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YES: Susan Nitzke and Jeanne Freeland-Graves, from “Position of the American Dietetic Association: Total Diet Approach to Communicating Food and Nutrition Information,” *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* (July 2007) 5

NO: Suzanne Havala, from *Good Foods, Bad Foods: What’s Left to Eat?* (Chronimed Publishing, 1998) 12

Nutrition professors Susan Nitzke and Jeanne Freeland-Graves represent the position of the American Dietetic Association (ADA) when they write that there are no “good” foods or “bad” ones, since all foods can fit into “a healthful eating style.” ADA emphasizes the total diet that a person eats is more important than any one particular food. They stress moderation and portion control. As the world’s largest association of food and nutrition experts, ADA “emphasizes a balance of foods, rather than any one food.” Nutrition professor, and author of *Good Foods, Bad Foods: What’s Left to Eat?*, Suzanne Havala counters that some foods are better than others and that saying otherwise is just a way to “rationalize the dietary status quo and protect the commercial interests of the food industry.”

Issue 2. Is the Dietary Guideline for Sodium Realistic? 19

YES: Institute of Medicine, from “Strategies to Reduce Sodium Intake in the United States: Brief Report,” *The National Academies Press* (April 2010) 22

NO: Michael Moss, from “The Hard Sell on Salt,” *The New York Times* (May 29, 2010) 28

Jane Henney, Christine Taylor, and Caitlin Boon, editors of the Institute of Medicine’s report on sodium, recommend the FDA set mandatory national standards for sodium content of foods and require the food industry (including manufacturers and restaurants) to gradually lower the sodium they add to processed foods and prepared meals. Health writer Michael Moss describes the numerous problems the food giants such as Kellogg, Frito-Lay, and Kraft will face if they attempt to lower sodium in foods they make.

Issue 3. Can an Overemphasis on Eating Healthy Become Unhealthy? 36

YES: **Lindsey Getz**, from “Orthorexia: When Eating Healthy Becomes an Unhealthy Obsession,” *Today’s Dietitian* (June 2009) 39

NO: **Chris Woolston**, from “What’s Wrong With the American Diet?” *Consumer Health Interactive* (October 28, 2009) 44

Writer Lindsey Getz describes orthorexia, the condition that makes a person strive for a perfect diet. People with orthorexia avoid sugar, trans fat, cholesterol, sodium, and anything they believe is “unhealthy” and take pride in eating a perfect diet. Health and medical writer Chris Woolston believes the typical American diet is excessive in calories, fat, and sugar. He says we would be much healthier if we ate more “fish, poultry, cruciferous vegetables (i.e., cabbage and broccoli), greens, tomatoes, legumes, fresh fruits, and whole grains.” He also believes we should “skimp on fatty or calorie-rich foods such as red meats, eggs, high-fat dairy products, french fries, pizza, mayonnaise, candy, and desserts.”

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Issue 4. Does “Trans Fats-Free” Mean a Food Is Heart-Healthy? 52

YES: **Lindsey Getz**, from “A Burger and Fries (Hold the Trans Fats)—Restaurants Respond to Demand for Healthier Oils,” *Today’s Dietitian* (February 2009) 56

NO: **Joseph Mercola**, from “Interesterified Fat: Is It Worse Than Trans Fat?” *Mercola.com* (March 5, 2009) 61

Health writer Lindsey Getz applauds restaurants and the food industry for eliminating the trans fat in foods and stresses how it will improve the health of the nation. Physician Joseph Mercola strongly disagrees and points out that food manufacturers are replacing trans fat with interesterified fat. He claims these are worse than trans fats.

Issue 5. Does a Diet High in Fructose Increase Body Fat? 66

YES: **Joseph Mercola**, from “This Harmful Food Product Is Changing Its Name—Don’t Get Swindled,” *Mercola.com* (October 1, 2010) 68

NO: **Corn Refiners Association**, from “Questions & Answers about High Fructose Corn Syrup” (August 2008) 76

Osteopathic physician Joseph Mercola considers that high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) is more deadly than sugar and explains how the body converts fructose to fat. He accuses the Corn Refiners Association of trying to convince us that their HFCS is equal to table sugar. The Corn Refiners Association claims that HFCS has no adverse health effect and is the same as sucrose and honey. They also emphasize the benefits that HFCS provides to food.

