WN *Feedback*

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The New Nutrition
Fit for the needs of this century

Access Public Health Nutrition September 2005 on the New Nutrition here
Access Public Health Nutrition September 2005 The Giessen Declaration here
Access Nov 2014 Geoffrey Cannon, Claus Leitzmann on the New Nutrition here
Access January 2015 Mark Wahlqvist on the New Nutrition here
Access January 2015 Hélène Delisle on the New Nutrition here



Constitution Dock, Hobart, on a cold day. In alphabetical order (not in picture), Andrea Begley, Geoffrey Cannon*, John Coveney, Jane Dixon, Danielle Gallegos, Tim Gill, Roger Hughes, Mark Lawrence (top, second from left), Amanda Lee, Dymphna Leonard, Stewart Lockie, Tony McMichael*, Geoff Marks, Cliona Ni Mhurchu, Margaret Miller, Claire Palermo, Malcolm Riley, Judy Seal, Boyd Swinburn (top, third from right), Karen Webb, Heather Yeatman*

Mark Lawrence writes:

Written from a beach shack on the Mornington peninsula outside Melbourne on my i-Pad. Hope it reaches you (*ed, it has)* and hope you can read and edit it (*ed, we can and have and now you have approved it).*

It was exciting to read the November 2014 *WN* commentary (access it above) updating the definition, dimensions, purposes and principles of the *New Nutrition Science*. This made me think once more about this transformative agenda's impact on

my professional practice. When the *Giessen Declaration* (1) was first published in 2005, a decade ago this year, it was a revelation for many of us engaged in public health nutrition policy, research and teaching. My views towards nutrition science at the time were a combination of frustration, uncertainty and tentative optimism.

With many others I was frustrated at the moribund nature and scope of my parent discipline whose teaching practices and research rules and procedures were shackled to a biomedical worldview of food and health relationships. We were also uncertain about how best to act on this frustration and to articulate an alternative approach to the prevalent nutrition science orthodoxy. At the same time there was some tentative optimism that there were possibilities emerging for transforming nutrition science. Following the *Declaration's* publication I shared with colleagues, work largely informed by the new nutrition science. Thus, we sensed added legitimacy to incorporate environmental sustainability, food systems and social determinants of health as core topics in our curricula and reference books (2).

During this period I participated in the 2007 meeting in Hobart, Tasmania, to discuss the new nutrition science, organised by two participants at the Giessen workshop meeting, Geoffrey Cannon and the late Tony McMichael. A picture of our bracing and exhilarating day is above. Boyd Swinburn (in shades) put his full support behind the new nutrition science, quickly synthesised the key points with a fresh perspective, and then secured a crucial amendment to the original three dimensions when he argued persuasively that economics be included separately as a fourth dimension.

What is needed now

The vision to transform nutrition science articulated so cogently in the *Giessen Declaration* has stood the test of time. Its visionary aspect has been vindicated, with the escalating social, economic, biological and environmental challenges facing nutrition as taught and practiced, and that face us all as citizens.

There is now a need to integrate the new nutrition science into policy, research and teaching activities. This will require new methods and new tools to provide an evidence base to inform decision-making. Currently, public health nutritionists are required too often to use methods and tools that are a carry-over from nutrition science's biomedical heritage.

As long as decision-making processes privilege a biomedical worldview, with evidence derived from clinical trials, over public health interventions, the state of population health will not improve. Decision-makers who persist with nutrient-based analyses to nutrition problems, and technological fixes as nutrition solutions, must be challenged. With the new nutrition science the profession now has a more coherent and 'fit for purpose' disciplinary basis.

