

ANNUAL REPORT

2022

LETTER FROM THE CEO



I'm excited to present the International Food Information Council's 2022 Annual Report, where we highlight IFIC accomplishments in science communications and consumer research to promote the science and evidence behind our food. As U.S. public health and nutrition leaders expand their focus on the role of diet in reducing the risk of disease and improving health, the availability of fact-based information on food and dietary patterns is more important than ever. Improving the public's understanding of the food they eat is the core of IFIC's mission. I invite you to review our work in 2022, from the research we do to better understand the challenges consumers face in making healthy food decisions, to the careful steps we take to gather, translate and promote current standards of knowledge in food production and nutrition.

After seven years as IFIC's Chief Executive Officer, this is also my last opportunity to share my deepest thanks and appreciation to each and every IFIC member, supporter, partner, collaborator and professional IFIC staff member. In a media and information environment packed with misinformation about food, your support for IFIC's unique focus on the quality and availability of sound information on food production, safety and nutrition has enabled us to significantly increase our ability to reach consumers with fact-based information about diet and health.

With 2023 comes an exciting new chapter for IFIC. After a careful search, Wendy Reinhardt Kapsak, MS, RDN, returns to IFIC as its new Chief Executive Officer, and I could not be more excited about what the future holds for our organization. Wendy brings a wealth of leadership experience at the intersection of science, communications and health, including over a decade at IFIC as a Senior Director in Nutrition and Wellness. Along with the entire IFIC staff, Board of Trustees and Assembly, we extend Wendy a warm welcome!

Finally, I'd like to thank the IFIC community for its faith in me during my time at this special organization. Joining all of you was the best decision I ever made.

With appreciation,

Joseph Clayton

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through our original content, timely research, and engaging education programs, the International Food Information Council (IFIC) continued advancing the understanding of food and nutrition science in 2022. In a post-pandemic world, our research program took a forward-looking approach, focusing on the emerging priorities of consumers. IFIC's experts collaborated on new science-based resources that reached millions of people around the globe. And our distance learning events brought the latest findings on nutrition and food safety to thousands of health professionals. This report highlights the outcomes of our consumer research, comments to regulatory agencies, special communications initiatives, and continuing professional education.

In 2022, IFIC conducted six consumer research projects investigating science communications topics at the center of global food conversations, such as regenerative agriculture and gut health. And our flagship initiative, the annual Food and Health Survey, celebrated its 17th year, focusing on policy-related issues such as allergen labeling, consumer definitions of "healthy," environmental sustainability, and mental health. We also included an oversample of the Generation Z population to better understand their perspectives. We brought together experts in science communications from