Issue 6. Does Eating Soy Improve Health? 86

YES: **Silk Soy Nutrition Center**, from “Health Benefits of Soy,” *Soy Nutrition* (2009) 89

NO: **Cornucopia Institute**, from “Behind the Bean: The Heroes and Charlatans of the Natural and Organic Soy Foods Industry, the Social, Environmental, and Health Impacts of Soy,” *Cornucopia Institute* (2009) 96

The Silk Soy Nutrition Center claims that scientific studies show that soy lowers cholesterol and reduces the risk of heart disease. They also claim that “populations eating diets high in soy-based foods have a lower incidence of breast cancer, prostate cancer and menopausal problems.” Representing Cornucopia, Charlotte Vallayes and colleagues consider isolated soy proteins to be highly overrated, and possibly hazardous to the health of women and infants. They say that the heart health claim “is a direct product of corporate boardrooms searching for ways to sell more soy products—and to turn the soy ‘waste’ soy-products of soybean oil extraction into profits.”

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Issue 7. Should Physicians Use BMI to Assess Overall Health? 104

YES: **Jeremy Singer-Vine**, from “Beyond BMI: Why Doctors Won’t Stop Using an Outdated Measure for Obesity,” *Slate* (July 20, 2009) 107

NO: **Keith Devlin**, from “Do You Believe in Fairies, Unicorns, or the BMI?” *Mathematical Association of America*, http://www.maa.org/devli/devlin_05_09.html (May 2009) 110

Journalist Jeremy Singer-Vine points out that “the circumference around a person’s waist provides a much more accurate reading of his or her abdominal fat and risk for disease than BMI.” But “waist measurements require slightly more time and training than it takes to record a BMI.” Since BMI is cheap and easy to use, physicians and the medical community will continue using it. Mathematician Keith Devlin, who is classified as “overweight” by his physician, since Keith’s BMI is 25.1, despite his 32-inch waist, considers that BMI is “numerological nonsense.” While he applauds the knowledge that physicians have about the human body and health issues, he feels that the mathematics behind the BMI calculations are used irresponsibly and says BMI should not be used in medical practice. He calls for mathematicians to demand responsible use of math.

Issue 8. Do Americans Need Vitamin D Supplements? 117

YES: **Jane Brody**, from “What Do You Lack? Probably Vitamin D,” *The New York Times* (July 26, 2010) 121

NO: **Institute of Medicine**, from “Dietary Reference Intakes for Calcium and Vitamin D,” The National Academies Press (November 30, 2010) 124

Best-selling author Jane Brody says that a huge part of the population is deficient in vitamin D and that studies indicate deficiency increases risk of cancer, heart disease, arthritis, and a host of other conditions. She also

reports that the “experts” recommend a supplement of 1,000–2,000 IU each day. The 14-member committee appointed by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academy of Sciences to set the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) disagrees. After reviewing over 1,000 studies and listening to testimonies from scientists and other stakeholders, the committee set the RDA for people up to age 70 years at 600 IU and at 800 IU for those over age 70. They conclude that few people are deficient in vitamin D and the only health benefit is the vitamin’s role in bone health.

Issue 9. Does Obesity Cause a Decline in Life Expectancy? 130

YES: **Samuel H. Preston**, from “Deadweight?—The Influence of Obesity on Longevity,” *The New England Journal of Medicine* (March 17, 2007) 133

NO: **Paul Campos**, from “The Weighting Game: Why Being Fat Isn’t Bad for You,” *The New Republic* (January 13, 2003) 137

Demographics professor Samuel Preston maintains that obesity is a major health problem in America and the problems associated with it cause obese people to die earlier than those who are thinner. Law professor Paul Campos disagrees and points out that the health consequences of obesity are not as dire as governmental health officials claim.