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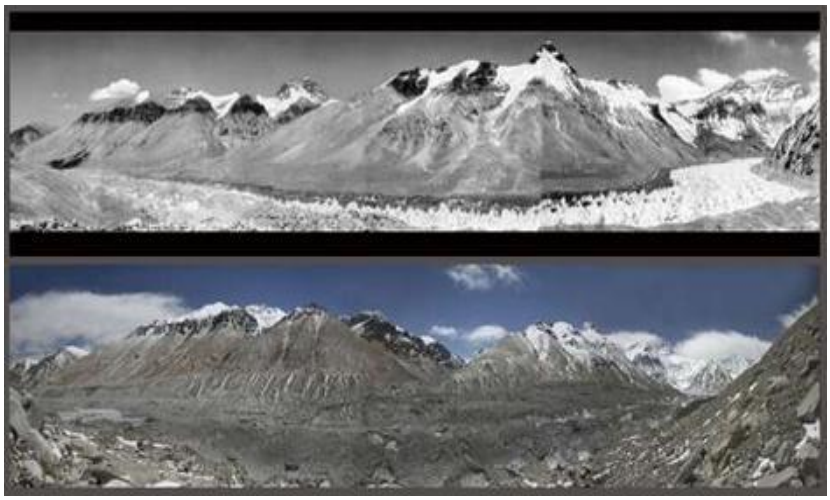
Lawrence M. The New Nutrition. Fit for the needs of this century [Feedback]. World Nutrition March 2015, ***6,*** *3, 215-217*



WN *Development. Climate*

No water means no food

Access October 2014 Editorial on climate here
Access October 2014 Naomi Klein, Tony McMichael, Colin Butler on climate here
Access December Update Colin Butler on climate here



The Rongbuk glacier on Mount Everest in 1968 (top) and 2007 (bottom). The Tibetan plateau and its glaciers are the source of the Indus, Brahmaputra, Mekong, Yellow, and Yangtse rivers

Mark Wahlqvist writes:

Thanks and congratulations for the hard work and broad vision of the *WN* editorial team. As one example that preoccupies us in Asia, the attention *WN* is paying to change in climate and its impact on world food systems and global health is crucial. The circumstances of this century oblige us all in the professions of public health and nutrition, and all of us as citizens, to reframe and rethink priorities and realities.

I report from Hangzhou in January. Sobering, even shattering news has appeared on Chinese media. In my part of the world, the fount of surface water is the Tibetan plateau and its glaciers. We can see what is happening. There is no doubt. But now, climate change in Tibet and the Himalayas is quickening beyond all expectations,

even faster than projected in the terrifying official report from Tibet *attached here,* backed by *recent reports from China* All of its seven major rivers will begin to dry by 2050 – in my children's and students' lifetimes – affecting China, South Asia and Indochina. This comes from a Chinese climate science report, and live television interviews with the scientists involved, just as the three major Chinese water diversion systems to bring water to the north come on-stream, but with the prospects that they will have little water to deliver within three decades. This projection means that almost half the world's population, in Asia, will be without water, since ground water is also disappearing.

In Australia, my country, the current government is now approving fracking at the edge of the Artesian Basin, (http://www.gabpg.org.au/great-artesian-basin-report). This is one of the world's most enormous bodies of currently unadulterated water, on which much of Australia depends. This is insane. Why should nutrition professionals be concerned and engaged? The answer is obvious. No water means no food, which means no nutrition. It is time for us all committed to public health and nutrition to rethink our principles and priorities – and fast.

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Wahlqvist M. Climate. No water means no food
[*Feedback*] *World Nutrition March 2015, **6**, 3, 217-218*



***WN** Development. Climate*
Food prices and food wars

Access June 2011 Editorial on food insecurity and food wars here
Access June 2011 Claudio Schuftan on food insecurity and food wars here
Access Update January 2015 on food wars here

Claudio Schuftan writes:

