IN RESPONSE TO CONSUMERISM*

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When Dick Epley invited me to participate at a meeting of meat specialists, primarily in academic research and teaching I truly was pleased, for it meant you had an interest in the consumer front and the ultimate journey's end of your efforts...as well as research, production and teaching. But, because I don't know you...your organization...I really wasn't sure what approach I should take. Dick was full of ideas, however, so you can blame him if what I'm going to talk about isn't what you bargained for.

He said you would be interested to hear about the things that, as a retailer, we are attempting to do for the consumer in all areas of activity including education and information about all aspects of food shopping, preparation and nutrition. He said you would be particularly interested in my description of today's consumer, pointing out some of the major changes in consumer's food interests and buying patterns. He also said he thought many of you would be very interested if I indicated to you how I think you can help me and others like myself carry the ball in the area of consumer education in food.

So--I have organized my remarks around his request. Last March, I related similar things to the National Pork Producers Congress in Indianapolis, so if any of you were there I hope you won't mind this refresher, three months later.

So--on to the subject I know better than meat--consumers--and, how we are responding to them. Hopefully, you will be able to relate what you hear about this consumer, her and his ever changing demands and desires when shopping for meat, as well as all the other thousands of products, so that you might see how the direction and thrust of your research and guidance can respond with increasingly better timing and satisfaction.

So--I guess I'm here to tell you how we try to be sensitive to what's on the mind of the consumer, and--what we are doing.

Anyone who is billed to talk about consumerism usually covers, what I now call common terms--unit pricing and open dating. I could talk about Jewel's experience of 6 years ago when we were the first retailer to introduce unit pricing chain wide, and the same a year later for open dating. Perhaps these are unfamiliar terms to you in

academia...but on the otherhand, I assumed that being as close to college students as you are, you would be quite up-to-date. I frequently feel that new waves of consumer ideas begin on college and university campuses. So--right here, is my first suggestion to you as to how you could help me. You could keep me in tune with the trends of student moods, philosophies and thrusts.

A very major effort on Jewel's part, which I think would interest you, was our research and development of meat identity labeling. How many times have retailers been accused of ripping off the consumer by giving fanciful names to retail cuts of meat, and then charging whatever the trade would bear. We felt we were already honest with the consumer, but then with our sister food companies--star markets in New England, Buttrey Food Stores out here, headquartered in Great Falls, Montana, and Eisner Food Stores in Central Illinois and Indiana coupled with Jewel in the five midwest states—we knew that different names meant different things in different parts of the country. Pity the poor food shopper moving from Boston to Pocatello, Idaho, who has every intention of finding her favorite cuts of meat—only to discover a case of packages bearing foreign names. So, our committee of meat experts from each of our grocery companies worked for two years at eliminating names and developing a complete list of standardized terminology—based on identification for all meat cuts. New slugs were made and large pictured charts of beef, veal, lamb and pork with their retail cuts identified as to where they come from, were displayed in every Jewel meat department. We still maintain those charts today, 4 1/2 years later. You know the story from there. After we introduced the program with heavy advertising and much consumer education, we turned the whole thing—even our ads, consumer booklet and signing—to an industry-government-university committee, with the hopes that it could encourage retailers all over the country to adopt the standards. It has been encouraging to us to see this happening, even though it's been slower than we had hoped.

Other consumer programs have been nutrition labeling, percentage ingredient labeling, metric information and other informative actions that really spell disclosure and consumer information.

What I think might interest you about the customer is...what do consumers want, what do they demand, what do they know, what do they expect?

First of all, things began changing at a faster pace a few years ago. It became apparent to us that the consumer had more and more questions about food: its cost, its quality, its availability and its preparation, than ever before. Individual customers, representatives of women's groups and civic organizations, home economics teachers and PTA leaders, called the consumer affairs department in increasing numbers requesting information, asking that someone from Jewel speak to their groups: answer their questions, allay their concerns. Then, as these requests became greater in number, it was obvious that more
and more Jewel people would have to become involved if we were to be of real service to our community. I did not like to turn down requests for speakers, but it became physically impossible to reply affirmatively to all of them.

As a result, a group of people, known as consumer educators was formed. These are resident supervisors, store managers, district supervisors in all areas, who have been trained in public speaking, and who enjoy talking before an audience. Equipped with a script, a slide presentation and confidence in what Jewel is doing for the consumer, these educators have covered the suburbs and beyond, entering into lively discussions as they strive to answer the questions on consumer’s minds. These are still scheduled months in advance right now.