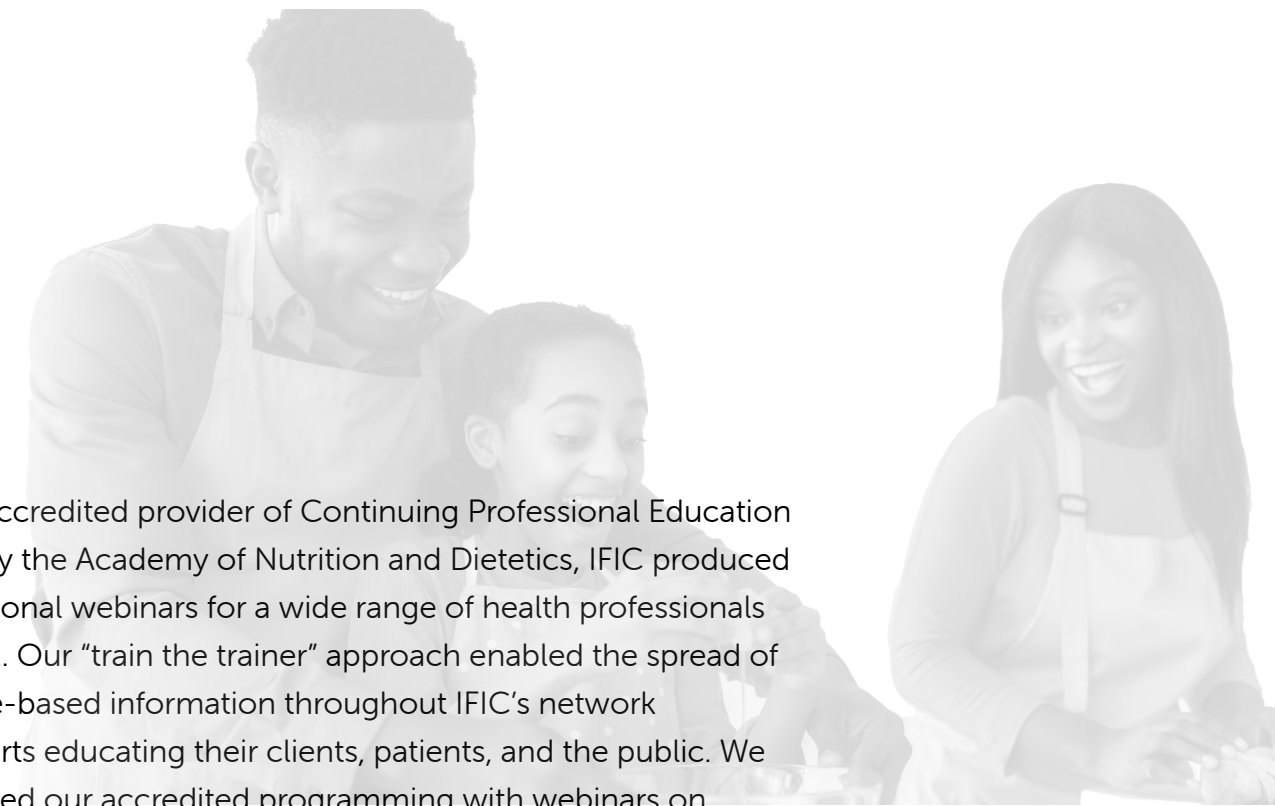
public and private stakeholders to collaborate on original resources that engaged and informed millions of consumers in 2022. We published a constant stream of science-based articles, explainers and social messaging across IFIC's far-reaching online platforms. Our in-house experts kept the evidence for nutrition and food safety at the center of global food conversations and filled in knowledge gaps about the science.

IFIC worked throughout 2022 to ensure that policymakers made decisions based on scientific evidence. We submitted comments on various topics, including the development of the 2025-2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, online food information accessibility in Canada, and the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health. Our credibility and longstanding relationships with regulatory agencies mean that our input on pending decisions is valued and respected.

Our team responded to myths and misperceptions surrounding food ingredients and processing techniques by creating communications that focused on scientific evidence. We collaborated with industry, government, and academia to investigate critical topics, ensuring that our findings remained relevant to food producers and consumers.

As an accredited provider of Continuing Professional Education (CPE) by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, IFIC produced educational webinars for a wide range of health professionals in 2022. Our "train the trainer" approach enabled the spread of science-based information throughout IFIC's network of experts educating their clients, patients, and the public. We expanded our accredited programming with webinars on topics such as nutrition science in the media, low- and no-calorie sweeteners, and sugar intake trends.

As we look forward to 2023, IFIC remains committed to understanding the evolving priorities of food consumers and working collaboratively to advance health professionals' knowledge. We will continue to create impactful educational programs and provide valuable insights into the intersection of food, health, and nutrition.



UNDERSTANDING TODAY'S FOOD CONSUMERS

In 2022, IFIC's research program embodied a forward-looking approach, with an acknowledgement of the emerging priorities of consumers in a post-pandemic world. With the immediate impacts of the pandemic waning, IFIC surveys shifted away from tracking pandemic-specific changes in consumer attitudes and pivoted to understanding the minds of consumers in the current food landscape. In total, IFIC conducted six consumer research projects, which included surveys focused on topics such as regenerative agriculture and gut health.

