



Worrying about food may be detrimental to your health!

Eating: enjoying vs. worrying

A 6-nation survey on perceptions of Food, Body and Health

Directed by Claude Fischler, CNRS (France)

Paris, June 26, 2002 - The French National Dairy Council (CIDIL) announced today that its OCHA* research center has completed the second phase of a cross-cultural survey on perceptions of Food, Body and Health. The results highlight cultural differences among 6 Western nationalities in terms of which foods are considered to be most healthy, how important food is for good health, what 'eating well' means and whether this is a source of worry, regret or pleasure. The study also looked at how different nationalities see their bodies, ranging from "armchairs" to "trees"!

Full results of the study and its implications will be discussed by an international panel of experts during a full-day symposium on September 25 at the upcoming 26th IDF World Dairy Congress in Paris, organized around the theme "Enjoyment and Variety".

Claude Fischler, leader of the OCHA study and director of research at France's CNRS national scientific research center, said:

"Worrying about eating right does not appear to be effective when it comes to staving off health problems like obesity. Nations such as the US, in particular, suffer from acute nutritional anxiety. The study shows that people there are concerned about computing the nutritional and calorific value of meals while the French or Italians focus more on the pleasure of sharing mealtimes."

Yves Boutonnat, managing director of CIDIL and deputy chair of the International Dairy Federation's standing committee for marketing, commented:

"Marketers need to adapt to some of the consumer trends that we have observed in this study, e.g. a call for more variety and more information about the food we eat. We need to help consumers boost their enjoyment of eating and worry less! The study also highlights some important cultural differences, e.g. perceptions as to which foods are good for you, how important they are for good health and what 'eating well' actually means."

***About OCHA**

OCHA (The Cidil observatory for food harmony) has been working since 1992 on the complex relationships between food, health, culture and society. OCHA's work is overseen by a scientific committee led by Claude Fischler, sociologist and director of research at France's national scientific research center (CNRS). Contributing international researchers include Alan Beardsworth, lecturer in sociology at the University of Loughborough (UK) and Paul Rozin, professor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania (USA), amongst other respected names.

About Congrilaït 2002 - the 26th IDF World Dairy Congress

Congrilaït, the 26th congress of the International Dairy Federation, will be held in Paris' Palais des Congrès from September 24-27, 2002. Organized around the theme "Enjoyment and Variety", the congress will bring together more than 2,000 participants from over 80 countries and all areas of the dairy industry, including marketing, communications and distribution, to debate key issues facing dairy producers and consumers. Case studies, tasting sessions, exhibitions and field visits will also be on the agenda.

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OCHA phase 2 findings: press preview

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The following preview is based on a telephone survey carried out between September and October 2001 in the UK, the US, France, Germany, Italy and French-speaking Switzerland. More than 1,000 people were interviewed, including the general public, doctors and teachers. Interestingly, doctors tended to agree with their compatriots more often than with doctors from other countries. However, doctors in general were more convinced that today's food is more hygienic and comes with better information than before.

This second phase follows on from focus groups held in different countries in 2000 and 2001. A third and final phase will complete the study, which is due to be presented at the 26th IDF World Dairy Congress in Paris this September.

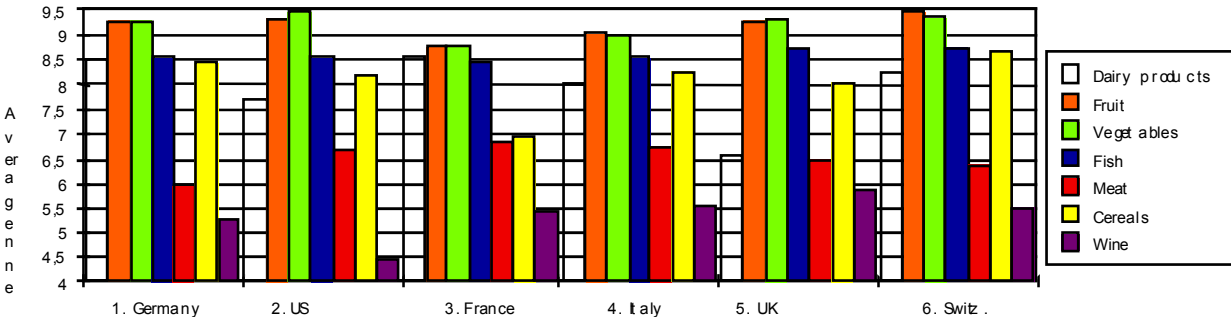
The French Paradox revisited: the British give better 'health scores' to wine than the French.