So, let's take a look at this consumer. First of all, we know the consumer is a changing one, and has probably changed the most dramatically in the last two years. What about consumer attitudes? Consumers are certainly more temperamental, and far less loyal today...less loyal to specific brands and specific retailers. Changes in buying habits and eating patterns have been most apparent--many of which should please you, which means there are great implications to all of us involved in food--whether in the research and development of it, or the growth of it, packaging, shipping or selling of it!

According to the General Mills' American Family Report released last year, money is the chief preoccupation of American families today and the principle source of argument in the family, and their updating research says this is still true. The troubled economy has seemed to alter the family menu in terms of content and quantity. Meats, frozen and prepared foods and sweets have been the major mealtime cutbacks and some families have even given up second helpings. Many of the changes in eating patterns reflect family efforts to keep down food costs, but the study noted that few families have had much success in beating the high cost of food. Budgeting, saving, wives working--all are part of the effort to deal with inflation, but the major strategy for families is to change its buying and spending patterns and to adjust its lifestyle.

Many families have done such a good job in making these changes that they feel they are now better shoppers. They question more, they are less wasteful and they are sharing their concerns about money with their children.

Another study, "The Shopping Crisis 1975" by Needham, Harper and Steers Advertising, Inc. reports on: I--What is happening to today's food buyers? and II--What are they doing about it? I want to discuss with you Part I especially, but first, listen to some of these highlights of the findings. You should hear some opportunities!
1. Women are more aware of prices and price changes than they have been in the past.
2. Because prices have gone up so much, many women are angry.
3. Women agree "It's no fun to shop anymore."
4. They dislike shrinking package sizes--for example, going from a 16-ounce package of bacon or sausage to a 12-ounce--they feel like you're trying to put something over on them.
5. They say they are very concerned about nutrition, although they have a difficult time defining it.
6. Women are concerned about teaching their children better eating habits than they have, so that their children will grow up healthy.
7. Women's personal nutritional concerns seemed to be linked to weight watching.
8. Women divide food into two nutritional categories: (1) those that are good (which they call God-made foods), and (2) those that are bad (man-made foods).
9. "Natural" is a buzz word for nutritious.
10. Women believe that additives--such as nitrite, sugar, artificial flavoring, coloring and processing are antithetical to nutrition.
11. Processing is bad because it robs food of its natural nutrition, and substitutes additives, artificial flavoring, etc.
12. The middle man bears the brunt of blame most recently.
13. Women have made changes in their food planning, shopping and meal preparation because of concerns about inflation, nutrition, and consumerism.
14. Much more than formerly was the case, women are making lists and menu planning in order to avoid unnecessary purchases.
15. Consumers say they pay more attention to labels than they did in the past--nutrition information is one of the reasons...where is the meat industry with nutrition labeling? Are you urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture to revise and finalize their regulations? The meat industry has a lot to benefit from nutrition labeling.
16. Women are making changes in what they buy. They say they are cutting down on snack foods (cookies, chips, etc.) for cost and nutrition. Instead, they are substituting fruit, raw vegetables, graham crackers, peanut butter, popcorn and other "natural foods."

17. Besides snack cakes and cookies, they are cutting down on other sugar related items, such as soda, fruit drinks, candy, gum, presweetened cereal and jelly.

18. Women are making their own convenience foods.

19. There is increased do-it-yourself gardening, canning, baking and freezing.

Those are just 19 of the 48 listed ingredients! So, let's probe a bit closer into what is happening to today's food buyers.

Recent studies indicate that--while recession lessons in saving will not be quickly abandoned--consumers will spend more when there is good reason to do so. The 1975 report of supermarket trends by Yankelovich, Skelly and White, Inc. shows a shift back to convenience foods, but noted that the shift was toward foods offering definite time savings, with no noticeable movement toward convenience foods regarded as luxury items.

This same study, plus another one by Progressive Grocer, show the working woman to be more conscientious in money-saving methods than non-working women--except in practices that are time-consuming, such as redeeming coupons.

A recent Roper report talked about more steak, less starch. The American diet has shifted in the direction of more high grade meat protein in the past year. The change is not large, but it is consistent. There has also been a slight increase in the consumption of chicken and turkey, and a slight decrease in the serving of hamburger and other forms of ground beef. Pork, however, which has risen considerably in price in the last year, shows a sharp drop-off. People also report serving less fish.

