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National Consumer Research Institute Predicts Top Five Health Trends for 2013**Food Waste Consciousness, "Mini-Meals" and Veganism Top List of Consumer Health Trends That Will Dominate in the New Year**

SANTA ANA, CA--(Marketwire - Dec 27, 2012) - The growth of food waste consciousness, mini-meals, gluten-free products and mainstream veganism top the health trends expected to make headlines in 2013, according to a second annual forecast by a leading national research group studying health-related attitudes and behavior in America.

The Values Institute at DGWB, a social science research entity based in Santa Ana, Calif., used observational studies to identify the top health and wellness trends that Americans are most likely to embrace in 2013. A collaboration with DGWB's [BalancedHealthy practice](#), serving clients in the health and wellness space, the annual list is an extension of the Institute's work in values-based marketing and social entrepreneurialism and long-term partnership with the international research firm [Iconoculture](#) of Minneapolis.

The top five consumer health trends for 2013 will be:

1. Food Waste Consciousness. Waste not, want not, especially in the kitchen. A recent [Eco Pulse survey](#) found that 39 percent of Americans feel guilty about trashing food, more so than any other "green" sin. Some waste is unavoidable, though, and communities and corporations alike are converting compostable scraps into disposable cash. [Marin County, Calif.](#), has begun processing wasted food from local groceries and restaurants to generate electricity, and [Starbucks](#) has found a way to recycle coffee grounds and baked goods into laundry detergent. Meanwhile, new mobile apps like [Love Food Hate Waste](#) help consumers plan meals from leftovers and manage portion size.

2. Wellness in the Workplace. Employers are realizing that working health into the corporate agenda benefits waistlines *and* bottom lines. With healthcare costs expected to rise by 7 percent, companies are improving employees' health (and minimizing healthcare expenditures) by adding wellness programs. Plan on seeing more discounted gym memberships, group Weight Watchers accountability plans, and active design workspaces this year. [The National Business Group on Health](#) found that 48 percent of companies surveyed plan to use incentives to get workers involved in wellness in 2013.

3. Mini-meals and Snacking. As the snacking trend continues, [new research](#) shows that those who eat between meals tend to have healthier diets. [FastCasual.com](#) reports that snacks make up one out of every five eating occasions in the U.S. Especially prevalent is the advent of multiple "mini-meals" in place of the standard three squares a day. Quick [Lean Cuisine salad options](#), probiotic nuts, and the ubiquitous cup of frozen yogurt with fruit are slowly replacing breakfast, lunch and dinner. Expect to see this trend continue and usher in a new standard for convenient, healthy snack foods beyond the 100-calorie Oreo pack.

4. Meatless Mainstreaming: Veganism is OK. Last year's rise of the flexitarians is foreshadowing a trend toward meatless eating and outright veganism, vegetarianism's older brother. No longer reserved for the hip in Hollywood, going vegan is being embraced as a viable health alternative. Even professional athletes like Venus Williams and Arian Foster, whose bodies are their livelihood, have made the switch. Merit-badge consumers seeking exotic natural ingredients like jackfruit and quinoa have helped turn the tide, especially as increasingly popular Asian and Indian flavor profiles eschew animal products. Look for [herbivore-accommodating menus](#) at restaurants on both coasts to start migrating to mid-America in 2013.

5. Going Against the Grain. The past year saw an influx of gluten-free products as everyone and their brother is shunning their Wheaties. Gluten has joined carbohydrates and corn syrup as the newest ingredient Americans love to leave out. While some [experts](#) see this as self-diagnosis gone awry, consumers increasingly see the "GF" logo as a guide to healthier eating. From [grocery stores](#) to [gastro-pubs](#) to brands like [Betty Crocker](#) to [Domino's](#), the food industry is taking advantage of this new, not-so-niche need.

"Our 2013 findings are consistent with the growing importance of health in America -- if not yet as a daily routine then certainly as a primary goal for three out of four consumers," said Mike Weisman, president of the Values Institute at DGWB. "More than ever, health is the new prestige barometer -- meaning that most Americans would rather be called healthy than wealthy.

"Certainly, this trend will have major implications for marketers and retailers looking to sway consumer opinion in 2013 and beyond."

The Values Institute at DGWB is a division of Santa Ana-based [DGWB Advertising & Communications](#). The agency's Balanced Healthy practice teamed up with Iconoculture in early 2011 to study the behavior of the 76 percent of Americans who actively take steps to maintain or improve their health. A total of 2,800 adults ages 18 and above participated in the national online study rating personal values and health actions. This undertaking led to the creation by DGWB and Iconoculture of six new healthy consumer segments that are based on shared values rather than traditional usage and demographics.

"By looking at shared values instead of the more traditional metrics, we're able to connect people at a deeper level on the basis of their common emotional and philosophical beliefs about health and wellness," said Mark Weinfeld, director of The Values Institute. "The study gives us a unique vantage point to accurately identify, follow and predict consumer trends."

For details, go to the Values Institute at DGWB website at <http://www.thevaluesinstitute.org/>.

About The Values Institute at DGWB

The Values Institute at DGWB is a social science research entity housed at Southern California's [DGWB Advertising & Communications](#). The Values Institute grew out of the agency's more than two decades of work helping *Fortune 500* clients and nonprofits build long-term relationships with their constituents based on shared values and socially responsible behavior. Founded by DGWB President Mike Weisman, the Institute is led by an advisory board of leaders at academic, nonprofit and for-profit organizations involved in values-based marketing and social entrepreneurialism. For information, contact Mike Weisman directly at (714) 881-2300.

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