



# Go Wheat! A Communications Toolkit

December 18, 2012



# Toolkit Overview

- Situation Overview
- Wheat Messages for the Media
- Grain Chain Contact Information
- Spokesperson Contact Information
- Communications Decision Tree
- Responding to Wheat Belly: Process Overview

# Situation Overview

On August 30, 2011, the controversial fad diet book, *Wheat Belly* was published. In the time since its release, the book and its author, cardiologist Dr. William Davis, have received coverage in notable media outlets such as *The Atlantic*, *The View*, *CBS News*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *Maclean's* and *The Dr. Oz Show*.

The book's content poses challenges to wheat on two fronts: it calls into question the genetic composition of modern wheat and then extrapolates that this genetic composition is the root cause of many of the health ills that impact society today: from obesity and diabetes to psychological conditions. Dr. Davis posits that eliminating wheat and wheat foods is the holy grail of a healthy lifestyle and he has amassed a small but devout following who support this position.

Members of the grain chain and other interested organizations are working tirelessly to counter the claims made by Dr. Davis and his book while reinforcing the positive ways wheat has benefitted humans for the past 10,000 years.

As we approach the New Year diet season and the expected release of a new *Wheat Belly*-based cookbook, we invite you and members of your organization to use the enclosed information to handle any media requests you receive concerning wheat, its origins, its genetic composition and its role in our diet. We also invite you to incorporate the messages in this toolkit into your proactive media outreach and social media conversation strategies and to share these messages with other organizations, individuals, experts and institutions within your sphere of influence.





# Wheat Messages for the Media

The following messages have been developed through a collaborative effort of all grain chain members. Each key message is accompanied by a specific support point. Further proofpoints can be found in the Wheat Messaging Matrix in the appendix.

These messages can be used in a variety of formats: to brief spokespeople, as the basis for fact sheets or to inform media statements and/or as social media content (tweets, posts, blog topics, video subjects, etc.).

# Six Things Everyone Should Know About Wheat

- **There is no genetically engineered wheat in today's food system.**
  - Today's wheat varieties have been developed through conventional breeding over the last 150 years. There is no wheat in today's food system that was grown from seeds that include genes from unrelated species.
- **Wheat provides 20% of the protein consumed by 4.5 billion people across the globe.**
  - It is estimated the number of people worldwide will increase from nearly 7 to more than 9 billion by 2050 and wheat will be a vital source of nutrients to support this booming population.
- **Conventional breeding of wheat has yielded wheat that is easier to grow and thrives in different – even difficult – environments, helping to ensure enough food to feed the world's growing population.**
  - Farmers and scientists have worked together for hundreds of years to develop wheat that makes better use of the land, water and fertilizer and is more resistant to damaging pests and diseases so that all the world's people will have enough food.
- **The genetic components of wheat have not changed in 10,000 years.**
  - While some modern wheat plants are shorter than their ancestors, wheat's genetic makeup of wheat remains the same. Shorter plants are more efficient plants because they require less energy to grow and produce grain.
- **Wheat won a Nobel Peace Prize.**
  - Dr. Norman Borlaug, one of the world's preeminent plant breeders, was awarded the 1970 Nobel Peace Prize for his work to develop high-yielding varieties of grain that are credited with saving over a billion people from starvation.
- **Fortification of enriched wheat flour with folic acid was named one of the top public health achievements of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.**
  - Folic acid fortification has been credited with reducing birth defects by one-third in the United States.