The serving of the money saving fillers, casseroles, stews, rice and pasta, has also dropped in the past year. The only starch which has remained constant in consumption is potatoes. Soups, too, are being served less often--both homemade and canned. Hot cereal is being served a bit less with cold cereal picking up. Puddings, gelatin desserts, and cakes made from mixes are reported being served less often than a year ago, yet soft drinks have picked up.

The overall pattern of food consumption is consistent with other indications of a stronger economy shown in recent studies. Americans currently feel that things may not get much better, but on the other-hand, they probably won't get much worse. Thus we do see them making
spending choices again…but not in the comfortable old spending patterns we used to expect before the recession. The items consumers cut back on during hard times are not being returned to old levels as before. People seem to have learned that they can live with these changes easier than perhaps they had thought.

At the end of 1975 a study of 200 women found that they actually liked cutting back on food, gasoline and the use of energy for reasons that go far beyond the money they save. At a 3 to 1 majority, the women felt that they are better off personally for having to cut back on foods and gas in that it has contributed to their health, happiness and financial well being. They reported feeling good about cutting back on food, for example, because the cutbacks were heavily concentrated on desserts and snacks which they feel are so heavily loaded with sugar and fat as to be unhealthy.

When consumers were asked directly how they could increase their spending by 20%, only 8%, or one family in twelve, reported that it would buy more food. Looking at the rest of 1976, consumers are clearly planning to make deferrable purchases, as we have already been seeing. On the otherhand, there does not seem to be an indication for increased sales in food. People seem to have enjoyed finding they can be frugal, and indicate that they don't really want to give up the habit of cutting back. Perhaps this has a real message to you. If consumers aren't going to buy more food or spend more for their food, perhaps we should concentrate on improving the quality of food available to them, and also help them know how to improve the quality of their meals, and eating habits.

Numerous surveys and studies show the subject of nutrition an important one. Roper reports, "Awareness of nutrition issues is relatively high. Most feel they need to know more about nutritive values, and after cost, it is the major consideration in food buying decisions. One fourth of the public (1/3 of women) have either changed brands recently or stopped buying a food product because they thought it nutritionally inadequate..." And, I think this is to your advantage. In the Needham study, the subject of nutrition also came up often with every interview. Although there is confusion about its meaning, most feel processing causes food to become less nutritious. This should be a concern to us…and perhaps you can help do something about it. I believe that you have a credibility with the public that industry sometimes doesn't have.

The importance of nutrition begins with children--teaching proper eating habits. They think children like junk food because they were brought up on it. They want to change that.

Nutrition for the husband is most usually associated with potential heart disease.

I mentioned earlier that certain things make food non-nutritious. Again, here is where you can be of much help.
Any form of processing seems to automatically lower the nutritional value of a food. Doesn't this say to you that all of us...every facet of the food path system has a responsibility in educating the consumer. And, educating the consumer about the positive benefits to the consumer, of safe, government-approved food processing, is part of that.

When making food purchases, total cost of the product is the primary criterion of choice for all groups in the population, well off and poor, at all levels of education, and for both men and women shoppers.

But, believe it or not, the nutritive content according to Roper is the second consideration in buying decisions (which may not mean it actually is much less important than price, since nutritive content may be considered to be similar for items of varying prices).

For the consumer activists, nutrition is considered a top priority matter, after scanning, according to a survey taken by Supermarketing magazine. They want supermarkets to take more responsibility for carrying and promoting nutritious as opposed to "junk" foods. But, listen to what nutrition means to them. These were typical comments from responding activists.

1. "Additives, preservatives and sugar in food must be abolished," wrote one activist. This includes "sodium nitrates and nitrates in hot dogs, sugar, all junk snacks including sugar cereals. BHA-BHT in cereals and MSG as a meat tenderizer."

2. "Mass education is needed on nutrition," said the vice president of a national activist group. "We need more food that is good for the body, less sugar and chemical foods, and more real consumer voices being included in food industry decisionmaking."

3. "Now let's 'clean-up' some foods--like the hog dog and other foods with additives. And they can junk 75 percent of cereals on the shelf."

Does this not concern you? You people (men?) are so deep in science...in searching for new and more efficient ways of producing better meat for consumers...and yet, not all consumer activists would look at it in that light. You need to start telling your story...let them know why your contributions are vital to continuing our food supply. You, probably better than those of us in the supermarket, can best explain why we can't go back to eating totally non-processed foods, and foods that have not been subjected to fertilizers, pesticides and other agricultural aids.

