



THE CANADIAN CENTRE FOR
FOOD INTEGRITY

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Canadians Want to be Better Connected to their Food

New research shows how Canada's food system can further engage with Consumers

GUELPH, ON. November 13, 2019 – Canadian consumers care now more than ever about their food. New research from the Canadian Centre for Food Integrity's (CCFI) 2019 Public Trust Research Report shows that while 91% of Canadians claim to know little, very little or nothing about modern farming practices in Canada, 60% of survey respondents, meaning three in five Canadians, are interested in knowing more about agriculture and how their food is produced. CCFI surveyed 2,189 Canadians 18 years and older and examined the online conversations of close to 260,000 Canadians.

The 2019 report, *'Connecting with Canadians'* provides benchmark data to better understand Canadian's overall impression of Canada's food system and consumers' expectations and sentiment of contentious food-related issues.

Two new tracking trends identified in the 2019 data are Canadian consumers' moderate to strong concerns relating to food fraud (91%) – the practice of mislabeling, adulterating or counterfeiting food products – and concerns with misleading food labels (89%) for the purpose of marketing. Consumers are starting to look more closely at food labels and are asking questions about what certain food labels mean.

"The timing of the research is pertinent considering how food related topics are dominating news relating to plant-based diets, pesticides, genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and consumer's perspective on agriculture's role in greenhouse gas emissions relating to climate change," says John Jamieson, CEO & President of CCFI. "The 2019 research is a key resource for Canada's food system to learn how to better connect with consumers."

The 2019 research is consistent with 2018 data that shows the percentage of Canadians who feel the food system is on the right track out numbers those who feel it's headed in the wrong direction. The data shows that more Canadians feel Canada's food system is heading in the right direction at 35% of respondents, compared to only 26% of consumers from the United States. More American consumers appear to have disapproving views of their food system than Canadians who appear to better trust their food system.

The research also shows the differences between provinces, genders and generational preferences in Canadian consumers and discusses the unfavourable role celebrities and well-known activists play in certain topics relating farming to the environment, animal welfare, nutrition and food safety.



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“As consumers have access to various communication channels and are overloaded with more information relating to their food, the ability to decipher what is credible becomes more difficult,” says Kim McConnell, Chair of the CCFI Board of Directors. “Canada’s food system can use the 2019 research to better communicate with different types of consumers to help further build the public’s trust when discussing their food priorities.”

The 2019 research was unveiled at the fourth annual Public Trust Summit in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan from November 13-14, 2019. The 2019 Summit was co-hosted by the CCFI and Farm & Food Care Saskatchewan. Over 230 thought leaders from across Canada’s food system – from primary producers, to industry associations, retailers, grocers and agri-food executives – gathered to learn, network, and engage on how to better earn public trust in food.

CCFI welcomes those interested in a copy of the 2019 Research Report ‘Connecting with Canadians’ to visit the CCFI website to download the Report or contact the Communications Coordinator to receive a hard copy.

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The Canadian Centre for Food Integrity is a national charity with a clearly defined mandate as the service provider to help Canada’s food system earn trust by coordinating research, resources, dialogue and training. As CCFI gains traction in Canada, the opportunities for collaboration among industry partners, stakeholders, members and consumers continues to grow. Leading the way in spreading the message of the importance of public trust is key for Canada’s food system and its many opportunities.

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