When it comes to rating the health benefits of foods, Europeans and their American counterparts tend to agree: **fruit and vegetables** score highest, followed by **fish**. The exceptions are in France, where fish is replaced by **dairy products** and Switzerland, where it shares third place with **cereals**. Meat is given its best ratings by the French and cereals in Germany and Switzerland. When asked to rate health content from 1-10 (0= unhealthy, 10= very healthy), the Europeans all gave **wine** a "pass" mark, starting at 5.28 out of 10, with the most enthusiastic supporters the Brits (5.87 out of 10), compared with the French (5.41). However, wine was less well considered by the Americans with 4.44 out of 10.

Despite recent food safety scares, **meat** was awarded an overall 6.51 out of 10, with consumers' perceptions most positive in France (6.84) and least positive in Germany (5.95). The UK and US sample awarded 6.47 and 6.66 respectively.

In terms of **dairy products**, UK replies showed that they perceived to be slightly more healthy than meat, (6.5 out of 10), and much more healthy in France, Germany and Switzerland, where scores were between 8.2 and 8.5). The average US score for dairy products was 7.68 out of 10. While most continental Europeans consider live dairy products to be healthy, the British and Americans are wary of unpasteurized products, rating them 4.2 and 4.6 respectively. On the other hand, Americans tend to see vitamin A and D boosts to milk, as a health benefit (marked 7.22 out of 10), unlike the Germans (3.94 out of 10).

Healthy foods: scores attributed to food families

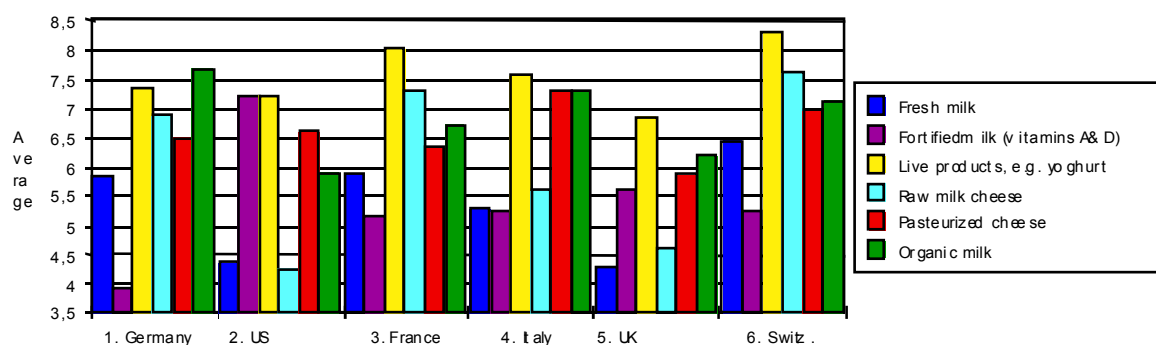


The French Paradox revisited (continued)

Healthy foods: scores attributed to food families

	Milk Products	Fruits	Vegetables	Fish	Meat	Breads and cereals	Wine
Germany	8,48	9,31	9,32	8,56	5,95	8,47	5,28
USA	7,68	9,35	9,47	8,57	6,66	8,2	4,44
France	8,56	8,77	8,78	8,47	6,84	6,96	5,41
Italy	7,99	9,08	8,99	8,56	6,75	8,23	5,56
Great Britain	6,55	9,31	9,34	8,74	6,47	8,04	5,87
Switzerland	8,23	9,48	9,38	8,74	6,39	8,71	5,51
GLOBAL	7,92	9,21	9,21	8,61	6,51	8,1	5,35