It is important for the retailer, and all of us, to keep very current on the changing pattern of consumer attitudes with respect to the marketplace. Today the consumer has rearranged his/her priorities of purchase and thinks of food in a more valued way--as one would think of a scarce resource. Each week the consumer considers prices, values,
trade-offs and substitutes to make the best economic decision for her or his family. As pork supply falls as it has this past year due to your decreased production, and consequently pork prices rise, customers shift to beef, poultry or other items hoping to see the pork supply build and the price fall. But it's disconcerting to us at Jewel to read the USDA reports and other indications about the reluctance to increase hog production. I think this is sad because of controlling supply for such an extended period of time the pork producer may ultimately lose that customer, as she has gone on to find other things to replace pork. I disagree with Dan Coons, a Missouri hog raiser, and a winner of a spokesmen contest when he said, "the family will continue to eat bacon, no matter what the price." He is confident that high retail pork prices would not turn consumers off. Yet, the per capita consumption of pork has declined to quite low levels already.

It seems to me we need to do two things if we are to move forward in meaningfully meeting consumers' needs and in trying to keep the cost increases of food to a minimum. First, we need to distinguish between the consumer, including legitimate consumer organizations and spokespeople—and self-proclaimed consumer activists. Secondly, we must learn how to accurately perceive what consumers truly want and/or need—and differentiate from consumer demands that may have other motives behind them.

So, how do I advise we accomplish these two challenges? Well, to me it seems that the best way to distinguish between consumers and those that are true leaders of consumer opinion from the self-proclaimed consumer activists, is to reach out, and get to know consumers—consumers of all types. I can tell you about some of the ways we do it in the supermarket business, which might give you ideas in relating it to your business.

Of course, our best source is right in the stores. In addition to being in our stores every week, I occasionally am in a store on a pre-announced visit. Customers are invited to come to talk with me, to ask questions and to share their concerns. And, in our five Grand Bazaar stores, we have resident home economists at a consumer service center, which really keeps us close to the heartbeat of the consumer. For each Grand Bazaar, as well as the total chain, we have a consumer advisory council, composed of people representing all aspects of the community—including a consumer activist.

You also need to go to consumer meetings, join consumer organizations—and, don't be afraid to go up and talk to those you think are leaders, and try to learn how they think and how they operate. You may be pleasantly surprised to find that many of those you thought were adversaries, really aren't on opposite sides to you—and that there really are some common grounds on which you can start building.
Now, what about understanding what consumers want, and what they don't want? Consumer research is probably the most dependable; however, the challenge here is reviewing a wide range of consumer research and doing so on a regular basis. Then, deciding how to put that research to work for you is the next step. It can guide us into knowing how much information consumers want, how much will they be willing to pay for, how much do they know about the cost factor of foods and consumer services, and what consumer information/education campaigns are really necessary and worth our expenditure.

We've already discussed some of the current data on consumers. One additional study I'd like to mention...the U.S. Department of Agriculture's study on consumer satisfaction with food products and marketing services found a high level of satisfaction among consumers with food products they buy, which is somewhat surprising with other evidence that consumers are irritated. On the other hand, this highly favorable attitude begins to change when the shopping environment is considered. Specifically, consumers were much less satisfied with product information supplied primarily by food manufacturers. They were most dissatisfied with the reliability and truthfulness of information in ads sponsored by manufacturers of food products. Being a retailer, I was pleased to learn about a high level of satisfaction with the food store where consumers do their shopping and a satisfaction with shopping information from that store as compared to the shopping information supplied by food manufacturers. This tells me that perhaps our consumer efforts everyday, on a face-to-face basis are worth the effort, and we would be foolish to diminish our efforts in these areas. But, what about you, and your association?

Does this not give you reason for getting involved in communicating with consumers...however you may choose to do it? You could make a real contribution--both to the consumer, to the meat industry, and to your own association's goals and objectives.

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Richard Epley: All right. We will open the session up for questions for either Dr. Whitlock or Jane.

Jim Hodges, Stop and Shop: Afraid that we'll hear from certain groups, "We have a right to know," there's a certain cross-factor involved with the right to know, such as nutritional labeling. Would you care to comment on how much the right to know is worth to the consumer?

