- Finding synergies across countries
Thank you