ESRC FOOD Seminar Series

Future of Consumer Research and Communications about Food

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Seminar Series on Food Options, Opinions and Decisions (FOOD): Integrating perspectives on consumer perceptions of food safety, nutrition and waste

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Co-investigator: Professor Lynn Frewer – Agriculture Food and Rural Development Newcastle University

Co-investigator: Dr Tom Quested – WRAP

Co-investigator: Dr Sian Thomas – Food Standards Agency

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Communication needs

- **Food safety**: 17 mln cases/year of foodborne illness, incl 500 deaths and 20,000 hospitalizations (Tam et al., 2011)
- **Nutrition**: People are increasingly making unhealthy food choices, with 62% of adults overweight or obese (DOH, 2013)
- **Food waste**: Domestic food waste is 7 million tons/year, of which 4.2 million tons is deemed preventable (WRAP, 2013)
- *Communications about these topics may contradict each other*
Research seminar series on food options, opinions, and decisions (FOOD)

• aims to understand and improve UK consumers’ decisions about nutrition, food safety, and domestic food waste
  – Interactions between these domains
• brings together academics and practitioners from across the UK and overseas in 9 seminars from 2015 to 2017
• builds lasting networks that lead to joint efforts

http://lubswww.leeds.ac.uk/cdr/food
2015 Seminars

Practitioners’ perspectives on consumer’s choices about food safety, nutrition and waste.
Speakers: Professor Wandi Bruine de Bruin (Leeds, CDR), Dr Sian Thomas (FSA), Dr Andrew Parry (WRAP) and Dr Kieron Stanley (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). 20 January, 2015, University of Leeds.

Consumer behaviour & food security: Health, safety, and sustainability.
Speakers: Prof. Matteo Vittuari (University of Bologna, Italy), Prof. Julie Barnett (University of Bath); Dr Tom Quested, (WRAP). April 4th 2015: Food Standards Agency, London.

Food choice and behaviour, nutrition interventions, and implications for waste.
Speakers: Prof. Paul Rozin (University of Pennsylvania); Prof. Louise Dye (University of Leeds) and Prof. Peter Jackson (University of Sheffield). July 7th 2015: University of Newcastle.

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2016 Seminars

**Psychological and sociological factors contributing to waste, nutrition and food safety.** Speaker: Prof. Daniel Read (Warwick Business School). **January 21st 2016:**
WRAP, Banbury.

**Communicating better about food.** Speakers: Professor Baruch Fischhoff (Carnegie Mellon University, USA), Professor Lynn Frewer (Newcastle University), Dr Eric VanEpps (University of Pennsylvania, USA). **April 14th 2016: University of Leeds.**

**The role of supermarkets in consumer food choices and sustainable strategies.** Speakers: Prof. Willliam Young (Univ of Leeds), Craig Noonnan (Head of Retails PR at the Co-operative). **June 30th 2016: Food Standards Agency**

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2017 Seminars

*Integrating perspectives on consumer perceptions for food safety, nutrition, and waste.* Speakers: Prof Monique Raats (Univ of Surrey), Prof Jason Halford (Univ of Liverpool), Dr Gulbanu Kaptan (Univ of Leeds) **January 17th 2017: WRAP, Banbury**

*Food Security and novel food solutions: implications for food choice, safety, and waste.* Speakers: Prof. Michael Siegrist (ETH Zurich, Switzerland), Dr Margot Kuttschreuter (University of Twente, Netherlands), Dr Gavin Stewart (Newcastle University). **June 2nd 2017: Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne**
Final seminar

**Facing the future of FOOD.** Speakers: Prof Hannelore Daniel (Technical University of Munich), Adam Smith (The Real Junk Food Project), Prof Tim Benton (University of Leeds), PI Prof Wandi Bruine de Bruin (University of Leeds), and Co-I Prof Louise Dye (University of Leeds). Discussant: Jay Rayner

**September 12th 2017: University of Leeds.**
Additional Interviews

Sample

• 24 participants from ESRC FOOD seminar series
  – 7-10 experts from each area of expertise
  – Academia (18), industry (4), government agency (2)

Procedure

• 5 semi-structured group interviews over the phone
Finding 1: Communications across topics

**To eat healthy with minimum food waste:** how to effectively shop; how to cook/preserve; frozen vegetables are healthy to eat; plan for small portions

**To eat healthy and safe food:** how to safely prepare food at home; how long the food could be kept safely if it is prepared in advance

**To eat safe food with minimum food waste:** date labels, how long to keep leftovers and food frozen
Finding 2: Communication development

• *Communications should be clear and consistent* across topic areas
• *Use participatory processes*, taking into account consumers’ preferred language, wants and needs, as well as socio-economic and cultural factors
• *Collaborate with the media* to prevent inaccuracies
• *Collaborate with the industry and policy makers* to develop communications from farm to fork
• *Evaluate effectiveness* using a variety of methods
Finding 3: Other interventions

- Social media
- Apps
- Smart food labeling
- Cameras in the fridge
- Cooking classes
- Breakfast clubs
- Pledges
Conclusion

Future of consumer research and communications about food?

- Collaboration needed across topic areas
- Promise of new technologies
- Reliance on diverse methods
- Other?

Ways forward?

- Ongoing interaction
- Funding
- Other?