Jane Armstrong: Well, this is something I think we've really failed miserably on. We have not educated or informed the consumer about the costs of all these services, and so on. I happen to feel that it is our responsibility to provide as much information as we possibly can about food, so the consumer can make the best choice for his or her own needs.
Now, I just recently read the results of a Gallup poll, and maybe you have too. The interest was on considering nutritional labeling and would they be willing to pay more for it, and if so, how much. I have to even admit that it surprised me, but more than 50 percent of the consumers surveyed said they would be willing to pay more money. That was crossing all economics levels.

Mark Thomas, Meat Board: How do we balance the two opposing opinions that we heard? In fact, the consumers don't read labels, yet they want to have nutritional labeling. I'm not taking a stand, but how do we interphase those two seemingly opposing opinions?

Jane Armstrong: Well, I think that that has been true in the past and consumers were not reading the labels, but believe me, they are reading them more and more everyday. If you go in any supermarket and go down the isles, just start observing. The first thing a consumer will look for are ingredients, generally. Then they might proceed and look for caloric information. Now, I agree they aren't really taking in the whole nutritional labeling panel at this point, but each one is a step toward that.

Gaylord Whitlock: I think they need to be taught how to read labels. We have not done this in the past. We are beginning to do it now, particularly in Home Economics and extension areas, with an ethnic program. They are beginning to teach them how to read the label, and it's working.

Dick Pankey, Quaker Oats: You made a comment earlier that even with nutritionists and some of the consumers, that even when these information labels were available, they still didn't read it. Yet much of what you said, from your survey, showed an awareness of research. Do you think this was just a lip service or response or mimicking of the vocal consumer activist?

Jane Armstrong: I'm not exactly sure if I understand your question. An awareness on the part of the consumer of nutrition information or--

Dick Pankey: Do you think there's a real awareness, a real desire to use this, or do they say they're aware? Are they mimicking what they think they should be saying and respond to it?

Jane Armstrong: I think it's growing, I really do. Particularly among younger consumers.

Gaylord Whitlock: I have an answer to that, too. I've been on the Consumer Education soap box for so many years that I think I can speak from experience. Five years ago, nobody was interested in nutrition except nutritionists. But, within the past five years, there has been a significant change, not only in the homemaker, but the people who do the shopping, whether they get any help from the husbands and kids or not. But I speak to Rotary Clubs, Lion's Clubs, Exchange Clubs, 4-H Club leaders. Everybody is interested in nutrition. You really had to beat the bushes to get a crowd of 20 or 30, five years ago. You
can get invited anywhere and I could be out 500 times a year speaking about nutrition. They really are interested. It's not just the young people. It's the old guys in the Rotary and Lion's Club who really are concerned about nutrition. They're beginning to see that it may have some real relationship to health.

**Dick Epley:** I would like to interject a question here while we still have the speakers. I would like either of you to address yourselves to this: Do you think that any type of American Meat Science Association news releases on a controversial issue such as nitrate or feeding grain, this type of thing, do you think that is effective and would be believed by the public?

**Jane Armstrong:** Well, Dick, as I said, I think you have more credibility in many of these areas than any facet of food industry. Just like the Institute of Food Technologists, they're public information. Boy, when an issue appears, they have been extremely fast in distributing factual information to the press. I'd love to see your association doing that kind of thing.

**Richard Epley:** But you don't think that certain groups would look at it and say, "Well, that's the American Meat Science Association, they're just defending nitrate?"

**Jane Armstrong:** No, I really don't. I think they know you're scientists. Who but you can counter-attack their claims? They certainly aren't based on the research that you base your claims on.

**Max Judge, Purdue:** I'd like to ask Dr. Whitlock a question. In your survey of the homemaker's consumption patterns, you said you found that they were eating the amount of meat from the meat group represented. What do you find in terms of the FDA's for protein and iron? Were they eating those as well as the level of meat?

**Gaylord Whitlock:** Within the way that we could analyze, yes. We have not done a seven day food record. Our instructions from Washington, in the beginning of this program, was not even to worry about serving sizes. But, immediately we saw that we had to worry about serving sizes, because it is the total amount of nutrients that get in that counts. We see that there has been an increased fulfillment of need for Vitamin C, Vitamin A and calcium. Protein is really not a limiting nutrient. It isn't even the limiting nutrient in the world. The calorie is the limiting nutrient. If you get enough calories, you're going to get enough protein to exist. Now, it may not be good health, but at least you'll be alive.

