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The brilliant comedian Jim Gaffigan has it figured out. To paraphrase his McDonald's routine. "Friends tell me 'Oh, I would never go to McDonald's' but they sell a billion hamburgers a day, somebody's going." Indeed. Somebody is going

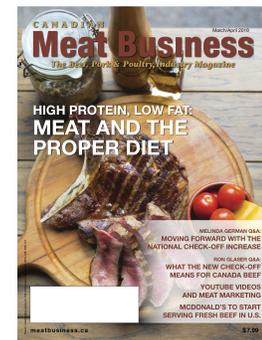
a Canadian Meat Business exclusive by Scott Taylor

People love red meat. It's that simple. It is the best source of protein on the planet and has been for thousands of years. Fawn Jackson, the Manager of Environment and Sustainability for the Canadian Cattleman's Association and the National Beef Strategy, is one of the great promoters of Canadian beef and the fact that people love "our product."

"Beef is already a product that people love and the more we can tell our story, the better it will be for the entire industry," Jackson said. "And it's a wonderful story. It should be told. And I also believe that consumers want more information about this product they love so, so why not tell the story as often as we can?"

We tend to worry a bit too much about telling the story of red meat – beef and pork. It seems that "pop science" has decided that red meat is bad for us. In fact, there was a time, not so long ago, that we were so worried about it, that pork producers' got in touch with an ad agency and turned pork into, "The other white meat."

"Atkins, Taubes and



The March/April Issue

In this issue we take a hard look at Meat and the proper diet, two Q&As with Melinda German and the new Check-Off increase, and Ron Glaser to tell us how Canada Beef will spend the increase. How YouTube video can leverage your Meat Marketing, and how Canada must increase productivity to remain competitive in today's marketplace, and much more!

Read it now!

other medical practitioners and nutritionists who believe in high protein diets don't appear to be wrong. There are also a growing number of them"

Diet is an issue. Diets – both proper and fad – have been a staple of Western Culture for decades. And according to investigative science journalist and author Gary Taubes, it might be time to take a look at some of these popular diets scientifically. And when you do take a deep dive into what popular science has been selling you, it might be time to apologize to a number of people and one in particular.

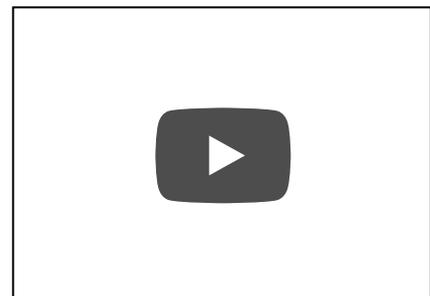
In an article Taubes wrote for New York Times Magazine, he leads with this: "If the members of the American medical establishment were to have a collective find-yourself-standing-naked-in-Times-Square-type nightmare, this might be it. They spend 30 years ridiculing Robert Atkins, author of the phenomenally-best-selling Dr. Atkins' Diet



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Revolution and Dr. Atkins' New Diet Revolution, accusing the Manhattan doctor of quackery and fraud, only to discover that the unrepentant Atkins was right all along. Or maybe it's this: they find that their very own dietary recommendations — eat less fat and more carbohydrates — are the cause of the rampaging epidemic of obesity in America. Or, just possibly this: they find out both of the above are true.”

With that, Taubes went on to write 7,000 words on a scientific approach to diet, one that makes the American medical establishment and a growing number of nutritionists look pretty silly.

“When Atkins first published his Diet Revolution in 1972, Americans were just coming to terms with the proposition that fat — particularly the saturated fat of meat and dairy products — was the primary nutritional evil in the American diet,” Taubes wrote. “Atkins managed to sell millions of copies of a book promising that we would lose weight eating steak, eggs and butter to our heart's desire, because it was the carbohydrates, the pasta, rice, bagels and sugar, that caused obesity and even heart disease. Fat, he said, was harmless.”

In a popular speech on from the Seattle Town Hall that can be viewed on YouTube, Taubes describes himself this way: “Since my latest book is called The Case Against Sugar, you need to know that I'm not a doctor, I'm not a nutritionist, I do not have a PhD. I'm a journalist. I started my career as an investigative science journalist. I did my first two books on physicists and nuclear physicists who discovered non-existent phenomenon and lived to regret it. As such, I was obsessed with how hard it is to do science right and how hard it is to get the right answer. One line I quote in three of my books is from the Nobel Laureate Physicist Richard Fineman who said: ‘The first principle of science is that you must not fool yourself and you're the easiest person to



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not fool yourself and you're the easiest person to fool.'