The *Update* news story in the January edition of *WN* rightly says that change in climate is a cause of food and nutrition insecurity, and thus civil unrest. This should not distract attention from the main cause. This is the insane practice of making food a commodity prey to the 'free market', often by the way of sheer speculation. Most people who have enough money, and who live where food is abundant, fail to realise that fluctuations in the supply of staple foods brings about volatility and artificial rises in their price that creates shortages and continual insecurity where food is most needed. This pushes families, communities and populations living in the margins,

below subsistence level, into states of scarcity and, worse, starvation. But these days impoverished people are not resigning themselves to their fate. They listen to the radio, watch television, use cell phones. They figure out who is profiteering from their children's hunger. So they eventually get very angry and rise up. The policy of treating food as a commodity is actually doubly insane because, down the ages, rulers and administrators have known that staple foods must always be available at affordable prices and distributed free of charge when needed. A colleague points me to the account below, from *The Later Roman Empire* by AHM Jones. At the time of the Emperor Justinian, Constantinople had a basic welfare system. The motive was not altruistic. It was common sense governance:

> Like Rome, where grain, and later bread, had been given away to citizens since the time of the Republic, Constantinople offered a free bread ration to many of its citizens, some by hereditary right, as with homeowners and scholars, but more on the basis of need. Both Rome and Constantinople were chronically at risk of riots caused by food shortages, usually but not always the result of speculation. To prevent disturbances, the civic authorities… directed the one hundred thousand bakeries of Constantinople to provide two pounds of free bread to each of eighty thousand residents daily.

The *WN* January *Update* refers to a recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and quotes the IPCC chair Rajendra Pachauri as saying:

> The report says climate change has already cut into the global food supply. The report also connects climate change to rising food prices and political instability, for instance the riots in Asia and Africa after food price shocks in 2008. Climate change poses a threat to global food stocks, and to human security. 'Nobody on this planet is going to be untouched by the impacts of climate change'.

The World Bank president Jim Yong Kim has also gone public saying:

> Battles over water and food will erupt within the next five to 10 years as a result of climate change. The water issue is critically related to climate change. People say that carbon is the currency of climate change, water is the teeth. Fights over water and food are going to be the most significant direct impacts of climate change.

As a matter of fact, fights, battles and wars over food and water have already broken out. It would be more accurate to say that these are caused by what is still the standard operation of the 'free market' ideology with, to an important extent, corporations driving climate change, itself a cause of hunger. Jim Yong Kim has a distinguished history of upholding the rights of ordinary people, as a founder of Partners in Health. He knows that his World Bank colleagues are not yet comfortable with such realities. They better had become so, and quick.

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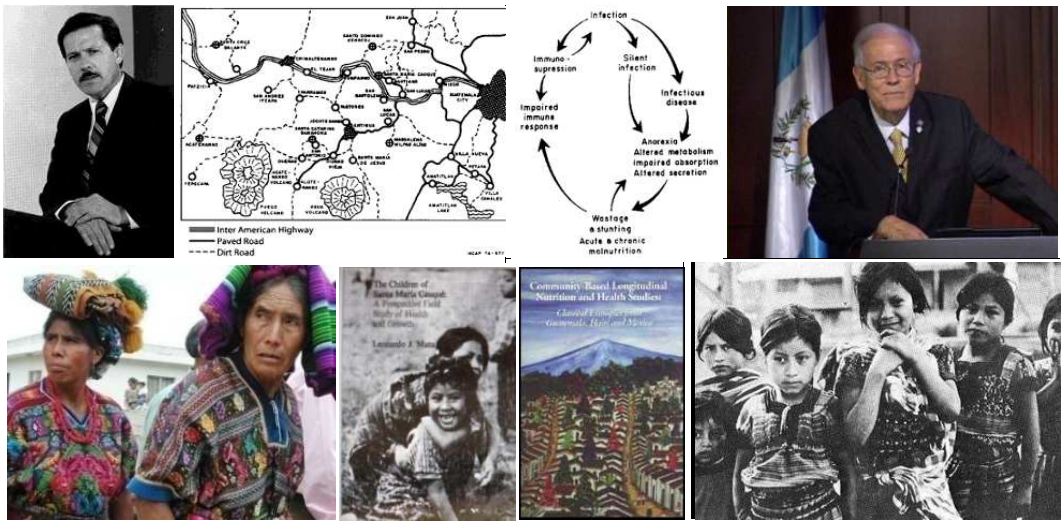
Schuftan C. Climate, Development. Food prices and food wars.
[*Feedback*] *World Nutrition March 2015,* ***6,*** *3, 210-211*

