

# Current Food Myths Confusing Consumers

CHICAGO, IL — An 11-city checkoff-funded media tour featuring Dr. Paul Saltman, professor of biology at the University of California, San Diego has recently been completed. The goal of the tour was to dispel rumors and misconceptions about meat and diet.

During the media tour he reached an estimated audience of more than 5.5 million consumers. In a series of 57 radio, television and print interviews.

Saltman told the media he believes most consumers are confused about nutrition and diet. An independent Gallup poll conducted in conjunction with the tour reaches the same conclusion.

"Most of the confusion centers around cholesterol, fat and calorie content of foods," says Saltman, who feels the confusion comes

from the many nutritional messages consumers are bombarded with, many of which are contradictory.

He said that instead of dispelling misconceptions, many of these messages add to the confusion and actually create new myths about eating.

"The public is not necessarily misinformed about nutrition, but the information is getting muddled," says Saltman. "The Gallup poll, which looked at nutrition knowledge, attitudes and behavior of meal preparers, shows that some nutrition messages are received, but not always acted upon."

The poll showed that salt, saturated fat, sugar and cholesterol were top nutritional concerns, but fewer than half said they pay any

attention to these factors when doing day-to-day meal planning.

"When asked which three-ounce portion of meat was highest in cholesterol -- broiled sirloin, broiled chicken or broiled flounder -- 73 percent of those polled said the sirloin," says Saltman. "However, beef and chicken contain equal amounts of cholesterol, about 76 milligrams per three-ounce serving."

Two-thirds of the respondents knew that going overboard in eliminating fat from the diet -- regardless of the nutrient benefits -- may actually cause nutritional deficiencies.

"While 83 percent of those polled know that it is easy to reduce fat in beef by trimming, proper cooking and choosing low-fat grades of beef, they do not believe that beef is lower in fat and calories than it was two years ago," says Saltman. "In reality, changes in feeding and breeding have lowered the fat content in beef since the 1950s."

On the subject of calories, Saltman says that lean, well-trimmed beef is comparable to calories in skinless chicken. The poll revealed that 26 percent of those contacted do not remove the skin from chicken, which adds to the calorie and fat content.

"Trimming exterior fat from beef can eliminate up to 50 percent of the saturated fat and cholesterol," says Saltman.

When asked about taste, 40 per-

cent said they prefer beef, compared to 37 percent for skinless chicken and 20 percent who favored broiled flounder. More than half of the respondents who ate meat on the previous day said they ate beef at their main meal.

"The poll shows the 'good food vs. bad food' preoccupation has left many people with a sizable list of dietary do's and don'ts with very little understanding of them," says Saltman. "Many people have developed baseless food fears that lead to poor food choices, which make it nearly impossible to get adequate amounts of essential nutrients."

Saltman made this point on the media tour and in, "The California Nutrition Book" which he co-authored. The book tells how to enjoy good nutrition without sacrificing favorite foods.

The checkoff-funded media tour and the Gallup poll were conducted on behalf of beef producers and importers by the Beef Industry Council and Beef Board. The Beef Industry Council is a federation of 44-state beef councils that works to build demand for beef through checkoff-funded programs of promotion, research and consumer information.

## Pie-Making Tips

(Continued from Page B18)

And besides, we're having lots of fun."

The sisters attribute having fun together to their childhood when they worked on the family's dairy farm. "We never had a hired hand. We learned to work and have fun doing it," they said.

Recently a customer remarked, "You do good for two old retired ladies."

Pauline stoutly replied, "We may be retired, but don't call us old."

Then she admitted to her sister, "You know we are old."

But Mildred replied, "I worked in a nursing home and I know what

old people looked like. Although some of them aren't as old as we are, they looked old."

The sisters agreed not think about getting old but to always keep busy.

How long do these retired ladies plan to keep baking? Pauline laughs merrily and recounts, "A caterer that orders my pies on occasion told me I'd better keep baking for another 25 years."

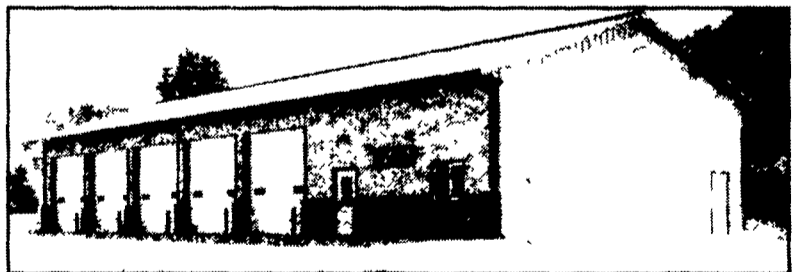
She shrugged, "So I guess I have a long way to go."

Pauline's pies can be purchased at 10 Heffelfinger Road, Lebanon, 17042 or by calling (717) 272-8082.

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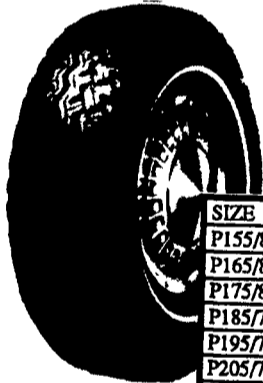
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