

Food Safety Issues Facing the Industry – Marketing vs. Safety

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Overview

- Today we'll examine different approaches to marketing food safety in the context of...
- Consumers' perceptions of food safety vs. safety itself...
- Outlining some of the specific concerns consumer hold when considering parts of the agri-food chain
- We'll also touch on the dangers of marketing on food safety
- And look at who/how many seem to be driving the "food sensitivity file"

Food Safety From a Marketing Perspective...



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Marketing

- **Marketing = The Action or Business of Promoting or Selling Products/Services**
- **Need to create Brand Identity, Brand Differentiation, Brand Equity**
- **Positioning is king**
- **When positioned appropriately, prospective customers immediately recognize your product's unique benefits or advantages, and are better able to assess it in comparison to your competitor's offering**





Marketing Food Products

Demand driven



What do consumers want?

- **Product-related attributes:**

- Taste
- Nutrition
- Price / cost
- New / different
- Look / visual appeal
- Calories / fat content
- Cholesterol
- Ease of preparation
- Packaging
- Recipe options / variety
- What kids will eat
- Quality / consistency

- **Other “issues”:**

- Organic
- Environmentally responsible production
- Animal treatment
- Country of origin
- Food safety





Different Approaches to Positioning

- **Product attributes**

- Juicy Jumbos: “The big, juicy hot dog made with the very best quality ingredients”



The big, juicy hot dog made with the very best quality ingredients.



- **Product benefits**

- Lean Links: “Dinner sausages with 40% fewer calories and less than 10% fat”





Different Approaches to Positioning

- **Against another product**
 - Dempsters: “Breads made with whole grain flour use all 3 parts of the grain and provide you with all the goodness and taste of the whole grain. On the other hand, breads made with white flour as their main ingredient (as most brands of grain breads are) use only 1 part of the grain and provide you with only part of the nutrients and taste of the grain.”





Different Approaches to Positioning

- **Product category disassociation**

Maple Leaf Prime Naturally:

- “Canada’s only national brand of fresh, vegetable-grain fed chicken.”
- “No animal by-products”



At this point in time, marketing on “food safety” is a way of distinguishing your brand from the rest of the category



Approaches to Food Safety From a Marketing Perspective

Options:

1. **Don't talk about it / Keep "under the rug"**
2. **Use it: Position your brand against others or against the whole product category**
 - **Subtle**
 - **Obvious**



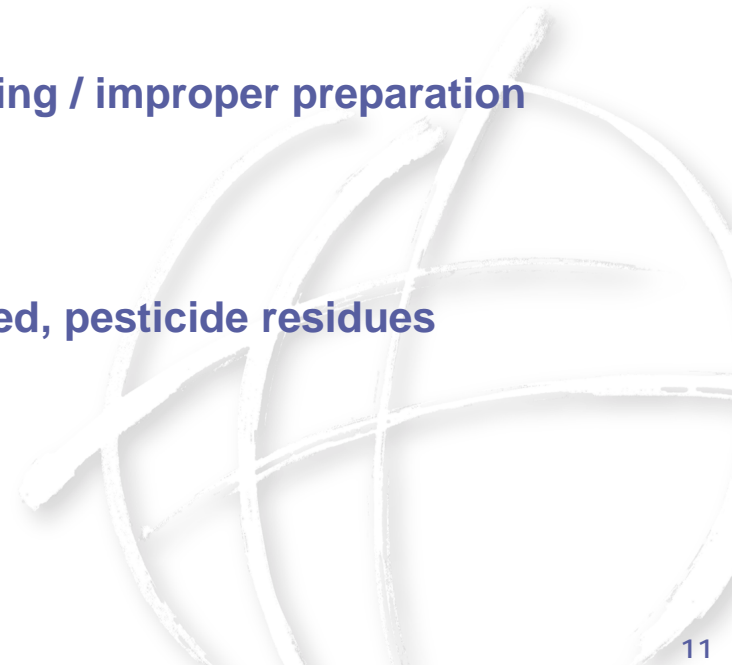
But What is “Food Safety” to the Consumer?