Public health heroes. Leonardo Mata
Visionary – and right

Access January 2015 Geoffrey Cannon on Leonardo Mata here



Leonardo Mata in his 40s (top left) and giving a lecture on The Children of Santa María Cauqué (right), in 2012. The map shows the location of the village in Guatemala. The diagram is of the vicious circle of infection and malnutrition. Below left and right are women and children of the village, and between them books containing the full account of the study (1978) and summarising it (1995)

David Picou writes:

Thank you for your *celebration of Leonardo Mata* from Costa Rica in the January *WN*. I knew Leonardo from the 1960s. He was always far more than a microbiologist. He was a visionary, charismatic and full of passion.

Our work on malnourished infants at the Tropical Metabolism Research Unit in Jamaica, of which I was director in the 1970s, supported his thesis on the relationship between infection and malnutrition. Infection in the severely malnourished infant did not express itself as written in the textbooks. There was usually no fever, tachycardia, increased white cell count. Postmortem studies in severely malnourished infants showed signs of infection in nearly all cases. We soon began to treat all infants with protein-energy malnutrition with antibiotics as part of a regime including a maintenance diet with trace elements.

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*Picou D. Public health heroes. Leonardo Mata. Visionary – and right [Feedback]. World Nutrition March 2015, **6**, 3, 220*



WN *Balance. Nutrition and nourishment*

Food, health – and care

Access December 2014 Olivia Yambi Visions for this century here
Access January 2015 Editorial on Beyond biochemistry here
Access January 2015 Geoffrey Cannon on Leonardo Mata here
Access this issue George Kent on how to end hunger here

George Kent writes:

In the January *WN* the editorial on *Nutrition and Nourishment* assesses the current path of nutrition work, emphasising the need to get beyond the narrow focus on biochemistry (1). Good, and there is also need to get at the social, political, economic and environmental dimensions of food and nutrition issues, a special strength of *WN*.

In his column in the same issue (2) Geoffrey Cannon cites the work of Leonardo Mata, author of the path-breaking study and book *The Children of Santa María Cauqué* (2), who sees hunger and deficiency as symptoms of poverty and injustice and whose solutions emphasise community health care.

Expanding nutritionists' vision in this way is important. Even so, they tend to limit their attention to interventions that can be taken to address narrow nutrition problems, whether at the community level or any other level. Yes, health workers can provide a variety of services. But that is not going to happen at the scale that is required unless people really care about the well-being of the needy. I refer here to deep caring, not the type of caring that is delivered mainly in exchange for a salary.

My commentary in this issue of *WN* (3) argues that hunger is not likely where people are really concerned with one another's well-being. Preventing hunger depends more on caring than on wealth or on specific health interventions. The importance of caring is especially clear with children. No child is born into a poor world. People care about the widespread malnutrition among children, but not enough. If ensuring that all children were adequately nourished became everyone's highest priority, there would be few obstacles to achieving that goal.

Food, health and care

There is a widely accepted framework for analysing children's nutrition, which is centred on food, health, and care. As Olivia Yambi explains in her contribution to the *WN Visions for This Century* series last December (4):

> Decades of studies and programme implementation in the field of nutrition has confirmed that population nutrition status is influenced by the triad of food, health and care. These are the underlying determinants of nutrition status. Optimal nutrition status

> results when children and populations at large have access to affordable, diverse, nutrient–rich food; when appropriate maternal and child care practices are in place; and when there are adequate health services and a healthy environment including safe water and sanitation and good hygiene practices.

