Big agriculture and
the new food labelling

Description

The Canadian Food Guide should be free from economic, cultural, and political influence

By **Georges Dupras**

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It wasn't so many months ago (August 2019) that I submitted an article to the WestmountMag entitled, **The Canadian Food Guide and Andrew Scheer**. My comments were directed towards the **Conservative Party** for siding with the dairy industry against professionals in the health industry. In that case, the dairy industry took exception to a decision taken by health professionals at the **Canadian Food Guide**. This occurred when the latter chose water, as the drink of choice over milk, for inclusion in the Canadian Food Guide.

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Beef industry exempt

Once again, we see where big agriculture, in this case, the beef industry, has decided that they are better qualified on health issues than those trained in the field of nutrition. A posse of ranchers actively challenged the credibility of dieticians at The Canadian Food Guide (supposedly independent) when they successfully pressured them to exclude beef from a new labelling standard. This new labelling would confirm that foods containing 15% or more fats or sodium are labelled as not meeting Health Canada Standards. This would impact greatly on sales of Canadian processed beef.

Truth in advertising

Regardless of where anyone stands on Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, genetically modified foods, and species enhancement, there should be clear labelling in the interests of the consumer. The Canadian Food

Guide, among others, should be free from economic, cultural, and political influence. This, however, doesn't appear to be the reality.

Science and science alone

On the issue of pandemics, and COVID-19 in particular, our Prime Minister has stated that his government supports science. Over the years, and despite assurances to the contrary, our government seems to prefer a more political approach on a variety of other environmental issues, particularly those having strong economic interests.

> 'People have a right to know the truth about the food they eat and the products they consume. Industry has a responsibility to adapt to change and lead by example.'

It is not to our benefit to remain idle while professional standards are politicized in the interest of corporate gain. Canadians must insist that our governments meet or surpass all other controls, and that science works in our long-term environmental interest and not necessarily to fit a corporate end.

Closing

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Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of WestmountMag.ca or its publishers.

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Georges R. Dupras *has advocated for animals for over fifty years. A member of the International Association for Bear Research and Management (IBA), a Director of the Animal Alliance of Canada (AAC), Quebec Representative of Zoocheck Canada and past Board member of the Canadian SPCA, he worked on the original Save the Seal campaign in 1966 that culminated in the founding of the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) in 1969. Georges Dupras has published two books, Values in Conflict and the eBook Ethics, a Human*

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