THE 2022 FOOD AND HEALTH SURVEY

IFIC's annual Food and Health Survey marked its 17th consecutive year in 2022. This flagship research initiative gathers consumer insights on how Americans' perceptions and behaviors around their food-purchasing decisions have changed over time, along with an exploration of the factors that drive those decisions today. IFIC's subject matter experts in nutrition, food safety and agriculture use the findings of this survey to better understand how consumers are thinking about their food. These insights help to inform the structure and delivery of IFIC's education and communications programs across our platforms. Additionally, these findings further the dialogue

among key stakeholders in the food and nutrition spaces. Each year, IFIC summarizes our latest findings in customized research briefings to our supporters, our trustees and the broader community of academic institutions and NGOs that share our interest in the intersection of food and health.

This year's Food and Health Survey focused on policy-related issues such as allergen labeling and consumer definitions of "healthy," while also diving into consumer perceptions of the relationship between food and issues like environmental sustainability and mental health. Additionally, the Survey included an oversample of the Generation Z population to better understand the perspectives of this maturing demographic with increasing buying power. While the 2022 Survey included fresh topics relevant to today's landscape, there was also a continued exploration of themes from previous years, including perennial issues like trends in diets and eating patterns, perceptions of food production methods and food labeling, as well as attitudes about food safety.

HIGHLIGHTS OF IFIC'S BROADER RESEARCH AGENDA

[Consumer Survey: Understanding Portion and Serving Sizes](#)

[Consumer Perspectives on Regenerative Agriculture](#)

[Caffeine: Consumer Consumption Habits and Safety Perceptions](#)

[Consumer Insights on Gut Health and Probiotics](#)

[Perceptions on Processed: Consumer Sentiment and Purchasing Habits 2022](#)

[2022 Food & Health Survey](#)



ORIGINAL RESOURCES FROM INDEPENDENT EXPERTS

IFIC convenes science communications experts from across public and private organizations with a common interest in elevating the scientific evidence behind our food system. We combine their shared knowledge and perspectives to create engaging resources that educate consumers, influencers and health professionals.

This work is led by our team of in-house experts in science communications and consumer research who collaborate with independent organizations, government agencies and academic experts to ensure the accuracy and integrity of our education and communications programs.

Highlights from over one hundred original, expert-derived resources we created:

[Metals in Food and Water: What You Need to Know to Protect Your Health](#)

[Free-Range Chickens and Cage-Free Eggs: The S\(coop\) on Poultry Labels](#)

[Tips for Mindful Snacking](#)

[To Formulate or Not to Formulate? The Lowdown on Infant Feeding](#)

[Questions and Answers About Sugars](#)

[Busting Myths About Animal Agriculture](#)

[Nutrition 101 Video Series: How to Read a Nutrition Facts Label](#)

[What Is Stevia?](#)



COMMENTS TO REGULATORY AGENCIES

The pace of federal rulemaking around nutrition and food safety increased in 2022, and IFIC worked throughout the year to ensure policymakers were making decisions based on the scientific evidence. Our history of independent research - and our longstanding relationships with the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Drug Administration, and Health Canada - mean IFIC's input on pending decisions is credible and our community's voice is strongly represented.

IFIC submitted [comments to the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Agriculture](#) on the proposed scientific questions to be examined in support of the development of the 2025-2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Our comments focused on the need for a clear, consistent definition of the term "ultraprocessed," addressing the connection between sustainability, climate change and nutrition, and the need to enhance the personalization of consumer education tools such as MyPlate.