We professionals have a good understanding of the importance of food and health interventions that help children thrive. But we have given little attention to the importance of caring in relation to children's nutrition. Justice requires caring. The realisation of human rights in general and of the human right to adequate food in particular depends on caring. Nice laws can be adopted in United Nations meetings and seats of government proclaiming the right to food, but if people really don't care much about each other's well-being, those rights will not be taken seriously.

The *WN* January editorial concluded (1):

> What is needed on a global scale, including throughout all impoverished continents, countries, and communities, is not just nutrients, and indeed not just food. It is adequate, available, affordable, appropriate nourishment – or, in a word, justice.

Yes, but we are not going to get those changes on a global scale any time soon. In my commentary this month, I explore how it might be possible to achieve 'adequate, available, affordable, appropriate nourishment – or, in a word, justice' at the community level. If we find ways to do this, and do it so well that others emulate these ways of living, we might find a way to achieve what is needed on a global scale.

Lasting lessons

I would like to know more about Leonardo Mata's work, and in particular its lasting effect. Nevin Scrimshaw called for more such studies to

> Identify the multiple causative factors and the functional consequences of disease in a population. Unlike clinical trials, they probe for the host, agent, and environmental factors responsible for disease and suggest health related behavior that can reduce or eliminate the disease burden studies.

Key findings of the Santa María Cauqué study were that (3):

> . . it was not lack of food that caused disease and death of infants and young children in this Cakchiquel Mayan village in the central highlands of Guatemala, but infections and infestations, whose effects were much more likely to be serious and lethal when children were not breastfed.
>
> In Santa María Cauqué there was always enough food. When children recovered from infection they consumed 25 per cent more calories. In Leonardo's view it is an axiom of settled peasant communities, even in marginal environments, that there is always enough food farmed and stored for all seasons.

Perhaps then, worldwide, the widespread malnutrition in young children is not about deficiencies in the local food supply, and much of it could be alleviated through

better breastfeeding practices. Many other studies support this view. UNICEF and WHO and other global agencies advocate improved breastfeeding. But the impacts on everyday practices by ordinary people 'on the ground' remain limited. Is there now better breastfeeding in Santa María Cauqué? If not, why not? If we don't know, why don't we know? Could it be that the world really doesn't care much about the children there?

There comes a point at which nutrition researchers have achieved a decent understanding of the 'multiple causative factors and the functional consequences of disease in a population'. Then it is time to look inward into the way nutrition work is done to figure out how to make researchers' truths more useful.

It would be good to have more studies of the sort pioneered by Leonardo Mata. New studies could be launched and past studies could be extended. Another team could visit to see if anything has changed in Santa María Cauqué, and figure out the reasons for those changes. And if nothing has changed, they could try to figure out why not.

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4 Kent G. Food systems, agriculture, society. How to end hunger. *[Balance] World Nutrition* March 2015, **6,** 3, 163-176.
5 Yambi O, Fardet A, Garduño-Diaz S, Patel R. Wahlqvist ML. Nutrition. Visions for this century. *[Development] World Nutrition* December 2014, **5**, 12, 1069-1084.
6 Scrimshaw N (ed).*Community-Based Longitudinal Nutrition and Health Studies. Classical Examples from Guatemala, Haiti and Mexico.* Boston MA : INF, 1995. http://archive. unu. edu/unupress/food2/UIN09E/UIN09E00.HTM

*Kent G. Nutrition and nourishment. Food, health – and care [Feedback]. World Nutrition March 2015, **6**, 3, 221-223*

Editor's note:
In this month's WN Leonardo Mata reports on his regular visits to the village. Now, 'The actual Mayans in Cauqué are healthier, better dressed, and universal wearing of shoes. We recently found the first 100 year-old old lady! The village now has good safe piped water supply, electricity is universal, most have TV, and cell phones are carried by most people. Refrigerators and stoves are prevalent, as well as flush toilets'. And breastfeeding? See what he says…



WN *Balance. Food and memory*

Everyday miracles

Corinne Schmidt writes:

My favourite Bible stories involve food. In one, Jesus revives a young girl and tells her parents to give her something to eat. In another Jesus has been resurrected, and he cooks breakfast for the disciples. Resurrection is a blockbuster miracle, but what about the mustard seed miracles? Like Jesus laying out charcoal and cooking breakfast and thus making eating, this most biological act, part of the miracle.