"In the early 90s, after my first two books I had a lot of fans in the physics community and they said to me if you're interested in bad science or people who do it wrong, you should look into some of the stuff in public health because it's terrible. So I moved into public health reporting in the early 90s and learned quite quickly that my physicist friends had, if anything, underestimated the problem. Then, I stumbled into the nutrition field."

The entire speech can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4pnPgLt2EVI>

After "stumbling" into nutrition, Taubes learned that salt really doesn't "cause" high blood pressure and that eating fat does not make you fat. In fact, it drove Taubes to write about Dr. Atkins, in what he called, "One of the most controversial nutrition articles ever published in the Times."

"Atkins allowed his readers to eat 'truly luxurious foods without limit,' as he put it, 'lobster with butter sauce, steak with béarnaise sauce . . . bacon cheeseburgers,' but allowed no starches or refined carbohydrates, which means no sugars or anything made from flour," Taubes wrote. "Atkins banned even fruit juices, and permitted only a modicum of vegetables, although the latter were negotiable as the diet progressed.

"Atkins was by no means the first to get rich pushing a high-fat diet that restricted carbohydrates, but he popularized it to an extent that the American Medical Association considered it a potential threat to our health. The A.M.A. attacked Atkins's diet as a 'bizarre regimen' that advocated 'an unlimited intake of saturated fats and cholesterol-rich foods,' and Atkins even had to defend his diet in Congressional hearings.

“Thirty years later, America has become weirdly polarized on the subject of weight. On the one hand, we’ve been told with almost religious certainty by everyone from the surgeon general on down, and we have come to believe with almost religious certainty, that obesity is caused by the excessive consumption of fat, and that if we eat less fat we will lose weight and live longer.

“On the other, we have the ever-resilient message of Atkins and decades’ worth of best-selling diet books, including The Zone, Sugar Busters and Protein Power to name a few. All push some variation of what scientists would call the alternative hypothesis: it’s not the fat that makes us fat, but the carbohydrates, and if we eat less carbohydrates we will lose weight and live longer.”

Atkins, Taubes and other medical practitioners and nutritionists who believe in high protein diets don’t appear to be wrong. There are also a growing number of them.

Even the hosts of The Doctors, a nationally syndicated television show have started to question this high-carb, low-fat approach. It seems that despite the fact we’ve been told that red meat is bad for you, it’s very likely that it’s not. In fact, it’s actually good for you.

From The Doctors:

“What You’ve Heard”

Burgers, steaks, hot dogs—red meat is an American diet staple, but our carnivore cravings may be killing us. After tracking food choices of more than 121,000 adults for up to 28 years, Harvard researchers found that people who ate three ounces of red meat every day were about 13 percent more likely to die—often from heart disease or cancer—before the study

ended than people who didn't eat meat. And daily servings of processed meat such as bacon raised the risk of early death by 20 percent. Saturated fat and cholesterol are only the start of meat's diet dangers. Overloads of iron can threaten the hearts of meat eaters; sodium and nitrates make processed meat even worse. It's no wonder that many experts recommend reducing or eliminating red meat from your diet.

But Wait ...

A 2012 report found that Americans who regularly eat lean beef get more protein, zinc, potassium, and B vitamins than people who don't. And a 2010 report estimated that lean beef accounts for about 15 percent of the nation's protein but only about 4 percent of total fat. 'Lean red meat is a healthy thing,' says Carol O'Neil, PhD, a coauthor of both reports and a professor of human nutrition and food at Louisiana State University."

It's the kind of reporting and bad science that changed Taubes entire view of nutrition. And as we said, he's not alone.

In fact, Dr. Mark Hyman, the Director of the Cleveland Clinic's Center for Functional Medicine, had a very interesting response to the anti-meat researchers.

"Many of the studies demonizing meat use subjects who are smokers, drink too much, eat way too much sugar and processed foods, eat very little fruits and veggies, and do not exercise," wrote Hyman. "So it's no wonder that these meat eaters with bad habits and horrible diets are sicker and fatter.

"From a health and wellness standpoint, we question if eating meat truly causes heart disease, cancer and leads to a shorter life. Or is eating meat the key to longevity, as it seemed to be for the Plains Indians who lived almost exclusively on buffalo meat and

had the highest number of centenarians in history.”

“Studies that take a pro- or anti-meat stance often miss the bigger picture. They overlook the fact that most meat eaters who participate in the studies that show harm from eating meat are also eating a boatload of sugar and refined carbs alongside a highly processed, inflammatory diet. They certainly aren’t eating small to moderate amounts of grass-fed or organic meat along with a pile of colorful fruits and veggies.”