IFIC submitted [comments to Health Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency](#) on the development of voluntary guidance for making food information more consistently available and accessible to Canadians when shopping for food online. IFIC's comments centered on our extensive research around consumers and food labeling, the ease with which consumers can find food information online and changes in shopping behaviors resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The return of the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health in 2022 provided an opportunity for IFIC to help inform the Biden administration's push for a new federal nutrition policy. IFIC [submitted comments during the Conference's planning process](#) that highlighted major communications challenges faced by health and nutrition professionals as well as new opportunities for science communicators to disseminate messages to the American public. IFIC recommended the creation of a multisector collaboration to better understand food and eating decisions through research and to deliver effective and credible information that translates knowledge into behavior change.

We are extremely proud that regulatory agencies continue to look to IFIC for intelligence on consumer beliefs and behaviors.

COMMUNICATIONS INITIATIVES

IFIC's flexibility and expertise enable us to launch initiatives that respond to the constantly changing focus of food conversations around the world. Our team tracks the myths and misperceptions that build around particular ingredients or food processing techniques, and we create communications that turn the discussion back towards the scientific evidence.

IFIC excels at putting together teams within the food safety and nutrition ecosystem to investigate the critical topics of the moment for food producers and consumers. And each year, we find novel topics where industry, government and academia can work together to better understand and educate consumers. Here are just some of our highlights from 2022:

CAFFEINE WEBSITE

IFIC's caffeine website is designed to be a "one-stop shop" for consumers to learn about healthy caffeine consumption and food-safety facts. Complete with a "caffeine calculator," the site provides updated articles and resources about caffeinated beverages and foods to guide visitors along a healthful path.