Which brings me to *oliebolen*. These are Dutch fritters served at New Year's. I made some on 31 December. My sister made them on New Year's Day, using a recipe our Dad wrote down 30 years ago. She said his recipe didn't use an electric mixer. You just stick your hands in the batter and mix it up. When Fran told me that, I saw Dad's hands. My first bite of her *oliebol* transported me to New Year's Day 1975, biting into a greasy, still-hot fritter as Dad laid it on a paper towel-lined plate.

Which brings me to Marcel Proust and his story of the *madeleine:*

> And as soon as I had recognised the taste of the piece of madeleine soaked in her decoction of lime-blossom which my aunt used to give me (although I did not yet know and must long postpone the discovery of why this memory made me so happy), immediately the old grey house upon the street, where her room was, rose up like a stage set to attach itself to the little pavilion opening on to the garden which had been built out behind it for my parents (the isolated segment which until that moment had been all that I could see); and with the house the town, from morning to night and in all weathers, the square where I used to be sent before lunch, the streets along which I used to run errands, the country roads we took when it was fine.

Food breaks the shackles of time. Proust continues:

> When from a long-distant past nothing subsists, after the people are dead, after the things are broken and scattered, taste and smell alone, more fragile but more enduring, more unsubstantial, more persistent, more faithful, remain poised a long time, like souls, remembering, waiting, hoping, amid the ruins of all the rest.

Food is magic. Eating can be a religious experience. My resolution for this year is to come back to the dining room table, where we'll make some miracles together.

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Schmidt C. Food and memory. Everyday miracles
[*Feedback*] *World Nutrition March 2015,* ***6,*** *3, 224*

Traditional food systems
Middle East under threat

Access November 2014 Brazilian dietary guidelines here
Access December 2014 Patricia Jaime on the Brazilian dietary guidelines here



A traditional meal enjoyed in company, in Kuwait. But as elsewhere, traditional food culture is being rapidly displaced by foreign-originated packaged 'eat in the street' ultra- processed products

Sara Diana Garduño-Diaz writes:

In the December issue of *WN* Patricia Constante Jaime presented the newly released Brazilian dietary guidelines (accessed above).One of the points highlighted in the 'Choosing foods' chapter of these guidelines is making a variety of minimally processed plant foods the bases of our diets. In this context I write here about ultra-processed food products versus traditional dietary patterns in the Middle East.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) members (Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait) are main importers of consumer-ready packaged processed food products. In 2013, top US-originated processed product exports to the region included dairy products, vegetable oils, packaged salty, fatty or sugary snacks, french fries, table condiments, chocolate, confectionery and other ultra-processed food products. Pre-prepared products such as frozen chicken and rice are also now available in supermarkets, convenience stores and smaller retailers. In addition, the GCC confers trade and investment privileges to its member countries. Processed food products manufactured in any of these countries can be exported to other GCC countries duty-free, making them cheaper.

Fast food outlets are now increasing very fast, as is obesity. All sorts of ready-to-consume 'convenience' food products are becoming a growing part of people's diets. Use of on-line ordering systems means that time previously spent on food purchase and preparation is being reduced by immediate access to dietary energy without the use of any physical energy. On-line customers become impervious to oversight or criticism of their food choices, intake amounts and overall dietary habits.

Traditional Middle Eastern cuisine is based on foods such as vegetables, fruits, fish, lean meat, beans and nuts (see Box 1, below). It is also known for its aromatic spices and subtle flavours. Food consumption patterns in the Middle East have changed markedly in recent decades; this is particularly true in the GCC. These changes include frequent snacking, replacement of traditional ethnic foods with energy-dense fast foods, the replacement of water with soft drink consumption, and lower fruit and vegetable consumption.