**Question:** While you're there, how would you characterize our protein intake in the United States?

**Gaylord Whitlock:** Well, you may not like to hear this. I think the average protein consumption in the United States is too high. There is serious concern among some scientists that we like the foods that contain protein, and particularly the animal protein, so much that
we are consuming an average of 125 grams when the real need may be more like 45 or 55. There may be some ill health going on from over consumption of protein foods. Wisconsin work has shown that there has been a loss of calcium. You have a condition like Paget's Disease because of an over consumption in protein.

Marchello, North Dakota: I was wondering if you'd care to comment in the area that you mentioned about increasing food prices and consumer awareness of specifically high quoted prices. It seems to me that whenever money is a factor, it hits at food items first. Yet, the average consumer will take material items like cars, TV's, going to the bar, and throwing a $20 bill on the bar, and this doesn't affect them. Is there any way that you could suggest that we could override this image on food and play it so that it really isn't high priced?

Jane Armstrong: Well, you know it's just a constant effort on our part to educate the consumer as to why food costs what it does. But, part of the problem is that food is still about the only item that they pay cash for, and that's something you're buying every week. So, you are aware of every penny increase. You don't buy cars that often or a dress, or go out to eat quite that frequently, so you don't notice all the increase. You're charging; you're delaying payment.

Gaylord Whitlock: We did a study on this several years ago in California in which we wanted to know whether or not the consumers would accept the BankAmericard or Master Charge to buy groceries. Obviously, the banking facilities were encouraging this move among the retail grocery industry. But the consumers so rejected it, that finally the banking industry gave up. They said, "No, people do not want to buy groceries on credit." You're right, they are aware of what they spend. We did a recent study on the consumer's idea about the price changes in beef. They were well aware of this. Because of the price changes in beef, they made significant changes to turkey and chicken in the past 2 1/2 years. They're still concerned about quality, however. I think this is one place where you can really do a great job, is to tell the positive story of the clean, wholesome, safe, nutritious products that you represent.

Dave Schafer, Kansas State: I ran into one thing in dealing with the 4-H and young people groups. I was wondering whether you had run into this same phenomenon, that we might have oversold the word "Nutritious?" I'm speaking about in terms of by-products which have been mentioned earlier today. Among some of the things we were talking about, we got into nutritious foods. Immediately we got people who raised their nose and said, "Oh, I don't like that." When you start talking about nutrition together with products of food that they really like, we ran into a little bit of a road block. I was wondering if you have run into something like this?

Jane Armstrong: Well, you know in the last couple of years, things have been really different. I would have said that was very much like the adult shopper or the consumer two years ago; but during the last couple of years, our period of inflation, you could just observe
customers going up and down the meat case, looking, picking up packages, looking at the price, putting it down again. Then they would run across maybe beef liver, something they perhaps had never cooked before, but saw the price. They were willing to experiment with some help and encouragement. I think something that has helped a lot has been this increased interest in gourmet cooking, back-to-scratch cooking, and interest in foreign foods, the adventure in eating. Look at just the kitchen gadgetry that has come on the market. People are thinking nothing about spending $200 for a special piece of home food processing equipment. But because of them, you see they are intrigued with trying a lot of these that are less money. I almost tend to disagree with Dr. Whitlock when he said, "Variety meats, they're usually less expensive." Well, you know sweet breads are unbelievably expensive. They're such a delicacy. We are only able to get so many for a few stores where there's a customer that really wants them. I think we're maybe seeing kind of a switch. Maybe you can get your 4-H kids interested in that respect, the intrigue, the adventure, you know, that facet of it.

**John Miller, Idaho:** Jane, I've got one comment in my area that I kind of see. It is not the youth coming to campus where you see all the movements of the consumerism. It's the youth that is still in high school, and even early high school, that is coming out of grade school area, that is getting involved. They are becoming dollar shoppers in the whole Pacific Northwest.

**Jane Armstrong:** You're absolutely right. Seventeen Magazine, which is a magazine that goes to teenage girls, it has the largest circulation to these girls, has done several surveys about teenage girls shopping. It found that a very high percentage of teenage girls are doing either all or part of the shopping for their families. I think you're absolutely right. A big part of it, too, much of what is being taught in the elementary schools now is causing these young people to be more aware of these things. Many states legislate that Consumer Education must be taught in public schools, and part of that is comparative shopping. Now, some states are considering legislating nutrition being taught in public schools. I see this growing interest in nutrition and that's going to continue.

**Paul Addis, Minnesota:** How would you attack the problem of trying to teach nutrition to grade school children and junior high school children?

