

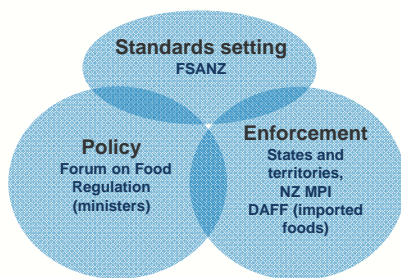
## SOCIAL SCIENCES IN AUSTRALIAN FOOD REGULATION

Dr Trevor Webb  
Paris Risk Group  
3<sup>rd</sup> Workshop 18-19 June 2015

## ABOUT US

- We are a bi-national statutory agency
- Our main function is to develop and administer the [Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code](#)
- Not responsible for enforcement

## FOOD REGULATORY FRAMEWORK



## THE FOOD STANDARDS CODE



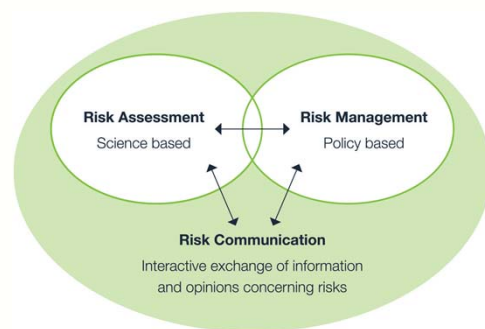
## DEVELOPING FOOD STANDARDS

### In developing standards regard is given to:

- Protect public health and safety of food consumers
- Adequate information to make informed choices
- Prevention of misleading or deceptive conduct

### Additionally, food measures are:

- Based on best available scientific evidence
- Consistent with international obligations
- Efficient & internationally competitive food industry
- Promote of fair trade
- Have regard to Ministerial guidelines



## SOCIAL SCIENCES IN FSANZ

- Traditionally – no overt place
- However :
  - Economics – impact assessment
  - Exposure assessment – incorporates dietary intake data
  - Communications – risk communication
  - Evaluation – nutrition labelling, allergens



## GROWING CONCERNS

- Growing concern over some standards
  - Calcium fortified orange juice
  - Approval for plant sterols in some foods
  - Formulated beverages – vitamin waters
- Reviews sought by Ministerial Council
  - Promotion of foods not in line with DGs
  - 'Medicalisation of the food supply'

## FSANZ'S RESPONSE

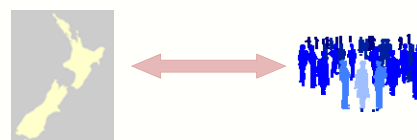
- Issues required new approach
  - Behaviour of consumers
  - Chronic not acute health issues
- Natural sciences unable to provide insight
- Started to explore social sciences
  - Employment of social scientist
  - Growing of expertise in the agency

## IN-DEPTH APPROACHES

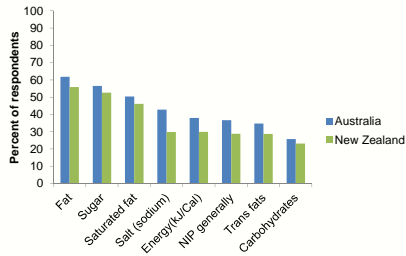
- Gain deep understanding of a behaviour, attitude ....
  - From the perspective of the participant(s)
  - Understand meanings underpinning action
  - In-depth interviews, participant observation, focus groups, on-line communities

## POPULATION SURVEY

Make a statement about the prevalence of a behaviour, attitude, knowledge .....



## USE OF NUTRITION INFORMATION



(TNS 2007)

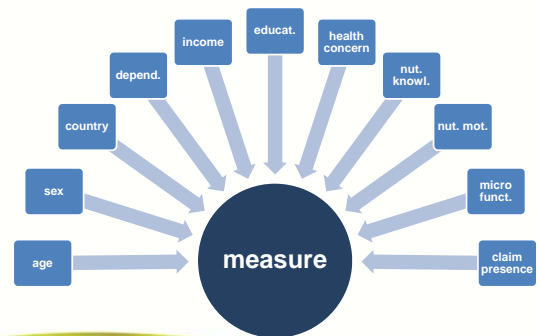
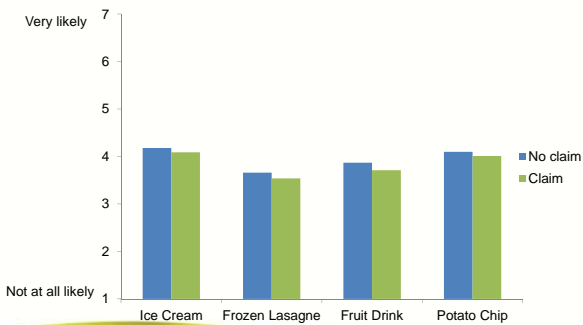
## EXPERIMENT