Healthy foods: scores attributed to different dairy products



	Fresh Milk	Fortified milk (with vitamins A & D)	Live products (with active cultures)	Raw milk cheese	Pasturized cheese	Organic milk
Germany	5,83	3,94	7,36	6,89	6,48	7,7
USA	4,37	7,22	7,23	4,24	6,6	5,92
France	5,9	5,13	8,03	7,28	6,35	6,74
Italy	5,3	5,23	7,56	5,6	7,27	7,31
Great Britain	4,29	5,62	6,86	4,61	5,89	6,23
Switzerland	6,46	5,26	8,3	7,62	6,98	7,14
GLOBAL	5,37	5,39	7,56	6,06	6,6	6,84

Test of averages: numbers are either red or blue when the corresponding average is significantly different than the variable average (5% risk).

Red= above average, blue = below average

You are what you eat... and how you eat.

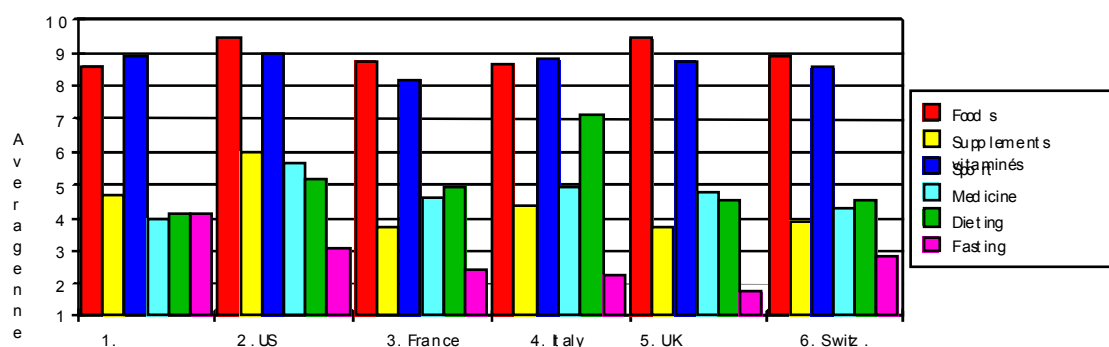
When asked to rate the importance of **food** for good health, the average response was 8.99 out of 10, with the highest scores in the UK (9.46) and the US (9.46). **Vitamin supplements** were not generally considered very important (average score 4.4 out of 10), except in the US, where the average score was 6.02 out of 10.

While good food is considered to be important, it is clearly not enough the only preoccupation. In fact, in Germany and Italy, **physical exercise** is considered more important than choosing healthy foods (rated 8.9. and 8.84 out of 10 respectively).

How you eat is also considered to be important. The majority of Germans tend to consider a **varied diet** to be important (58%), while the British (25% and 58%) and the Americans (15% and 59%) were also "strongly in agreement" or "mostly in agreement". **Dieting** was not considered to be generally important for good health (rated at an average 5.08 out of 10), except in Italy, where the score was 7.13 out of 10. The real key to good health for most of the interviewees was to **eat in moderation** (47% in Switzerland to 90% in Germany).

On average, 42% of interviewees said that it is important to **keep up-to-date with the latest information on food**, although surprisingly perhaps, the British appeared to be quite unconcerned (19%).