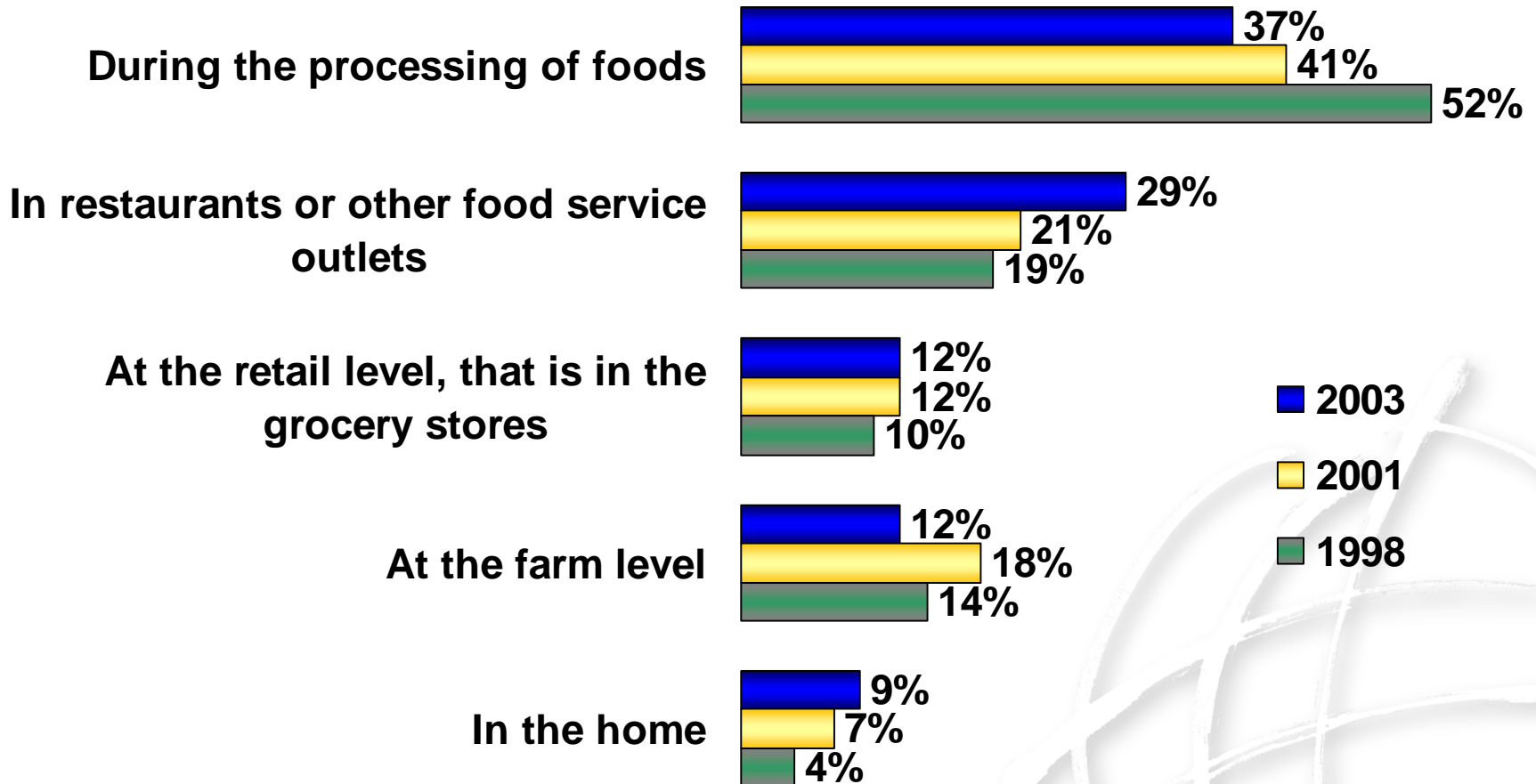
What is “Food Safety” to the Consumer?

- When we ask consumers about food safety, different things come to mind depending on the type of product we are talking about
- However, when it comes to most foods, the risks they are primarily thinking of tend to fall under the following categories:
 - Bacterial contamination
 - Perishable / freshness concerns
 - Problems arising from poor food handling / improper preparation
 - Animal diseases
 - Hormones, antibiotics
 - Farming practices – what animals are fed, pesticide residues
 - Additives and preservatives
 - Pollution





Consumers Believe Food Safety Problems are Most Likely to Occur at Food Processing ...





What do consumers feel are the risks?

Farm Level

- Pesticide use

Food Processing

- Poor handling/preparation, Bacterial contamination, Lack of surveillance/safety measures

Grocer/Retailer

- Poor handling/preparation, Shelf life, Poor storage and refrigeration

Restaurants

- Poor handling/preparation, Bacterial contamination

Home

- Poor handling/preparation, Bacterial contamination, Poor storage and refrigeration





Where Do Consumers Feel Food Safety Problems are Likely to Develop...

Comment From a Food Processor:

- *“When you interview consumers, they could be doing your survey while chopping veggies on a cutting board they just thawed chicken on, and they will – even knowing what they are doing is dead wrong – claim processors are most likely the problem.”*

33% of Canadian households do not keep separate cutting boards for raw meats and vegetables