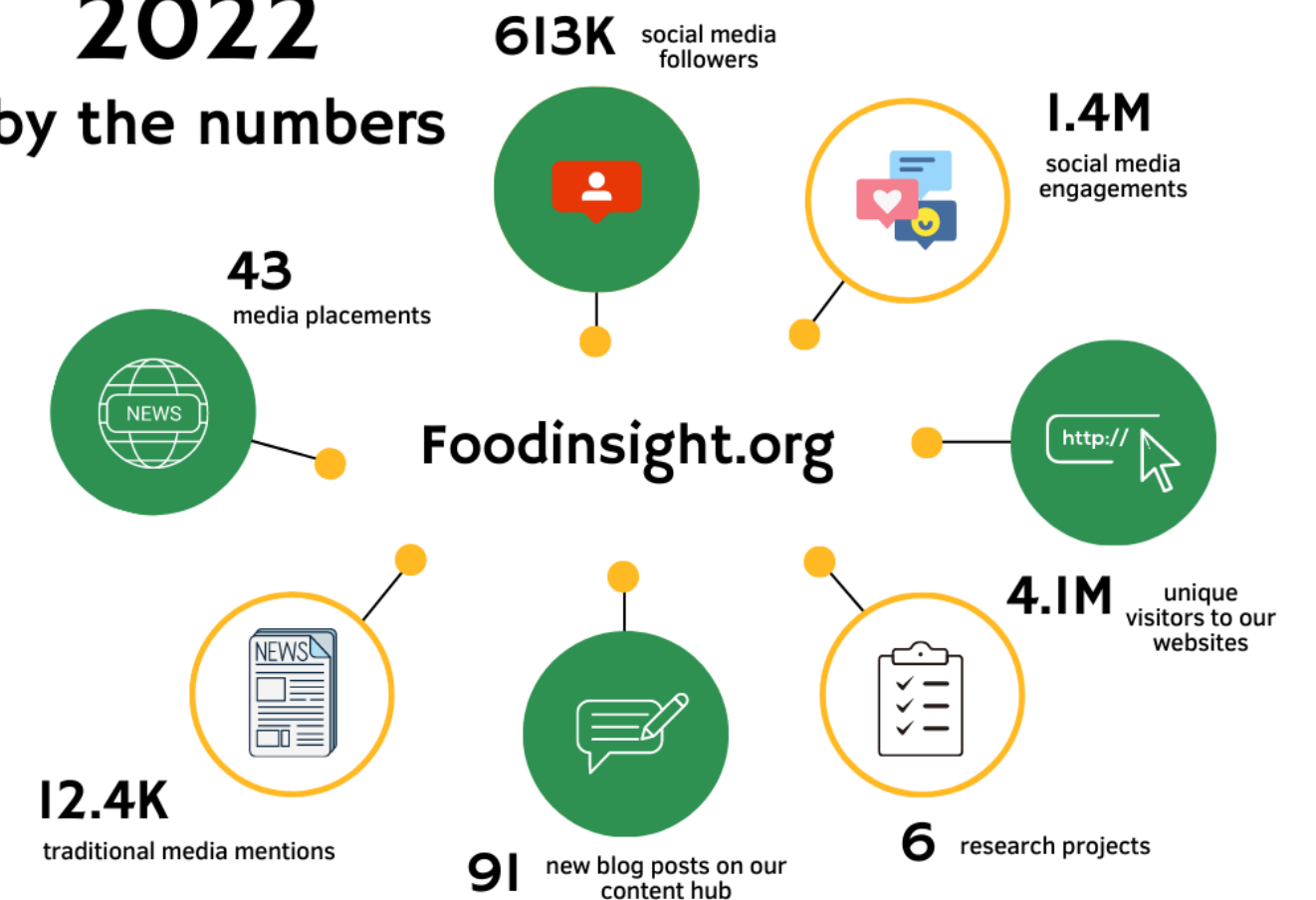
PROCESS THIS COMMUNICATIONS INITIATIVE

This year marks the sixth annual Understanding Our Food – Process This Initiative, IFIC's digital campaign that counters misinformation through educating consumers about modern food production, the spectrum of processed foods, and the many nutritional and safety benefits of food processing. First, IFIC conducted consumer research to understand consumer attitudes and perspectives around various aspects of processed foods, including assessing familiarity with ultraprocessed foods for the first time. Then we created dynamic, eye-catching content on topics such as fortification, nutrient density, MSG, caffeine and snacking.

INTERNATIONAL MICROSITES

Providing science-based information to broad audiences is part of IFIC's mission. As such, we translate our FoodInsight.org resources into Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese, uploading content weekly onto two international microsites that attracted over a million visitors in 2022.

2022 by the numbers



CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

IFIC's in-house experts use their knowledge and cross-cutting expertise to educate a broad range of audiences, including registered dietitians, nutritionists and other categories of health professionals. With two decades of experience as an accredited provider of Continuing Professional Education (CPE) by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, we have become a popular education destination for thousands of health professionals participating in our programs each year. The program provides a force multiplier to IFIC's own efforts to reach consumers as our "train the trainer" approach spreads science-based information to an entire network of experts educating their clients, patients and the public.

NAVIGATING NUTRITION SCIENCE IN THE MEDIA:

Translating Evidence to the Public – how to understand and communicate the quality of nutrition research studies receiving media attention

GUT CHECK:

Low- and No-Calorie Sweeteners and the Gut Microbiome – how low- and no-calorie sweeteners interact with the gut microbiome and what the published literature says about health effects

ADDING PERSPECTIVE TO RECENT SUGAR INTAKE TRENDS:

added sugar intake trends and consumption drivers

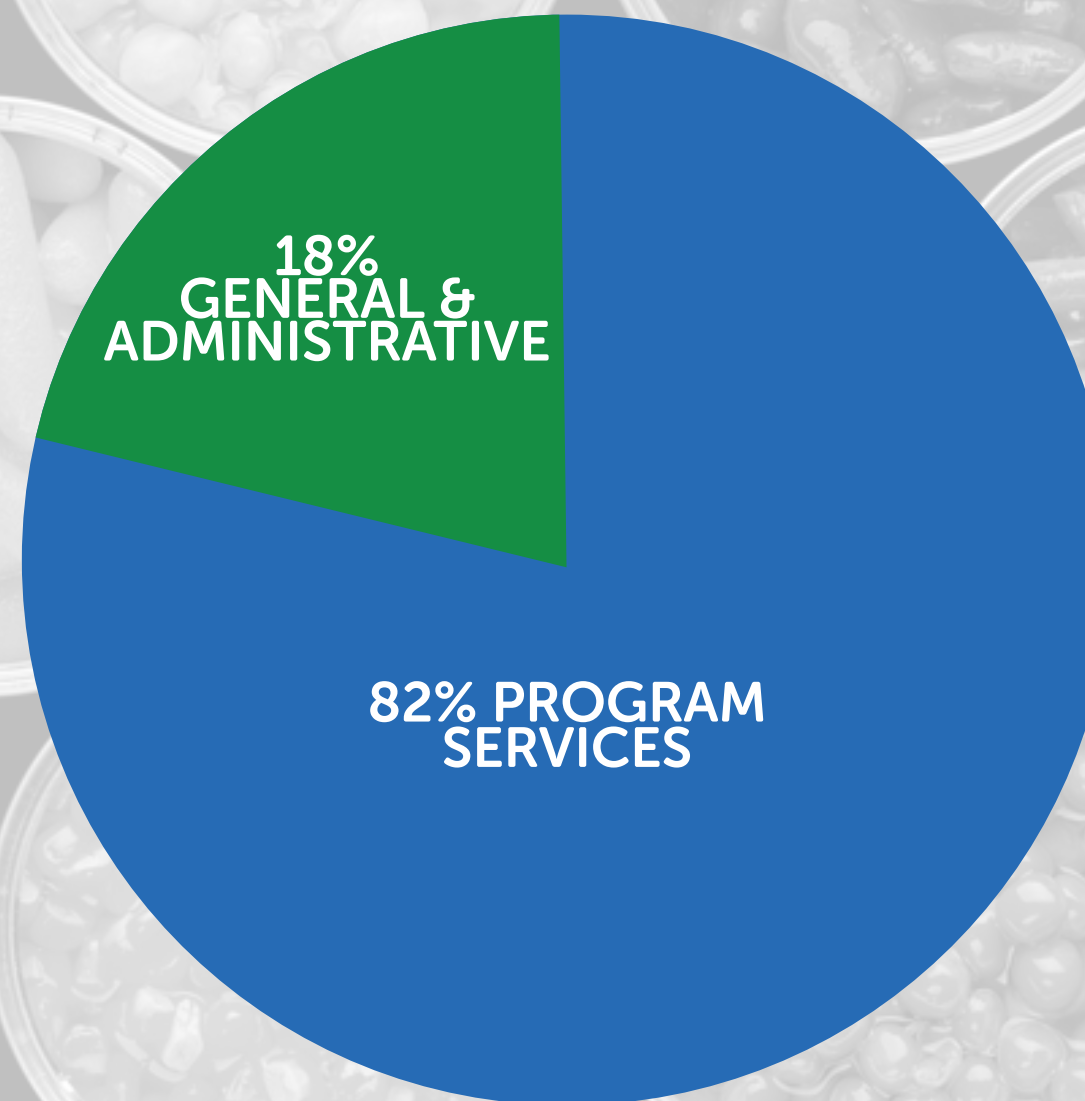
LOW-CALORIE SWEETENER SAFETY:

Settled or Asking For Evidence? – the safety and metabolism of low- and no-calorie sweeteners

More than 3000 members of IFIC's health professional network have actively participated in these sessions, affirming the quality and relevance of our content. The satisfaction levels with the programming are a testament to this, averaging a high score of 9 out of 10.

We invite you to explore the [Education](#) page on our website for further resources, as we continue to strive for excellence in our educational offerings.

FINANCIALS



Numbers derived from the audit of IFIC's consolidated financial statements comprising of activities, functional expenses and cash flows for the year ended December 31, 2021. Additional information on IFIC's financials are publicly available at [IFIC.org](https://www.ific.org).

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