**Gaylord Whitlock:** I wouldn't attack it at all. I would go in with fun, which I do. I take a puppet show into the classroom. I get the children really heated up on nutrition. This heats up the teacher, and she asks for further help. We come back and help her. Before long, we've got a whole school involved and all because of a little puppet show in which Dr. Goodley Diet comes in. You may not like the image, but I use a red lion to represent the meat group. It signifies red meat, red blood, and it gives a nice image. For adults I even say that he represents the meat group because he eats people for the same reason that people eat meat. So, it's really very easy. At the elementary school level, we have behavioral objectives. Our 4-H Club program is
a tremendously successful for the younger kids. The older kids, I'm really worried about them, particularly in senior high school. Only the dumb kids get interested in Home Economics anymore. They have survival courses, but if I would stress anything, I'd stress trying to teach at the secondary level, where it's almost impossible to teach these students. I might say, too, that you, as meat scientists, could take a personal interest and commitment that you are going to be a spokesman for your industry on a very personal grass roots level. Everything starts at the breakfast table. It only starts when one person is trying. So, if you can get out there and tell your story, it will build very rapidly. Many adults have information on nutrition from Preventive Magazine. Luckily, the younger children don't read it yet. We've got to counteract a tremendous amount of interest which is misinformation, with good information. I challenge you to get out on the soap box.

Richard Epley: I have one while you're here. In what areas or specific activities would you think that our meat scientists, whether teaching, research or extension, are sort of spinning our wheels in, when it comes to this whole area of consumer education. We are involved in a multitude of activities from meetings, to working with other educators, to radio, written words, TV, newspaper, magazines, a lot of activities are involved. Can you see anything that we as a group are doing with respect to consumer education that, in your opinion, you feel that it's a waste of time, or that we're spinning our wheels? Could we be making better use of our time elsewhere?

Gaylord Whitlock: Let me start out, Jane, and then you can pick up afterwards. I know you know more about this than I do. I am firmly convinced that a person will not use a product he knows nothing about. So "use information" has been lacking in how to use many, many products. I think perhaps you haven't spun your wheels here. Rather, you haven't revved up the motor on it to produce enough good use information, good recipes, good descriptions for advancing your labeling. Be sure they know what they're getting, how they use it, how they put it together to make a nutritious meal.

Fredrick Caporaso, Nebraska: I have a question for Mrs. Armstrong. The survey you mentioned by Roper, I was wondering how you felt about that? If I interpreted it right, didn't you say that the consumers felt that the number one concern was price, and the number two concern was nutrition?

Jane Armstrong: In making a choice, a decision in buying a product?

Fredrick Caporaso, Nebraska: Where does desirability, flavor, like and dislike fall into that? In the surveys that I have read, I would consider that number one.

Jane Armstrong: Well, remember this is the most recent report. We're just barely starting to come out of this recession period, inflationary period. It's still very familiar to our minds about all the decisions you had to go through when you were deciding what to buy,
because the prices were so high. They only had so much money for the food budget that week. So, price has been very important. But at the same time, I think what consumers learned during this period was, because they had less money to spend, they wanted to make sure that they got that return, that value return for their dollar spent. Part of that value was a nutritional value. That's why women said they were giving up all snack foods in their families. They no longer served desserts. They were cutting out all the junk food, because they were concerned about getting the most for their money. So I think as a result of this, that's why price and nutrition are very much in the forefront. Now, maybe in a year or so that will change.

Fredrick Caporaso: My feeling is that I think those are concerns. But in looking at that survey, just looking at in store sales, have desserts decreased in sales that much? Do you think that's reality, that price and nutrition are so important?

Jane Armstrong: Yes, I can tell you that desserts have decreased; ice cream is just barely maintaining its level. The facts point that out. Now, we are seeking, as I mentioned, a gradual resurge in buying of certain convenience products. Those that represent a saving of time on the part of the consumer mostly.

Bill Jones, Auburn: What do you think, if nutrition and price are supposedly related here, undoubtedly price is the most important and I think nutrition may run even below. Some of the things that we've read; what do you think will happen to the price, to make an assumption, if the price were to drop down to about $1 a pound and stay there for a year?

Jane Armstrong: I think consumption would go back up if the price dropped down to $1 a pound. That's one of the things.

Bill Jones, Auburn: We all know that that doesn't happen. Do you judge nutrition right by the book or the price?

Jane Armstrong: Well, I think that it is a fine line. I think that certain things the consumer will rationalize in his or her mind if they like it, and maybe limit themselves to it. Bacon is one of those unique products. But I think price has been the key thing with bacon.