# Six Things Everyone Should Know About Wheat in Our Diet

- **Wheat goes back to the cradle of civilization.**
  - Wheat was one of the first cultivated grains, which allowed our human ancestors to build cities and develop modern civilization. Wheat is the foundation of many wholesome, healthful products enjoyed across the globe, and has been for thousands of years.
- **Wheat provides energy.**
  - The complex carbohydrates found in bread and other foods made from wheat provide fuel the human body needs. Carbohydrates are the body's preferred fuel source.
- **Wheat flour is a vehicle for vitamins and minerals and an important source of carbohydrates, fiber, magnesium, B vitamins, folic acid, antioxidants and phytochemicals.**
  - These nutrients contribute positively to health and can help prevent many of the chronic diseases plaguing the world today, such as heart disease, diabetes, some cancers and neural tube birth defects.
- **The average, healthy adult should consume six one-ounce servings of grain foods each day. Approximately three-quarters of all U.S. grain products are made from wheat flour.**
  - The Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which are the gold standard for scientifically-sound nutrition advice, recognize that both whole and enriched grain products have a place in a balanced diet and call for individuals to "make half your grains whole grains."
- **Wheat provides approximately 20% of the protein for more than half of the world's population.**
  - Wheat is the basis of important staple foods in both developing and developed nations across the globe. As a food group, grains provide Americans more than half their daily intake of iron, thiamin and folate, nutrients essential for energy and good health.
- **People don't get celiac disease simply because they eat wheat.**
  - There are a number of theories to explain the increased rates of celiac disease and gluten sensitivity. Researchers are learning more each day but the fact remains that you must have a specific gene to develop celiac disease.

# Six Things Everyone Should Know About Diet & Weight

- **There is no correlation between wheat consumption and obesity rates.**
  - Per capita consumption of wheat has declined in the United States, while obesity rates have gone up. In France, wheat consumption is double that of the U.S., but the obesity rate is half. Italians consume three times as much wheat and have one-quarter the obesity rate of the U.S.
- **There is no magic bullet for achieving or maintaining a healthy weight....except a diet with the right amount of calories for you as well as regular physical activity.**
  - Fad diet plans aren't grounded in sound science and often rely on an author's anecdotes. A balanced diet with moderate portions that includes all food groups coupled with daily exercise is the best solution for long term health and weight management.
- **Most fad dieters can only stick with a plan for a few weeks or months.**
  - It is possible to lose weight quickly by following fad diets that eliminate entire food groups. While you may lose weight in the short run, these diets aren't sustainable and don't work in the long run. Yo-yo dieting, the ongoing, repeated cycle of weight loss & regain, is associated with more weight gain over time.
- **Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight can have transformative health effects.**
  - Moderate weight loss is the number one recommendation of diabetes experts around the world. Studies show weight loss can also improve other conditions, including sleep apnea, acid reflux and some rashes.
- **Carbohydrate intake is key for a healthy weight.**
  - Research indicates people with moderate- to high-carb diets tend to weigh less than people who consume fewer carbs.
  - According to the Institute of Medicine, people should consume about half (45-65%) of their daily calories from carbohydrates. Grains (like wheat) as well as fruits, vegetables, legumes and dairy products are all important sources of carbohydrates.
- **No single food or food group is responsible for the global obesity epidemic.**
  - The human diet is complex and varied. Blaming one food for an epidemic is a gross oversimplification.



# Contact Information

Following are key communications contacts for organizations participating in the grain chain and involved in the wheat communications process.



# Grain Chain Contact Information

Organization	Representative	Contact Information
Grain Foods Foundation	Christine Cochran Executive Director	<a href="mailto:ccochran@grainsfoundation.org">ccochran@grainsfoundation.org</a> 202-289-6119
Grain Foods Foundation (Mullen)	Tony Labriola Senior Vice President	<a href="mailto:tlabriola@mullen.com">tlabriola@mullen.com</a> 203-405-1473
	Ashley Reynolds Senior Nutrition Specialist	<a href="mailto:areynolds@mullen.com">areynolds@mullen.com</a> 617-226-9927
Wheat Foods Council	Judi Adams President	<a href="mailto:jadams@wheatfoods.org">jadams@wheatfoods.org</a> 970-275-5490
Wheat Foods Council (kinnaird + mangan)	Jula Kinnaird Principal	<a href="mailto:jula@kinnairdmangan.com">jula@kinnairdmangan.com</a> 703-919-8107