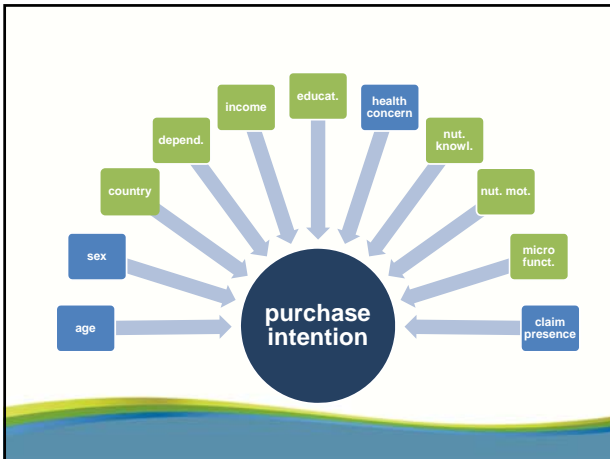
- Measure the impact of an intervention on behaviour, attitude, knowledge ....
- Example:
  - Does the presence of a nutrition content claim on a product impact consumers' evaluations of that product?
    - Particular concern with products of lower nutritional value
    - Between groups experiment with stimuli

	Control	Claim 1	Claim 2
Fruit Drink	No claim	Contains Antioxidants - flavonoids	Contains beta-cryptoxanthins
Ice Cream	No claim	Source of Calcium	Source of Selenium
Potato Chips	No claim	Good Source of Niacin	Good Source of Vitamins C



## PURCHASE INTENTION





### WHAT SORT OF QUESTIONS?

- **Consumption & purchase behaviour**
  - who? how much? how often?
  - socio-demographic/economic differences
  - food substitution
  - motivations influences on food choices
- **Labelling**
  - understanding, interpretations and use of nutritional labelling
  - warning & advisory statements
  - impacts of claims
  - use of food safety labelling

### ROLES OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

- **Analysing & characterising behaviours and responses**
- **Communications, targeting messages**
- **Critical roles**
- **Advocacy roles**

(Wendling 2012)

### ROLES OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

- **Analysing & characterising behaviours and responses**
- **Communications, targeting messages**
- **Critical roles**
- **Advocacy roles**

(Wendling 2012)



### SS AS PART OF RISK MANAGEMENT

- Organisationally we've been with risk managers
- Very close interactions, iterative process
- RA questions generally not formally asked
- Functional separation?
- **So what does SS in Risk Assessment look like?**

**Copyright statement**

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) supports and encourages the dissemination and exchange of information. Information in this presentation is provided under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Australia (CC BY 3.0) Licence, except for the Food Standards Australia New Zealand logo.

**Attribution**

You may copy, distribute, transmit and adapt the material in this publication by the CC BY 3.0 licence for commercial and non-commercial purposes; but you must attribute the work in the following manner:

© Food Standards Australia New Zealand.

This attribution must not, in anyway, suggest that FSANZ endorses you or your use of the work.

**Third party material**

To the extent that information contains material in which copyright is owned by a third party, the CC BY 3.0 licence would not apply to such third party material and, if you wish to re-use third party material, you may have to seek permission from the copyright owner.

For more information email [info@foodstandards.gov.au](mailto:info@foodstandards.gov.au)

**Contact Details**

Australia  
Boeing House  
55 Blackall Street  
BARTON ACT 2600  
Ph: +61 2 6271 2222  
Fax: +61 2 6271 2278

PO Box 7186  
Canberra BC ACT 2610  
Australia  
Email: [info@foodstandards.gov.au](mailto:info@foodstandards.gov.au)  
Website: [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

New Zealand  
Level 3  
154 Featherston Street  
WELLINGTON NEW ZEALAND  
Ph: +64 4 978 5630  
Fax: +64 4 473 9855

PO Box 10559  
The Terrace, Wellington 6036  
New Zealand  
[info@foodstandards.govt.nz](mailto:info@foodstandards.govt.nz)  
[www.foodstandards.govt.nz](http://www.foodstandards.govt.nz)