

**Canadians Concerned About Good Nutrition – But Not As Educated As They Could Be**  
*Sixth “Tracking Nutrition Trends” survey highlights Canadians’ knowledge, concerns*

October 12, 2006 – Toronto – Canadians are concerned about the food choices they make, but continue to be confused about basics such as the influence of certain fats and concepts like the glycemic index. These were among the key findings released today in the 2006 Tracking Nutrition Trends (TNT VI) survey, undertaken by the Canadian Council of Food and Nutrition (CCFN).

The survey was launched by the National Institute of Nutrition in 1989 to investigate the self-reported knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of the adult Canadian population with respect to food and nutrition. CCFN has maintained the survey; subsequent surveys have built on previous findings and tracked changes in attitudes, self-reported knowledge and behaviours of adult Canadians. Respondents were polled in 1989, 1994, 1997, 2002 and 2004.

Among other interesting findings is the gap that exists between self-perception and actual health status among Canadians. Knowing that almost 60 per cent of Canadian adults are either overweight or obese, it is interesting to find that few people actually view their health or eating habits as poor, according to the survey.

“Overall, Canadians report they are in good health and are generally in-the-know about nutrition information, yet the statistics on overweight and obesity are staggering. In an era where the obesity epidemic hangs over us like a dark cloud, the solution lies with all of us – industry, consumers, media, government – illustrating again that an integrated, multi-stakeholder approach is key,” comments Francy Pillo-Blocka, President & CEO, CCFN.

“Consumers need to be aware of their own health status and to be their own manager, for themselves and their families. Finding and using information from reliable sources is key.”

Canadians said they obtain most of their nutrition information from food labels (77 per cent), followed by print media (76 per cent), friends, relatives and colleagues (66 per cent) and electronic media (65 per cent).

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Among the other survey highlights:

- Eighty-seven per cent of Canadians believe they have some knowledge of nutrition
- Few people see their health or eating habits as poor
- Many people are motivated by health-based considerations when selecting food
- Nutrition is almost as important for Canadians as taste, and much more important than cost or convenience, when selecting foods
- Canadians also care about food-based considerations – they care about certain food attributes (e.g., whole grains) more than others (e.g., a low glycemic index)
- Other important attributes include the presence of omega-3 fatty acids, the presence of added nutrients and being organic
- Canadians have made changes in two broad categories to improve or change their eating habits in the past year:
  - Increasing their intake of nutritious foods, such as fruits and vegetables
  - Reducing the quantity of certain nutrients (particularly various types of fats)

A full copy of the survey can be obtained from CCFN, or online at [www.ccfn.ca](http://www.ccfn.ca).

The Canadian Council of Food and Nutrition is a multi-sectoral, science-based organization on food and nutrition policy and information. We are a catalyst in advancing nutritional health and well-being of Canadians. Our key priorities and activities serve to influence nutritional health based on solid scientific evidence.

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