



# CSPI YEAR-END REPORT

**For  
Members  
Only!**

**TO: CSPI MEMBERS**  
**FROM: MICHAEL F. JACOBSON, PH.D.**   
**DATE: NOVEMBER 29, 2011**  
**SUBJECT: 2011 HIGHLIGHTS & 2012 CHALLENGES**

Here are some of the accomplishments your support helped make possible in 2011 and the challenges we face in 2012 to ...

## Make your food safer!

### Get a Grip on Deadly New Germs

Cantaloupe wasn't the only killer this year. Cargill, Inc., one of the largest U.S. meat producers, recalled some 36 million pounds of fresh and frozen ground turkey contaminated with antibiotic-resistant *Salmonella* Heidelberg -- but not before it had killed one person and sickened 107 more. Cargill and USDA announced the recall on August 3, but records show that USDA officials had evidence linking the deadly germs to Cargill's turkey products months before they recalled them.

Why didn't USDA get that tainted meat out of our supermarkets? Because it didn't have the authority to protect the public's health. Federal regulations don't treat *Salmonella* as a poisonous contaminant, even when government tests discover dangerous antibiotic-resistant forms such as the Heidelberg strain. So USDA had to wait until people got sick and died before it could act.

To stop this craziness -- and

protect you and your loved ones -- CSPI filed a petition urging USDA to classify four antibiotic-resistant strains of *Salmonella* as "adulterants," a legal classification that would make products that contain them illegal to sell. In fact, we filed our petition before the summer's deadly outbreak from ground turkey, because CSPI closely follows outbreaks and we know that outbreaks from these dangerous pathogens appear to be increasingly common. It's time to move to a more preventive system of controlling the risks at the plant and on the farm -- before the food gets into our supermarkets and on our tables.

Of course, the only thing worse than getting sick from food is being told that no drugs exist to treat your illness. And that's the bad news more and more people are hearing, because the overuse of antibiotics in the production of meat and poultry has spawned a growing number of deadly germs that are resistant to the antibiotics we depend on to treat illnesses in humans. Antibiotics are not given to animals to cure illnesses, but because they usually promote faster growth and

stop infections that result from the filthy, inhumane conditions in which many animals are raised. CSPI is pressuring the government and farmers to improve on-farm conditions for livestock in order to minimize the use of antibiotics.

The need for action is urgent. The danger of antibiotic-resistant pathogens in the food supply is well-documented and has been recognized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the FDA, and by USDA itself. Working together to address the issue, these three agencies recently produced a document stating that "drug resistance threatens to reverse the medical advances of the last half century."

We must not let that happen and with your support CSPI will work to make sure it doesn't.

The good news is that in September USDA announced that it will expand its *E. coli* testing program. You may remember that in 1993, *E. coli*-tainted hamburgers sold by Jack in the Box caused a major outbreak that killed four children. That spurred USDA to bar the sale of foods contaminated with

*E. coli* O157:H7, and until now it was the only dangerous bacterium to be banned from fresh meat. With this new ruling, the beef-testing program must also search for six other potentially deadly strains of *E. coli*. CSPI's own data link these germs to 10 known outbreaks and nearly 700 illnesses since 1998.

Of course, the American Meat Institute raised an outcry, claiming that the new regulatory program will cost tens of millions of dollars. Not so! The actual estimated annual cost is about a million dollars for USDA and just \$10 million for the entire \$155-billion U.S. meat industry. A reasonable investment in safety, don't you agree, when stacked against the risk to consumers?

On Capitol Hill, we're gathering support to enact Senator Kirsten Gillibrand's Foodborne Illness Reduction Act, which seeks to give USDA the power to prevent food poisoning -- rather than just clean up after the fact. Importantly, the bill also tackles the issue of antibiotic resistance.

Using another tactic to protect consumers, we've also sued Safeway, the largest U.S. food

*Please read on to discover what CSPI has accomplished this year...*

retailer that collects consumer-purchase data, but does not use that data to notify customers who had purchased recalled products. They're happy to use that data to sell you their food -- but not willing to let you know when that food is contaminated! Costco's cooperation and its consumer-purchase data helped lead investigators to the Guatemalan farm where Del Monte's tainted cantaloupes originated and to get the contaminated melons out of grocery stores quickly. Other retailers used their data to alert consumers during the huge *Salmonella* recall of ground turkey. CSPI is pushing Safety to do the same thing -- the right thing -- for its customers.

