GOOD OR BAD?

IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT THE FUNDING
Insights on Preserving Public Trust in Nutrition Research

Most scientific research is funded by one or a combination of these resources:

- Government
- Corporations & Industry
- Nonprofit Foundations
- Universities

Reliable, trusted research for public health is:
- Conducted credibly (rigorously designed, peer reviewed and executed)
- Interpreted and translated accurately and in context

Funding resources for food and nutrition research are limited and in decline. The food industry is helping to fill the gap.

Regardless of quality, there is a strong perception of bias in corporate- and industry-funded research.

- 88% of Today's Dietitian readers feel that industry-funded nutrition research is at least somewhat valuable.
- 75% of Today's Dietitian readers feel that industry-funded nutrition research is at least somewhat biased.

Bias in research occurs in many forms, not only financial influence:
- Sample selection
- Sample size
- Data collection
- Statistical analysis
- Confounding variables
- Publication
- Desire for recognition
- Pressure to publish
- Personal ideology
- Political reasons
- Ethical orientation

Industry conducts research for reasons such as:
- New Product Development & Health Benefits of Food
- Innovation in Existing Products
- Legal or Regulatory Requirements
- Label Claim Substantiation

To evaluate nutrition research, one must assess its:
- Strengths
- Limitations
- Signs of Any Bias

There are currently no widely accepted, adopted or enforced guidelines for nutrition research transparency and integrity.
To improve the credibility and trust of this important work, we need a framework of guiding principles.

Based on a white paper from two invited panels convened by the American Heart Association, entitled: Sound Science to Benefit the Public’s Health: Opportunities and Challenges in Industry-Funded Nutrition Research, heart.org/NutritionScience

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