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Issue 10. Are Organic Foods Better Than Conventional Foods? 148

YES: **Ed Hamer and Mark Anslow**, from “10 Reasons Why Organic Can Feed the World” *The Ecologist* (March 2008) 151

NO: **Mark Bittman**, from “Eating Food That’s Better for You, Organic or Not?” *The New York Times* (March 22, 2009) 159

Ed Hamer and Mark Anslow indicate that organically produced foods use less energy, water, and pesticides and produce less pollution while producing foods that taste better and contain more nutrients. Mark Bittman disagrees and insists that eating “organic” offers no guarantee of eating well, healthfully, sanely, even ethically. He points out that many people may feel better about eating an organic Oreo than a conventional Oreo, and sides with Marion Nestle who says, “Organic junk food is still junk food.”

Issue 11. Does the World Need Genetically Modified Foods? 163

YES: **Henry I. Miller and Gregory Conko**, from “Scary Food,” *Policy Review* (June/July 2006) 165

NO: **Ed Hamer and Mark Anslow**, from “10 Reasons Genetically Modified Foods Cannot [Feed the World],” *The Ecologist* (March 2008) 173

Henry Miller and Gregory Conko defend biotechnology used in genetically modifying (GM) crops and foods and believe they bring many advantages

and help ensure a safe food supply. Ed Hamer and Mark Anslow argue that GM foods cost farmers and governments more money than they are worth, that they are ruining the environment, and point to the health risks associated with GM foods.

Issue 12. Are Probiotics and Prebiotics Beneficial in Promoting Health? 178

YES: **Anneli Rufus**, from “Poop Is the Most Important Indicator of Your Health,” *AlterNet* (March 27, 2010) 181

NO: **Peta Bee**, from “Probiotics, Not So Friendly After All?” *The Times* (London) (November 10, 2008) 186

Journalist Anneli Rufus describes how chemicals added to today’s food supply destroy the good bacteria (probiotics) and various ways to restore the bacteria to the body. She also encourages us to start looking for prebiotic-fortified foods, since it is hard to get an adequate amount from foods. Health and fitness journalist Peta Bee is skeptical of probiotics and counters that some products that claim to contain probiotics may not actually have bacteria that are still “live and active” by the time we eat it. She points out that some bacteria added to foods may even be harmful.

Issue 13. Should Energy Drinks Be Banned? 191

YES: **Chad J. Reissig, Eric C. Strain, and Roland R. Griffiths**, from “Caffeinated Energy Drinks—A Growing Problem,” *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* (January 2009) 194

NO: **Ellen Coleman**, from “Back to the Grind: The Return of Caffeine as an Ergogenic Aid,” *Today’s Dietitian* (March 2009) 205

Chad Reissig, Eric Strain, and Roland Griffiths, medical researchers at Johns Hopkins, say there are increasing reports of caffeine intoxication from energy drinks and predict that problems with caffeine intoxication may be on the rise. California sports nutritionist and exercise physiologist Ellen Coleman is not concerned about the potential side effects of caffeine in energy drinks and bars. She writes that “substantial research suggests that caffeine enhances endurance performance.”

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Issue 14. Is Hunger in America a Real Problem? 216

YES: **Joel Berg**, from “Hunger in the U.S.: A Problem as American as Apple Pie,” *AlterNet* (February 4, 2009) 220

NO: **Sam Dolnick**, from “The Obesity-Hunger Paradox,” *The New York Times* (March 12, 2010) 227

Hunger advocate Joel Berg says that 35.5 million Americans either suffer from hunger or struggle at the brink of hunger, which results in stunted growth in millions of American children. As the executive director of New York City Coalition Against Hunger, he points out that hunger is becoming a significant problem in the suburbs and is no longer only seen in poor inner city and isolated rural areas. New York journalist Sam Dolnick says that few Americans are hungry, if you picture hunger as a rail-thin child

with nothing to eat. But he points out that Americans are “food insecure,” which he describes as people “unable to get to the grocery or unable to find fresh produce among the pizza shops, doughnut stores and fried-everything restaurants.” In fact, obesity often results from this type of food insecurity, where there is little access to affordable fresh produce and other lower calorie foods.

