



Changing the food environment The French experience

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What is the goal?

- To improve the health of the population by acting on the nutritional determinant.
- Nutrition is a determinant of Health :
 - Type 2 Diabetes
 - Cardiovascular diseases
 - Cancers
 - Obesity
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- Nutrition : food intakes and physical activity

What are the strategies

- To allow an informed consumer choice (individual freedom)
 - Information, education, communication
- To improve the nutritional environment (social responsibility of all stakeholders)
 - through the improvement of the food and physical environment : make the healthy choice the easiest.
- **Many combined ways to act :**
Public local, regional and national initiatives
reglementation, private self regulation and initiatives

We need to build the coherence

- How to get population support when the nutritional messages are incoherent?
 - Science
 - Media
 - Food private sector
- The role of the public authorities :
 - To organise the credibility of the nutritional messages on a scientific basis
 - To organise the credibility of the dissemination of the messages

A basis : the food culture

a condition to improve the food environment

- What are the food representations?
- Who is legitimate to give guidance on food aspects?
- What is eating? What is “eating well” “enjoy food”?

The differences between countries

- - “Sometimes when I have to do shopping, I don’t eat at lunch time, I have to buy something at the “boulangerie” which I eat while I am walking, otherwise I can’t take it”
- - “To have a balanced diet of fruits, vegetables, carbohydrates and proteins, I think you need a balance of all of these things. To have enough to satisfy your hunger and maintain your health without being gluttonous”
- “I’m not gonna eat like you and you’re not gonna eat like me... It’s a question with the individual person himself....every body in this room got a choice about what they wanna eat”
- - “It’s having a nice meal with friends with a tray of sea foods, it’s eating a traditional dish, for instance a “pot au feu”, with the family, to pay a nice restaurant from time to time”
- 4 friends, who pays the bill at the restaurant?
 - Divided by 4 : 56% in F, 30% in USA ; According to individual consumption : 19% F, 50% US
 - **an individualistic versus a social view**

The semantic aspect

➤ Too often, the word « nutrition » is linked with an idea of a restrictive diet, with a medical meaning

Nutrition has a negative sound : it is « moral », it is risk, it is sad

➤ The way energy dense foods are marketed give an idea of pleasure, +/- nature, youth, dynamism, strength, energy... (positive values of our societies)

➤ What is an Obese person? More seen on an esthetic point of view, a jovial person, a person with a weak will

➤ The responsibility point of view (who is responsible)

To eat with pleasure for Health

What is done?

Some actions to change the food environment

- At school :
 - The total ban of vending machines since september 2005 (by law)
 - A decree (in septembre 2008) on the nutritional quality of school meals (attention to the quality of taste)
 - A recommandation to avoid snacks at school
 - An official ministerial document to avoid commercial brands in schools-- a strong recommandation to accept **only** documents with the “PNNS logo”
 - A national initiative to distribute, free of charge, fruits in underprivileged district schools (from september 2008)

Some actions to change the food environment

- Health messages on all promotional documents for manufactured foods and beverages (by law and decrees since march 2007)
- Charters “Ville active PNNS” “Département actif PNNS”



- Charters of commitments to nutritional improvements

Under discussion :

A ban of some TV food advertisements for children (which foods and which times during the day?)

How to ban confectionary foods at “caisses” (tills) in the supermarkets

Programme
National

Nutrition
Santé