Factors considered important for maintaining good health
(scores)



	Foods	Vitamin Supplements	Sport	Medicine	Dieting	Fasting
Germany	8,62	4,71	8,9	4,01	4,13	4,1
USA	9,46	6,02	8,98	5,69	5,18	3,11
France	8,76	3,76	8,21	4,6	4,93	2,38
Italy	8,7	4,34	8,84	4,93	7,13	2,28
Great Britain	9,46	3,74	8,77	4,78	4,56	1,72
Switzerland	8,94	3,91	8,54	4,28	4,56	2,85
GLOBAL	8,99	4,4	8,7	4,71	5,08	2,74

Test of averages: numbers are either red or blue when the corresponding average is significantly different than the variable average (5% risk). Red= above average, blue = below average

Basic principals of a healthy diet: percentage that strongly agrees

	Germany	USA	France	Italy	Great Britain	Switzer-land	Total (% completely agree)
I watch what I eat	58	29	47	65	34	57	48
Diversity in eating pretty much insures a healthy diet	58	15	42	60	25	40	40
Moderation in eating pretty much insures a healthy diet	41	25	18	55	30	18	31
It is important to keep informed regarding new findings in medicine and nutrition	48	43	41	62	19	40	42
Food can be classified as either good or bad for health	10	5	12	49	4	13	15
I take vitamins everyday	17	55	2	1	24	4	17

Eating well: pain or pleasure? A worry for the Americans, a pleasure for the French.

In the **US**, eating well is primarily a question of carefully selecting the right nutrients and eating the right quantities of food - in particular, not too many calories. For many, this is a daily worry: *"I think eating is a task,"* said one young American interviewee, who explained, *"I mean, consider the pyramid that you're supposed to follow. You're supposed to have so much bread, so much meat, so much protein every day, so much fruit... It's impossible to follow that!"* In **Britain**, on the other hand, people tend to reason in terms of saving time and money: convenience is what counts!

In **France, Switzerland, Italy and Germany**, eating well is much more a question of sharing and conviviality, although there are some slight differences. In *Germany*, the fact of eating as a family appears to be more important than the actual meal. For *Italians*, the content of meals is as important as the sharing. And many *French* idealize meals with friends and family: they talk about being in the country, taking the time to cook and enjoy simple food in good company. In the words of one interviewee: *"It's cooking up a little omelette, something really simple, that you'll enjoy eating with a little salad. It'll all be tasty and good with a nice little glass of red wine and you'll take your time over it. You won't need television or a book... you'll just enjoy the company and the moment."*

Nostalgia ain't what it used to be: food is tastier and better quality than ever before for the British and the Americans... but not for the French and the Italians.

You win some and you lose some... overall, 87% of respondents believe modern eating has gained in **choice**, 78% in **information** on food, 76% in **food hygiene** and 50% in **health benefits and freshness**. On the other hand, 68% regret a loss in **tradition** and 57% a loss of **confidence**, as might be expected from recent events.

There appears to be a **split between Latin countries and other nations**. The French, Italian and French-speaking Swiss most commonly consider that food has lost some of its **taste, quality and tradition** (e.g. 67% of French interviewees regretted a loss of taste, while 51% of Italians reported a loss of quality). This contrasts sharply with participants in the US, Germany and the UK, who felt that today's food offers the same or more taste and quality (75%, 68% and 61% respectively for taste, 69%, 69% and 75% for quality). The vast majority of UK interviewees also mentioned an increase in choice and variety (94% and 89%) and in food enjoyment (65%). The British also considered that they were healthier today (56%), compared to 48% of Italians who considered they were less healthy.

In terms of **food safety**, most respondents reported a loss in confidence (57% overall), with France, Switzerland and the UK most concerned (64%, 61% and 64%, against 44% in the US). The Italians were most confident, with 38% reporting an increase, compared to an average of 23%.

As for the **time spent eating**, 57% of Germans felt they were spending less, contrasting strongly with the French, 62% of whom felt they spent more time at the table than before.

When asked if they would prefer to be in the **past, present or future** when it comes to eating, many chose the past (between 25-31% of the British, Swiss and French, and 44% of Americans). However, the majority are happy where they are.