Issue 15. Should Government Levy a Fat Tax? 231

YES: Kelly D. Brownell, et al., from “The Public Health and Economic Benefits of Taxing Sugar-Sweetened Beverages” *The New England Journal of Medicine* (October 15, 2009) 234

NO: Daniel Engber, from “Let Them Drink Water! What a Fat Tax Really Means for America” *Slate* (September 21, 2009) 244

Kelly Brownell and colleagues propose a “fat tax” targeting sugar-sweetened beverages. They feel a tax will decrease the amount of sugary drinks people consume and ultimately help reduce obesity. They also suggest that the tax has the “potential to generate substantial revenue” to help fund health-related initiatives. Daniel Engber disagrees with a fat tax on sugary beverages since it will impact poor, nonwhite people most severely and they would be deprived of the pleasures of drinking palatable beverages. He says that the poor would be forced to “drink from the faucet” while the more affluent will sip exotic beverages such as POM Wonderful, at about \$5 a pop.

Issue 16. Can Michelle Obama’s “Let’s Move” Initiative Halt Childhood Obesity? 248

YES: White House Press Release, from “First Lady Michelle Obama Launches *Let’s Move*: America’s Move to Raise a Healthier Generation of Kids” (February 9, 2010) 251

NO: Michele Simon, from “Michelle Obama’s *Let’s Move*—Will It Move Industry?” *AlterNet* (March 14, 2010) 258

First Lady Michelle Obama says that the *Let’s Move* campaign can correct the health problems of the upcoming generation and realizes that the problem cannot be solved overnight. She thinks that “with everyone working together, it can be solved.” The “first ever” Task Force on Childhood Obesity was formed to help implement the campaign. Public health attorney Michele Simon claims that *Let’s Move* is just another task force and there is more talk than action. She questions if it’s realistic to be able to reverse the nation’s childhood obesity epidemic in a generation.

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Issue 17. Is It Necessary for Pregnant Women to Completely Abstain from All Alcoholic Beverages? 266

YES: Phyllida Brown, from “Drinking for Two,” *New Scientist* (July 1, 2006) 269

NO: Julia Moskin, from “The Weighty Responsibility of Drinking for Two,” *The New York Times* (November 29, 2006) 274

Science writer Phyllida Brown maintains that even a small amount of alcohol can damage a developing fetus and cites new research indicating that any alcohol consumed during pregnancy may be harmful. Food and nutrition journalist Julia Moskin argues that there are almost no studies on the effects of moderate drinking during pregnancy and that small amounts of alcohol are unlikely to have much effect.

Issue 18. Should Infant Formulas Contain Synthetic ARA and DHA? 279

YES: Haley C. Stevens and Mardi K. Mountford, MPH, from “Infant Formula and DHA/ARA,” International Formula Council (IFC) Statement on DHA/ARA and Infant Formula, (<http://www.infantformula.org/news-room/press-releases-and-statements/infant-formula-and-dha/ara>) (Press release, March 1, 2008) 282

NO: Ari LeVaux, from “Dangerous Hype: Infant Formula Companies Claim They Can Make Babies ‘Smarter,’” *AlterNet* (<http://www.alternet.org/health/143369>) (October 20, 2009) 287

Haley Stevens and Mardi Mountford, representing the International Formula Council (IFC), point out that “the available evidence strongly supports benefits of adding DHA and ARA to infant formula.” They point out that “a large database exists concerning not only the safety but also the efficacy of infant formula containing both ARA and DHA. These facts, together, support the addition of both ARA and DHA when LC-PUFAs [long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids] are added to formula.” Food writer Ari LeVaux is more skeptical. He says the oils are produced from lab-grown algae and fungi and extracted with the neurotoxin hexane. He also is concerned that some “parents and medical professionals believe these additives are causing severe reactions in some babies, and it has been repeatedly shown that taking affected babies off DHA/ARA formula makes the problems go away almost immediately.”

Issue 19. Is Breast-Feeding the Best Way to Feed Babies? 291

YES: Pat Thomas, from “Suck on This,” *The Ecologist* (May 2006) 294

NO: Hanna Rosin, from “The Case Against Breast-Feeding,” *The Atlantic* (April 2009) 310

Pat Thomas, the editor of the London-based *The Ecologist*, believes that breast-feeding is the best and healthiest way to feed babies and contends that advertisements from formula companies are jeopardizing the health of infants and children around the world. *The Atlantic* editor Hanna Rosin claims the scientific data on benefits of breast-feeding are inconclusive and, as an experienced mother of three, suggests a more relaxed approach to the issue.

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