Until we can all be sure that the food we buy in supermarkets is not going to harm us, CSPI will use every route possible to keep you safe. We agree wholeheartedly with USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack: "Until we get the number of foodborne illnesses down to zero, ... we still have work to do."

## Track Down the Germs More Quickly

Faster food identification means fewer people get sick when an outbreak occurs. CSPI has been working for years to improve outbreak reporting and response by federal, state, and local governments. In January, we released *All Over the Map*, a report that analyzed reporting practices in all 50 states. We sounded the alarm in states that had poor monitoring and reporting practices for foodborne illnesses.

States that aggressively investigate outbreaks and report them to CDC can help pinpoint the foods that are responsible for making people sick. Oregon, noted for its excellent laboratory facilities and public-health department, was instrumental in tracing the *Salmonella* infections to the tainted Del Monte cantaloupes. (And that good work made Del Monte angry enough to threaten to sue the state and file an official complaint against Oregon's head epidemiologist!) Our long-range goal is to have every state become as efficient and aggressive at foodborne illness surveillance as Oregon.

*All Over the Map* represented more than a year of research and is one of the reasons that CSPI is considered a leading expert in evaluating state public-health systems. In 2012, we will press for innovative approaches to food-safety surveillance, like faster testing and greater attention to consumer complaints, to shorten the time it takes investigators to identify foods in an outbreak. An animal-identification system to facilitate trace-back of tainted foods to their source will be a 2012 priority, although we face a big battle with animal producers to get that in place.

CSPI will also undertake a study of foodborne illness in schools. Hundreds of known outbreaks in the last decade sickened at least 23,000 children. That has to stop! We hope to determine what foods and practices are sickening kids, and what can be done to prevent these illnesses. At the same time, we're pressing USDA to comply with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act and create a Rapid Alert

System that will notify schools immediately when they have been sent contaminated or questionable food for the school-lunch program. CSPI's study of rapid food-alert systems in other countries convinced us that such a system is essential for the United States.

## Fight to Fund the Food-Safety Act

2011 provided the first test of Republican plans to cut budgets, with people like Representative Jack Kingston of Georgia leading the charge. He's the one who said -- before at least 25 people died from eating contaminated cantaloupes and before Cargill recalled 36 million pounds of ground turkey -- "It's absurd how safe our food is." And he's sticking to his story, despite the facts. What is absurd is his effort to slash the FDA's budget to carry out its mandate to enforce the historic, new Food Safety Modernization Act.

I hardly need to tell you -- who helped fuel CSPI's ten-year battle -- that this law finally gives the FDA the authority it needs to prevent food contamination, instead of having to track it down after an outbreak begins. FDA inspectors, for example, have been combing fields in Colorado for clues as to how *Listeria* contaminated cantaloupes that killed 25 people this fall. Under the new law, they could have been there before the outbreak -- and those 25 might still be alive.

But the agency must be fully funded to do this new job. With the Republican House insisting

on deep spending cuts, regardless of how important they are to public health and safety, CSPI has been helping lead the Alliance for a Stronger FDA to secure the advances we won.

While the Senate wants to restore some of the House cuts, the FDA budget is still well below what the agency needs to maintain its food programs and to implement the new law. And looming over everything is the deficit-reduction agreement, which requires that by the end of 2011, Congress and its so-called Supercommittee must cut another \$1.5 TRILLION from the federal budget over the next 10 years. Those kinds of draconian cuts present a real threat to food safety if Congress does not prioritize public-health funding.

To shore up support, CSPI delivered thousands of CSPI members' petitions to the chairs of both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. We are actively advising the government on implementation of the new law by filing comments, meeting with agency policy-makers, and presenting consumer views in FDA's public hearings on how the agency should implement the new law.

You can count on CSPI to make your voice heard, but we face a tremendous challenge from the well-funded lobbyists of the food industry and the "tea-party" types in Congress who would slash government programs, regardless of their effectiveness and merit.

*Please read on to find out about CSPI's work on nutrition...*

Your generous year-end contribution will help us meet the many safe-food challenges in 2012. At the same time, we are at the forefront of efforts to ...