Nostalgia ain't what it used to be (continued)

Gains and losses in respect to the past

		Taste	Pleasure	Quality	Tradition	Variety	Choice	Hygiene	Knowledge	Time	Trust
Germany	gained lost	40 32	40 26	45 30	16 56	67 11	84 8	74 9	74 15	20 59	18 54
USA	gained lost	14 25	47 17	47 31	13 66	85 5	83 8	65 16	82 10	41 42	26 44
France	gained lost	14 67	36 26	36 51	7 68	82 10	90 8	81 16	70 17	62 22	25 64
Italy	gained lost	27 54	37 44	36 51	8 74	80 10	84 9	82 13	82 9	58 33	38 51
Great Britain	gained lost	39 39	65 14	50 25	12 72	89 5	94 1	74 12	79 11	42 36	12 61
Switzerland	gained lost	27 59	45 22	40 40	9 74	81 16	89 8	80 12	81 15	55 32	17 66
Total	gained lost	31 46	45 25	42 38	11 68	81 9	87 7	76 13	78 13	46 37	23 57
	No change	23	30	20	21	10	6	11	9	17	21

The nurturing noughties: Europeans see their bodies as trees, not temples...

When asked to choose between a list of metaphors, most interviewees (42%) said they would compare their bodies to **trees** - living beings that require "food" from the soil, sun and air to grow and develop. While the European score ranged from 30% (UK) to 54% (Switzerland), the American score was only 22%, with more Americans (31%) choosing to describe their bodies as "**factories**, because when we eat, food is decomposed, transformed, distributed and stocked in different parts of the body". For 20% of Americans, the days of the body cult are not over yet: 20% described their bodies as a **temple**, compared to 15% of Europeans. Reassuringly, perhaps, only 4% of all interviewees saw their bodies as a "**good armchair**, because when we eat, we are overtaken by a feeling of comfort and pleasure"!

A choice of 7 body metaphors

Focus group participants were asked to find metaphors to describe the links between food and the body. 7 metaphors were selected and proposed to the telephone interviewees, who were asked to choose the one that best suited their way of thinking:

A tree	because the body is a living being that requires food from the soil, sun and air to grow and develop.
A car	because, a body needs food to function, like a car needs petrol/gas.
A factory	because when we eat, food is decomposed, transformed, distributed and stocked in different parts of the body.
A temple	because our bodies must be respected like a sanctuary and the food we give them must be chosen with the same care as an offering.
A filter	because when we eat, our body filters out what is not good and keeps what is good.
A fortress	because we have to eat to strengthen our defenses against external attacks.
An armchair	because when we eat, we are overtaken by a feeling of comfort and pleasure.

The nurturing noughties (continued)

Body metaphors

Chosen metaphor: % by country.

	Switzer-land	Germany	Italy	France	Great Britain	USA	TOTAL
Tree	54	51	48	47	30	22	42 %
Factory	16	22	16	16	25	31	21 %
Temple	16	13	14	15	12	20	15 %
Car	8	5	10	7	17	14	10 %
Fortress	3	5	5	4	5	5	5 %
Armchair	1	2	4	7	5	5	4 %
Filter	1	2	3	4	6	2	3 %
TOTAL	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Khi2=87,7 ddl=30 p=0,001 (very significant)

		Tree	Factory	Temple	Car	Fort-ress	Arm-chair	Filter	Total
Switzerland	All	54	16	16	8	3	1	1	100
	Physicians	53	17	13	13	2	2		100
Germany	All	51	22	13	5	5	2	2	100
	Physicians	54	24	10	2	2	4	4	100
Italy	All	48	16	14	10	5	4	3	100
	Physicians	49	20	18	10		4		100
France	All	47	16	15	7	4	7	4	100
	Physicians	40	17	27	4	4	6	2	100
Great Britain	All	30	25	12	17	5	5	6	100
	Physicians	41	35	14	2	2	2	4	100
USA	All	22	31	20	14	5	5	2	100
	Physicians	26	30	22	10	2	8	2	100
Total	All	42	21	15	10	5	4	3	100
	Physicians	44	24	17	7	2	4	2	100

Differences between countries for "all": Khi2=87,7 ddl=30 p=0,001 (Very significant)