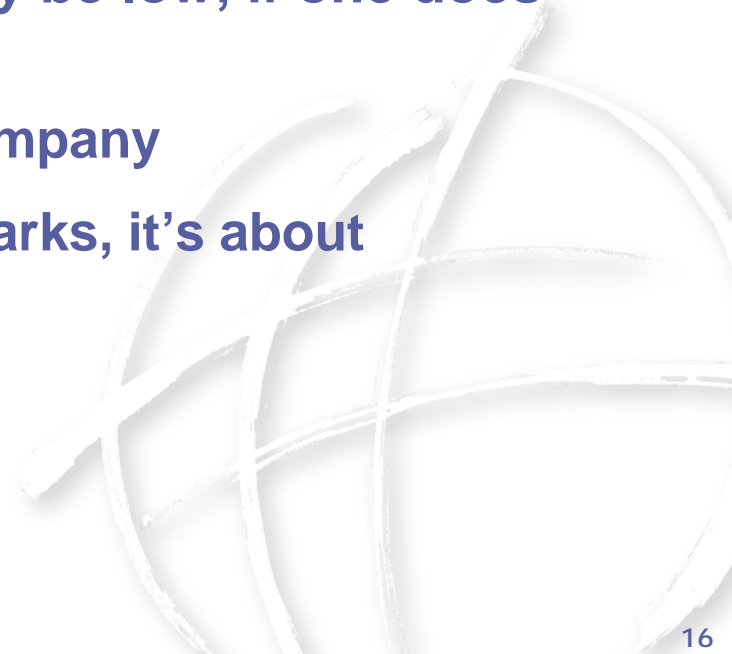
The Dangers of Marketing on Food Safety...





Dangers of Marketing on Food Safety

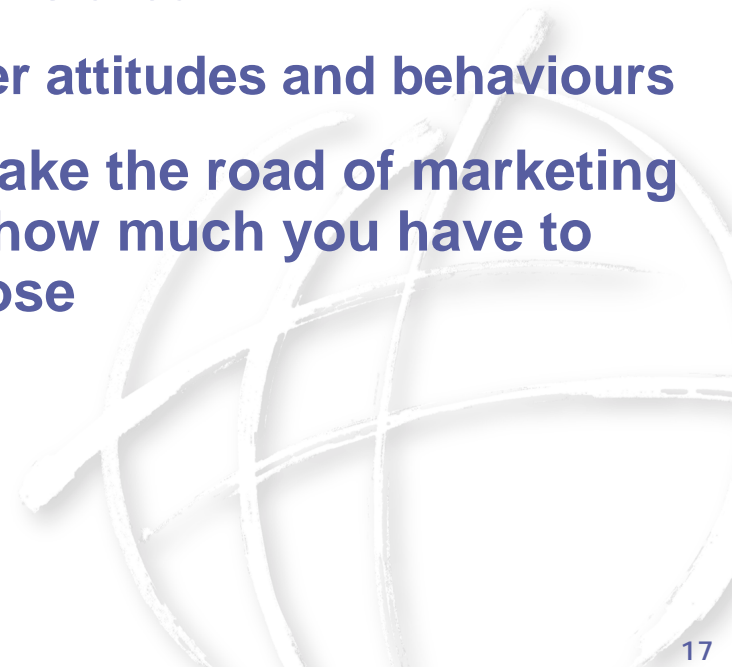
- Unlike other product-related attributes that a food manufacturer controls (e.g. taste, nutrition, package size)... food safety can not be controlled to the same degree
 - Many others steps and players in the chain
 - Control is only as good as the weakest link
- Although the risk of a problem may be low, if one does occur, the outcome can be severe
 - Discredit the brand... and the company
 - Branding isn't just about trademarks, it's about "Trustmarks"





Dangers of Marketing on Food Safety

- As well, marketing a particular food product/brand on it's safety implies that other products may not be as safe
 - How wise is this?
 - How does it affect your category overall?
- And lastly, drawing attention to food safety could create more "consumer involvement" in this area
 - Could result in shifts in consumer attitudes and behaviours
- As a food company, whether you take the road of marketing on food safety or not depends on how much you have to gain... or how much you have to lose



Conclusions...

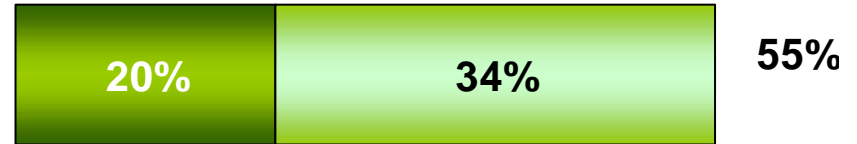




Conclusions...

- From all of our work, there appears to be just under a quarter of the population that tend to strongly drive the “food sensitivity” file...

**Very Concerned / Somewhat Concerned
About the Safety of the Food They Eat**



**Not At All Confident / Not Very Confident
That Their Food is Safe**



**Feel that food available today is less safe
than 10 years ago**





What would make consumers more confident in the safety of their food?





Looking Forward...

- What you've seen today is only the tip of the iceberg
- Need to consider a bigger picture and some of the trends that are underway, as well as some that are just emerging

Trends to keep in mind...

- For starters, food has become more important in the way we view our health





Looking forward...

Trends to Keep in Mind (continued):

- Time is of the essence
- Weight / obesity is a growing issue
- Food safety has been a growing concern since 1992
 - Two reasons:
 - An extension of the environment issue
 - Focus on the regulatory and supply chain process
- Disclosure will continue it's momentum



A vertical rectangular inset image on the left side of the slide. It shows a close-up of a hand reaching out from the right, with the index finger pointing towards a glowing, spherical planet (Earth) on the left. The background is dark, suggesting space.

Thank you.

**See other survey results at:
www.ipsos-reid.com**



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