## Make your food healthier!

It's no secret that most kids -- and, truth be told, most adults! -- eat lousy diets. Soft drinks, sugary cereals, cheese-laden pizzas, French fries and other junk foods are making this the fattest generation of children (and adults) in history -- which will certainly lead to high rates of diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. In fact, this generation will likely be the first to have shorter life spans than their parents -- unless something is done. Your support for CSPI in the year ahead will help us ...

### Defend Children from Food-Marketing Predators

Food marketing works. If it didn't, food companies wouldn't spend \$2 billion a year marketing their food to kids. If it didn't work, kids might be making more nutritious food choices and we might not be facing a childhood-obesity epidemic. CSPI has long sought measures to reduce the promotion of junk foods high in saturated fat, sugars, and salt and low in nutritional value. So last April, when the government's Interagency Working Group (IWG) proposed voluntary guidelines for marketing food to children -- largely as a result of our advocacy -- the industry's howl could be heard across the country!

In response, giants like General Mills, PepsiCo, and Viacom

(owner of Nickelodeon and SpongeBob Square Pants) created the Sensible Food Policy Coalition to oppose the government's sensible proposal. They hired PR expert Anita Dunn, who worked for the Obama White House in 2009, to lead the charge, and they set loose an army of lobbyists with a misleading campaign of fear-mongering and phony facts to convince legislators to modify or stop the regulations before they're even issued!

In another gambit to fend off the government's proposed voluntary standards, the industry proposed its own nutrition standards. While that alone was an important concession from an industry that has steadfastly refused to adopt a uniform set of standards, their nutrition standards are so weak that they allow the continued marketing to young children of overly sugary or salty junk foods like Reese's Puffs and Cookie Crisp cereals, some Kool-Aid drink mixes, and fake "fruit" snacks, like Fruit Roll-Ups. With the industry's current "self-regulation" program in effect, 86% of ads seen by children feature products high in saturated fat, sugar, or sodium.

But this battle isn't over!

In a letter organized by CSPI to President Obama, 75 physicians, psychologists, nutritionists, and marketing experts from universities around the country urged the president

and his agencies to stand behind the guidelines.

In the months ahead, CSPI will continue to pressure the IWG and the White House for marketing standards strong enough to stop food corporations from preying on our children. When the voluntary guidelines come out, we'll work hard to get food manufacturers, restaurants, and children's entertainment companies to follow them -- or adopt their own guidelines that are more protective of children. And we'll continue to blow the whistle on false and deceptive ad campaigns.

Meanwhile, another battle is going on in schools ... this one over potatoes!

When CSPI won passage of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act late last year, it was a tremendous victory for children's health. This new law simultaneously tackles childhood obesity and hunger by getting a lot of junk food *out of* schools and putting a lot of healthier food *into* schools. But now a profit-driven campaign by the potato and French fry industries threatens to bring down USDA's entire effort to improve school meals.

Never mind the recent Harvard study indicating that eating potatoes promotes obesity. Never mind a study by the USDA confirming that given the chance, kids will fill up on French fries instead of other healthier foods. When USDA proposed limiting French fries and other starchy vegetables in school lunches to twice a week, sena-

tors from the potato-producing states of Maine, Idaho, Colorado, and Oregon went into panic mode to try to block USDA's attempt to improve children's health. They claim that limiting potatoes in school lunches will needlessly injure potato growers around the country. We say that feeding kids too many French fries will needlessly injure their health.

CSPI is working hard to ensure that science prevails over parochial interests and campaign contributions. We've been educating members of Congress and mobilizing over 130,000 parents and health professionals in support of USDA's proposed school-lunch guidelines. At the same time, we're urging USDA to impose strong national standards to rid school vending machines of unhealthy foods and beverages.

Next year, we'll expand our efforts to help federal, state, and local governments adopt nutrition policies for the foods they sell and serve through government programs and on government property. Think about how many millions of people work for government agencies or visit parks or highway rest stops -- and how low-cost, pro-nutrition policies could affect eating habits nationwide. In New York City, for example, all food provided in city childcare, shelters, and prisons has to meet nutrition standards. Other states and cities could do the same -- and CSPI is positioned to help them do it in 2012.