Recently, TIME Magazine, write about a study undertaken by a team of researchers at McMaster University. Called, “One of the most comprehensive studies to date looking at how diet affects health and mortality,” the researchers reported that rather than lowering fat, more people might benefit from lowering the amount of carbohydrates they eat. Originally published in The Lancet, the study found that people eating high quantities of carbohydrates, which are found in breads and rice, had a nearly 30 per cent higher risk of dying during the study than people eating a low-carb diet. And people eating high-fat diets had a 23 percent lower chance of dying during the study’s seven years of follow-up compared to people who ate less fat.”

According to the report of the study in The Lancet, which involved 135,000 people from 18 different countries, “The results point to the fact that rather than focusing on fat, health experts should be advising people to lower the amount of carbohydrates they eat.”

Gary Taubes would respond with a quiet, “I told you so.”

“Some of these researchers point out that there are plenty of reasons to suggest that the low-fat-is-good-health hypothesis has now effectively failed the test of time.” Taubes wrote. “In particular that

the rest of time, I would write. In particular, that we are in the midst of an obesity epidemic that started around the early 1980's, and that this was coincident with the rise of the low-fat dogma. (Type 2 diabetes, the most common form of the disease, also rose significantly through this period). Our cholesterol levels have been declining, and we have been smoking less, and yet the incidence of heart disease has not declined as would be expected. They say that low-fat weight-loss diets have proved in clinical trials and real life to be dismal failures, and that on top of it all, the percentage of fat in the American diet has been decreasing for two decades.”

Here in Canada, one of the fiercest advocates for beef is Dr. Sangita Sharma, endowed chair in Aboriginal health, professor in Aboriginal and global health, at the University of Alberta. Dr. Sharma promotes beef around the world for many reasons, but at the top of her list is the significant impact beef has on the fetus and the young, maturing child.

“When it comes to iron, 75 gm of beef is equivalent to 3.5 cups of spinach and for zinc 75 gm of beef matches four cans of tuna and for the brainy B12 one would have to consume 2.5 chicken breasts to meet the equivalent of 75 gm of beef,” says Dr. Sharma.

“Beef is not only easy to prepare, but so little is required because of its nutrient density. The vitamin B12 found in beef is especially important for fighting fatigue, depression, neuropathy and confusion. After the age of 60, an adult has to be supplemented with B12. A lack of iron results in poor growth and can be the culprit behind impaired development and chronic fatigue. It is especially important for girls and women as they deplete iron through menstruation. Zinc contributes to a healthy birth weight and is needed for the body to heal itself. A protein-deprived body makes for a weak baby, a listless mother, an academic-struggling teen or an angry man. The nutrient density in beef makes it part of the hunger solution.”

Ryder Lee, the Chief Executive Officer of Saskatchewan Beef, is not surprisingly, a proponent of Dr. Sharma. He's also become a pretty good cook, who believes that there is more to beef than just its nutritional value.

“Getting something out of the food you beside simple nutrition makes beef look really good,” said Lee. “Beef is so varied. Some of our competing proteins are fairly repetitive, but there is so much you can enjoy with beef. Whether it's ground beef, a porterhouse steak, prime rib or a standing pot roast, beef just give you more choice and delicious variety. In recent years, I've been working on my cooking and as I delve deeper into, you realize the more you can do with beef.

“Beef will give anyone a really nice experience and one of the things that is not getting enough play is that as the Baby Boomers get older we tend to have smaller caloric intakes. Fewer calories can lead to some unfortunate maladies as we get older, but beef will increase muscle mass and bone density and in seniors, anything that makes them stronger and give their bones more density is a good thing.”

As Dr. Atkins would have said, “Eat meat. Eat luxurious foods.”

And in the meantime remember that Jim Gaffigan has it half right. Go to McDonald's and enjoy a burger from time to time. Although you might want to think about removing the bun and backing away from the fries.



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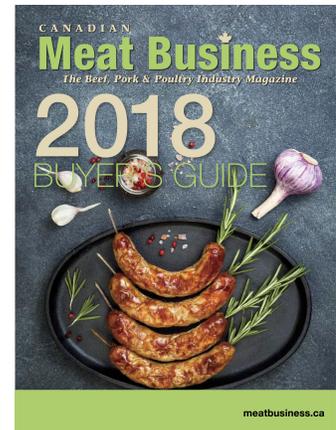
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