Bill Jones, Auburn: Well, I bring that out because the survey in which a few hundred housewives had indicated they find themselves in abuse of the gasoline and this type of thing. Yet, this year, the economy is picking back up slightly. Car sales have increased more than they have in the last five years. It's been the biggest year for car sales. So, I don't think the people are going to remain the state of conservatism that they are in.

Jane Armstrong: No, I say now that we are seeing some signs of a switch. But I don't think we're ever going to go back to the carefree eating, food spending that we had before.
Dick Pankey, Quaker Oats: As I understand what you're saying here, you're saying that nutrition is selling food. I don't believe this is the case. I have direct experience in my own work that the food has to be good. Then from consumer tests, that is the lowest of their concerns, acceptability, price. They were aware of the nutrition in specially advertised consumer tests where nutrition was the crunch. They overlooked it entirely, they missed that. They saw convenience, acceptability and utilization of the product. That was still their concern. I don't believe nutrition is selling the way you are indicating it is.

Jane Armstrong: Well, I don't say that is the only thing. But how do you explain the fantastic success of your natural cereal? The consumer thought it was nutritious. Yet, it was good, it tasted good.

Dick Pankey: It's selling is not a sign of nutrition. We are not pushing nutrition on that.

Jane Armstrong: No, but you see when Quaker introduced that, that was a time when all the natural things were coming on the market. As I mentioned before, natural is a "buzz" word for nutrition. Quaker had a fantastic successor. One other area--just look at fruits and vegetables today. Fresh fruits and vegetables have increased in sales because people are enjoying them. Also, because people think they're more nutritious than canned or frozen.

Dick Pankey, Quaker Oats: Then conversely, people would not buy a product because it is nutritious.

Jane Armstrong: I didn't say that. I said it was second in reasons in a list of priorities, in making a choice for a food product.

Dick Pankey: But an essential thing in making a choice is if they like that food?

Jane Armstrong: Oh, probably.

Dick Pankey: The first thing to do is pick a food that they like and then--

Jane Armstrong: Mainly between three brands of companies.

Gaylord Whitlock: One ag. economist did a study on beef changes, and that includes a period over the last 2 1/2 years. Price and quality were the top sellers. Only half of the people used nutrition in beef as a selling point. But it's increasing. I think that's the point Jane wanted to make. People are becoming more aware of health value. They're looking for fiber now as a nutrient. It isn't a nutrient, but they think it is.

Richard Epley: Well, my observation is that there are many factors to this they don't fully understand. We had some challenges that were brought to us here today by the speakers. Whether you caught them or
not, I hope that you respond to them as scientists. How many of you answered the recent article on bologna in Consumer Reports? How many of you read it? I think publishers would have less of a problem in getting the truth out if we would individually write responses to inaccuracies (at least I perceived inaccuracies in the article).

Chairman Stringer, I will turn the program over to you. You’ve been a very good audience. Thank you very much.

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D. M. Kinsman: Welcome to the first Graduate Student Research Paper Competition of the AMSA-RMC. This is an innovation developed during the past year and instituted for what we hope will prove to be an annual event.

The purpose of this competition is to encourage graduate students to:

1. Engage in high quality, sound and pertinent meat research;
2. Gain experience in written and oral presentation of scientific papers;
3. Demonstrate poise and mental agility before their peers;
4. Develop an appreciation of effective communication for dissemination of research information; and
5. Acquire an appreciation of the role of the Association and its members in advancing the welfare of the meat industry through research.

A committee of six evaluators will appraise the performance of the contestants. They have already scored the abstracts and manuscripts submitted several months ago and will now grade the oral presentations. A standardized score card plus the rules and regulations has been supplied all participants in advance.

Each student will receive an official AMSA-RMC certificate of participation. The first, second and third placing individuals will be awarded suitable inscribed leather plaques and $75, $50 and $25 for first, second and third places, respectively.

The evaluators for this event are:

1. Dr. J. A. Carpenter, University of Georgia,
2. Dr. R. G. Cassens, University of Wisconsin,
3. Dr. M. E. Dikeman, Kansas State University,
4. Dr. R. F. Kelly, Chairman, Virginia P.I. & S.U.,
5. Dr. C. B. Ramsey, Texas Tech,
6. Dr. J. R. Stouffer, Cornell University.

Each contestant will be allotted twelve minutes for presentation and five to six minutes to questions and discussion.