*Please turn the page to find out about Food Day's triumphs...*

## Promote the *Life's Sweeter Challenge*

The "Big Gulp." Free refills. Twenty-ounce single servings. Two liters for 99 cents. Soda vending machines just about everywhere. Industry has opened the spigot of sugary drinks -- soft drinks, "fruit" drinks, "energy" drinks, and "sports" drinks -- roughly doubling Americans' consumption in the last 40 years. Those beverages comprise the single largest source of calories in the American diet and lead to obesity -- which in turn promotes heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and other devastating health problems.

To put the genie back in the bottle, in August CSPI launched our *Life's Sweeter with Fewer Sugary Drinks Challenge*, and so far more than 100 organizations, including the American Heart Association and several big-city health departments have joined the coalition. Our goal is to cut average consumption of sugary drinks by at least half by 2020 -- down to about three 12-ounce cans per week.

We're encouraging employers, hospitals, and government agencies to adopt policies that would reduce soda consumption. We're working with cities

that are running hard-hitting campaigns, like Boston, where the mayor barred sugar-sweetened beverages from vending machines and concession stands on city property. And on June 7-8, 2012, CSPI will sponsor the largest-ever conference on sugary beverages, bringing together health experts and officials, citizens organizations, and others to expand support for cutting soft-drink consumption.

A campaign of this magnitude will be neither cheap nor easy. And opposition will be intense. Coca-Cola and PepsiCo have spent billions of dollars over the last decade to pump up sales. They also have spent lavishly to buy the allegiance of organizations that should be opposing consumption, such as Boys & Girls Clubs of America. To bolster our campaign, we'll produce a video exposing the soft-drink industry's insidious means of promoting consumption, and we'll unmask the industry's stealthy tactics, from campaign contributions to donating money to discourage youth and minority organizations from criticizing soft drinks.

Life is definitely sweeter with fewer visits to the doctor and lower medical bills ... with fewer diabetic amputations ... with fewer cavities and dental

visits ... with lower health-care premiums for both employers and employees. CSPI urgently needs your support of our *Life's Sweeter* campaign, and we need your help to ...

## Make National Food Day an Annual Event

CSPI's Food Day was a tremendous success on October 24. Now our focus is to make it a powerful grassroots movement for change and an annual event that is celebrated as widely as Earth Day!

With hundreds of thousands of people engaged in thousands of events across the nation, we brought together Americans from all walks of life -- parents, teachers, students; health professionals, community organizers, and local officials; chefs, school-lunch providers, and eaters of all stripes -- to push for healthy, affordable food produced in a sustainable, humane way. Some of the many events were in:

🍌 *New York City's* Times Square, where 50 luminaries, including Morgan Spurlock of *Super Size Me* and Food Network dietitian-chef Ellie Krieger, ate a delicious lunch of healthy, sustainably-produced food.

🍌 *California*, where the University of California's Hastings School of Law helped organize a conference on food deserts (where fresh produce is unavailable) and food served at prisons.

🍌 *Colorado*, where the Denver Botanical Gardens hosted a conference with film screenings and food trucks.

🍌 *Georgia*, where some 15,000 people in Savannah enjoyed healthful, regional food.

Food Day was led by honorary co-chairs Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) and Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.) and backed by an impressive advisory board, including author Michael Pollan, former Surgeons General David Satcher and Richard Carmona, professors from universities across the country, and prominent chefs. It also had the support of a wide range of national and local organizations focused on hunger, sustainable agriculture, animal welfare, and public health. And the most important ingredient: millions of people who want to "eat real." All of this positions us to move ahead, and with your support, CSPI will make Food Day 2012 the second annual event to spearhead a movement to transform America's diet.

## If I dwelled on all the challenges of 2012...

on the seemingly inexhaustible funds that the food industry spends on advertising and lobbying, and on the rekindled power of anti-regulatory politicians, I might begin to feel discouraged. But just weeks after the enthusiasm and activism of a successful Food Day, I'm filled with optimism that we can prevail. The multitudes who

participated in Food Day can be turned into a movement of millions who demand healthier, safer food -- and with your support, CSPI will lead the way. Forty years of fighting for better, safer food has taught me that change does not come quickly or cheaply. But it has also taught me that by working together, we can win tremendous advances toward securing the nutritious, safe food we all deserve.