Influenced by its location, once seen in various religions and cultures as the cradle and centre of the world, the Middle East, with its traditional food culture, has adopted culinary practices from Europe, Asia and Africa. This is evident in the use of spices and staple foods and in the predominant cooking techniques including skewer cooking over charcoal or long, slow simmering in unglazed covered pots.

Middle Eastern flavours and spices include lime, ginger, turmeric, cumin, cardamom, black pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg, paprika and *zaatar* (dried thyme and oregano mixed with sesame seeds, and salt). *Tahini*, a sesame paste made with hulled seeds, is used to make such popular *meze*, or appetizers, as *baba ghanoush* eggplant mashed and mixed with various seasonings) *and* hummus along with pungent dipping sauces served with *falafel* (deep fried, and made from ground chickpeas, fava beans, or both), *kofta* (minced or ground meat mixed with spices and/or onions) or vegetables.

But food products in the Middle East are becoming increasingly processed. As staples, for example, sorghum and millet, previously dominant in the diets of the common people in Middle Eastern countries, are becoming less important and have become displaced by refined powdered white wheat flour. Traditional food systems and dietary patterns can be protected by gaining appreciation for and understanding of local food culture. This includes recognising what makes a diet unique and passing on recipes and cooking techniques from one generation to the next. Families and other social networks play a key role in this practice as it is in our circles that societies establish eating habits, food preferences and dietary patterns.

My plan now is to be less academic and more active, to these ends. My new work will develop whole-person care, integrating a care coordinator, a healthcare team and collaborators, informatics and incentives to shift from treatment to prevention. By seeing the big picture inspired in part by *WN*, I hope I can help to improve health and well-being in the Middle East.

Box 1
Endangered food culture

Here are some of the main elements of traditional Middle Eastern dietary patterns. More details, with historical detail and many recipes, are in *A Book of Middle Eastern Food* by the Egyptian-born Claudia Roden. Along with the originally ancient culture they represent, these are now being displaced by ultra-processed ready-to-consume 'world' products.

In a region of strong family ties, large clans, and women at home, hospitality is deeply rooted, and offering food is the central act in the highly developed art of pleasing.

Flat bread, couscous and rice are staples in traditional Middle Eastern cuisine, along with their variations such as *manakeesh* (round bread sprinkled with either cheese, ground meat or herbs served for breakfast or lunch).

Olives, as well as dates, figs, and pomegranates are widely used. Dates are an important staple, often eaten with coffee and to break fasting such as during Ramadan. Fruits tend to be consumed as juice, contributing to a high sugar intake.

Vegetables tend to be present as part of traditional dishes including *tabouleh* (the Arab salad made of bulgur or couscous, tomatoes, finely chopped parsley, mint, onion and garlic, and seasoned with olive oil, lemon juice and salt). *Alternatively, vegetables are made into fattoush* (salad of toasted or fried pitta bread, mixed greens, diced tomatoes, cucumbers and onion, garlic, lemon, olive oil and mint), or *baba ghanoush* and *mahashi* (stuffed vegetables, usually bell peppers, eggplant or zucchini filled with meat, pine nuts or rice).

People in the Middle East consume a lot of dairy products, as *leben*, *halloumi* (goat and sheep cheese made without acid or bacteria) and yogurt.

Hummus, falafel and *foul* (fava beans cooked with chickpeas, olive oil, parsley, onion, garlic and lemon) are popular legume-based dishes. Many traditional dishes are meat-based including *kofta, shawarma* (bits of skewered chicken, garlic puree and salad wrapped in pitta bread) and *shish tawook* (skewered chicken served with pure garlic paste).

To close a meal, Middle Eastern cuisine requires sweets and tea or coffee. Traditional sweets include *umm ali* (bread pudding prepared from pastry which may include raisins, pistachios, vanilla and condensed milk), *baklava* (buttery filo pastry, chopped nuts, sweet syrup and honey dressing) and *kanafeh* (cheese pastry soaked in sweet sugar-based syrup and rose water or orange blossom water, sprinkled with crushed pistachios).

