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MEMO FROM MFJ

# Happy Birthday to Us!



In 1970, James Sullivan, an oceanographer, Albert Fritsch, a chemist, and I, a microbiologist, met in Washington, D.C., as interns or volunteers with Ralph Nader's Center for Study of Responsive Law.

After working with each other for several months, we thought it would be useful to create an organization run by scientists and devoted to public interest advocacy and to encouraging other scientists to use their skills for the public good.

If we had considered the matter carefully, we might have realized that we had no experience running an organization, no money, no connections, and almost no chance of success. But we didn't, and so, in 1971, was born the Centre for Science in the Public Interest.

At first, we worked on a wide range of issues, from asbestos to air pollution to food additives. But after Jim and Al left in 1977 (Jim is still on the board of directors), we focused mostly on nutrition and food safety.

From that inauspicious beginning, CSPI has grown into an organization that is widely respected (even by government officials and politicians we sometimes criticize and by company executives whose employers we sometimes sue), widely quoted in the media, and impressively effective. We've built a dynamic Web site that has become a go-to source for on-line information. And we publish a steady flow of reports, books, and articles. (For more on our history and current work, see the "About CSPI" video at [youtube.com/CSPITV](http://youtube.com/CSPITV).)

CSPI has been fortunate to have had an extraordinarily talented and devoted staff. Bill Jeffery, our first—and only—Canadian national coordinator, has been with us since soon after we set up shop in Canada in 1996. His

ability to work productively with health- and child-protection activists, professors, lawmakers, government officials, and the media has been key to our effectiveness and credibility.

*Nutrition Action's* team of writers and editors—Jayne Hurley, Bonnie Liebman, David Schardt, and Stephen Schmidt—has been bringing you the unvarnished truth behind the headlines for 15 years. And a cadre of mostly unsung researchers in Ottawa, Toronto, and elsewhere has helped ensure that *Nutrition Action* and CSPI remain on-point and on-principle.

Then there's deputy director Dennis Bass,

who has worked behind the scenes to help make *Nutrition Action Canada's*—and the world's—largest-circulation health newsletter.

CSPI has helped change the food landscape in Canada. Without us, food packages might never have had the Nutrition Facts labels that consumers rely on. And we helped lead the charge

to reduce sodium in packaged and restaurant foods and to get rid of artificial trans fat.

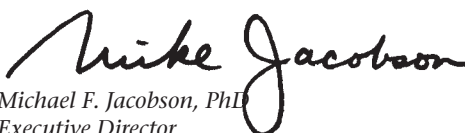
We've also sponsored two highly successful *Championing Public Health Nutrition* conferences in Ottawa to inform the public and government officials about the importance of nutrition policies that protect health and save money.

*Nutrition Action* also has been fortunate to have had hundreds of thousands of loyal subscribers in Canada and the United States, some of whom fuel our advocacy efforts with (mostly small) donations. Without you, CSPI long ago would have shrivelled and died.

I hope that our next 40 years will be as exciting and productive as our first 40.



"Psst! Wanna buy some healthy greens?"  
Me, 1972.



Michael F. Jacobson, PhD  
Executive Director  
Centre for Science in the Public Interest

*The contents of NAH are not intended to provide medical advice, which should be obtained from a qualified health professional. The Centre for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) is the non-profit health-advocacy group that publishes Nutrition Action Healthletter. CSPI mounts educational programs and presses for changes in government and corporate policies.*

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Photo: Jacobson family.