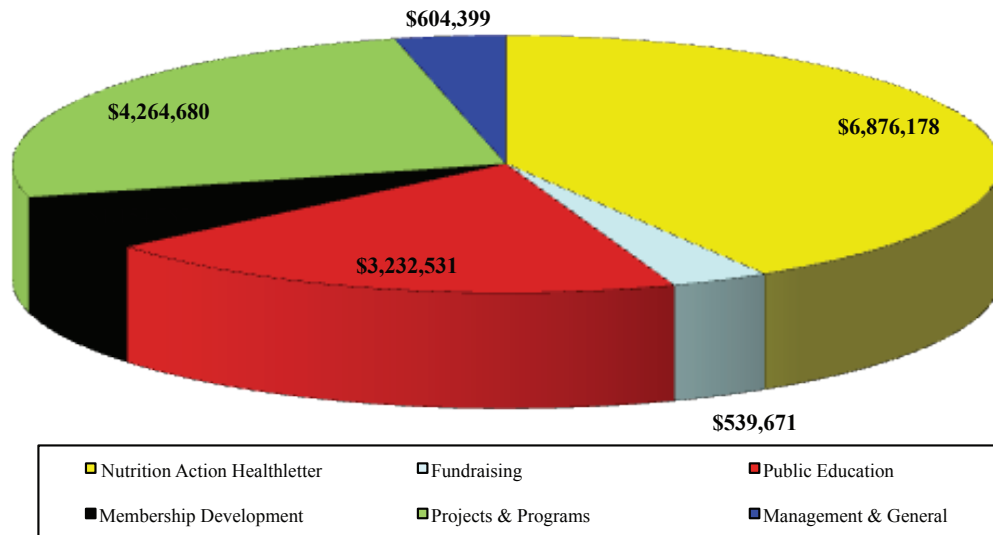
Please put your year-end gift to CSPI in the

mail today. And please make it as generous as you can as a vote of confidence in CSPI as we enter our fifth decade. Don't forget also to take a moment to fill out your survey.

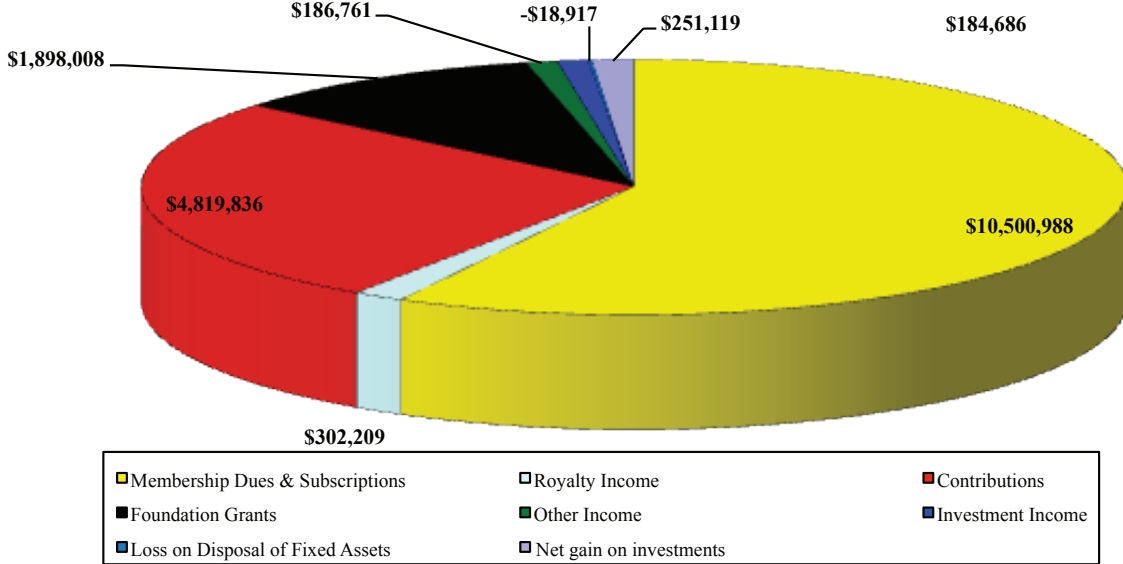
Thank you for all you have done in the past and for your support and continued confidence in CSPI to get the job done.

*You have my personal guarantee that every dollar you contribute will be used to its maximum effect!*

### FY2011 Expenses



### FY2011 Support & Revenue



### FY2011 Statement of Financial Position