Middle Eastern tea is usually black, served strong with sugar and mint (*chai nanna*). Coffee may be either of the strong, concentrated, black variety, or the Arab-styled aromatic type spiced with cardamom and rose water.

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Garduño-Diaz S. Traditional food systems. Middle East under threat
[*Feedback*] *World Nutrition February 2015,* ***6,*** *2, 225-227*

People's health movements

Food from and for the people (1)

Access December 2014 Update on the International Conference on Nutrition here




Managua, Nicaragua. Soynica founder Luci Morren in action (left), with a colleague. Preparation of green leaf extract, rich in protein, vitamins, minerals and in other bioactive constituents (right)

Luci Morren writes:

World Nutrition is a beacon for us here in Nicaragua. Thank you for your brilliant work that has helped us to give meaning to the *International Conference on Nutrition,*

I write to you from SOYNICA here in Managua, Nicaragua. considered underdeveloped and not important. I'm a woman who has studied nutrition and diets for 50 years now. With this knowledge I have worked with the impoverished rural people of Guatemala, Mexico and finally Nicaragua, combating malnutrition. Our favoured themes are Nicaraguan food culture, breastfeeding, the formation of the human brain, diets for each period of life and especially babies of 0-3 years of age, family ecological agriculture, diversity in raising food, and – you will be glad to know – the war against ultra-processed food products.

Times are hard here now. After the ICN, thanks to *WN*, we got to know about the network of public interest civil society organisations and social movements that had played an important role in moving ideas, and in *WN* we read the Declarations of these groups. Can you could put us in contact with this group so that we can join ? *[Ed – done]* We don't know who was the Nicaraguan representative in this group of social society and social movements. SOYNICA and the paediatrician Petronila Terán (who is in contact with Carlos Monteiro) would like to contribute with our experience of breastfeeding and the making and consumption of green leaf extract.

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*Morren L. People's health movements. Food from and for the people (1) [Feedback].World Nutrition March 2015, **6**, 3, 228*

Heroes. Bettina Koyro
Food from and for the people (2)

Access January 2014 Visions by Brooke Aksnes, Geoffrey Cannon, Maria Alvim here

Maria Alvim writes:

In *Visions* published in the January-February *WN*, I named inspiring people that are like heroes for me. Here is some more about Bettina Koyro.

Bettina is from Germany. She has lived in Brazil for 22 years. As a nurse, she worked for ten years in the rural area of the state of Minas Gerais, helping a population with serious anaemia and related conditions caused by poor feeding. She encouraged people to plant and to use non-conventional plants (such as *beldroega, caruru, bertalha, ora-pro-nobis, serralha* and *taioba*) that are extremely nourishing, grow wild, and so cost nothing.

Meanwhile, she managed courses and workshops about nourishing and healthy food, always respecting local habits and knowledge. Now in Juiz de Fora, the city where she moved, Bettina has fought for a restaurant dedicated to poor people, and for implementation of the Municipal Council for Food Safety, and the Brazilian Food Acquisition Programme. She has taught many people the value of healthy and traditional eating habits, improving their self esteem and health. In her words:

> I think I can show people a sense of organisation and struggle that is not very common in Brazil. And as we get many advances, people begin to believe in success when they organise and fight. It changes lives positively because people stop whining and start being responsible for their own destiny.

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How to respond

Feedback is edited by Maria Alvim and Isabela Sattamini. Please address letters for publication to wn.letters@gmail.com. Letters usually respond to or comment on contributions to *World Nutrition*. More general letters will also be considered. Usual length for main text of letters is between 350 and 1,000 words but they can be shorter or longer. Any references should usually be limited to up to 12. Letters are edited for length and style, may be shortened or developed, and once edited are sent to the author for approval.