# Grain Chain Contact Information

Organization	Representative	Contact Information
American Bakers Association	Lee Sanders Senior Vice President	<a href="mailto:lsanders@americanbakers.org">lsanders@americanbakers.org</a> 202-789-0300
National Association of Wheat Growers	Dana Peterson Chief Executive Officer	<a href="mailto:dpeterson@wheatworld.org">dpeterson@wheatworld.org</a> 202-547-7800, ext. 1
	Jane Demarchi Director	<a href="mailto:jdemarchi@wheatworld.org">jdemarchi@wheatworld.org</a> 202-547-7800, ext. 4
	Melissa Kessler Director of Communications	<a href="mailto:mkessler@wheatworld.org">mkessler@wheatworld.org</a> 202-547-7800, ext. 5
National Pasta Association	Carol Freysinger Executive Director	<a href="mailto:cfreysinger@kellencompany.com">cfreysinger@kellencompany.com</a> 202-637-5888

# Grain Chain Contact Information

Organization	Representative	Contact Information
USA Rice Federation	Anne Banville Vice President	<a href="mailto:abanville@usarice.com">abanville@usarice.com</a> 703-236-2300
US Wheat Associates	Steve Mercer Director of Communications	<a href="mailto:smerc@uswheat.org">smerc@uswheat.org</a> 703-650-0251
North American Millers Association	Mary Waters President	<a href="mailto:mwaters@namamillers.org">mwaters@namamillers.org</a> 202-484-2200, ext. 12
	Terri Long Director of Communications	<a href="mailto:tlong@namamillers.org">tlong@namamillers.org</a> 202-484-2200, ext. 11



# Spokesperson Contact Information

The following experts have been identified and vetted by the Grain Foods Foundation, National Association of Wheat Growers and the Wheat Foods Council and are ready and willing to provide expert commentary on wheat genetics, wheat breeding and the role of wheat in a healthful diet.

# Spokesperson Contact Information

Spokesperson	Contact Information	Expertise	Relationship Owner
Stephen Baenziger, PhD <i>University of Nebraska</i>	<a href="mailto:pbaenziger1@unl.edu">pbaenziger1@unl.edu</a> 402-472-1538	Wheat Breeding/Genetics	NAWG
Brett Carver, PhD <i>Oklahoma State University</i>	<a href="mailto:Brett.carver@okstate.edu">Brett.carver@okstate.edu</a> 405-744-9580	Wheat Breeding/Genetics	WFC
Erick DeWolf, PhD <i>Kansas State University</i>	<a href="mailto:Dewolf1@ksu.edu">Dewolf1@ksu.edu</a> 785-532-3968	Wheat Breeding/Genetics	NAWG
Glenn Gaesser, PhD <i>Arizona State University</i>	<a href="mailto:Glenn.gaesser@asu.edu">Glenn.gaesser@asu.edu</a> 602-827-2283 480-727-1884	Nutrition, Diet, Gluten Free	GFF/Mullen
Julie Miller Jones, PhD, LN, CNS <i>St. Catherine University</i>	<a href="mailto:juliemjones@comcast.net">juliemjones@comcast.net</a> 651-636-2275	Cereal and Food Science, Nutrition, Gluten Free	GFF/Mullen
David Marshall, PhD <i>USDA-ARS</i>	<a href="mailto:David.marshall@ars.usda.gov">David.marshall@ars.usda.gov</a> 919-515-6819	Wheat Breeding/Genetics	NAWG
Jochum Wiersma, PhD <i>University of Minnesota</i>	<a href="mailto:Wiers002@umn.edu">Wiers002@umn.edu</a> 218-281-8629	Wheat Breeding/Genetics	NAWG
Robert Zemetra, PhD <i>Oregon State University</i>	<a href="mailto:Robert.zemetra@oregonstate.edu">Robert.zemetra@oregonstate.edu</a> 541-737-4278	Wheat Breeding/Genetics	NAWG

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide. It features a stack of four slices of white bread, a small pile of white rice, and several stylized white flowers scattered around them. The background is a light beige color.

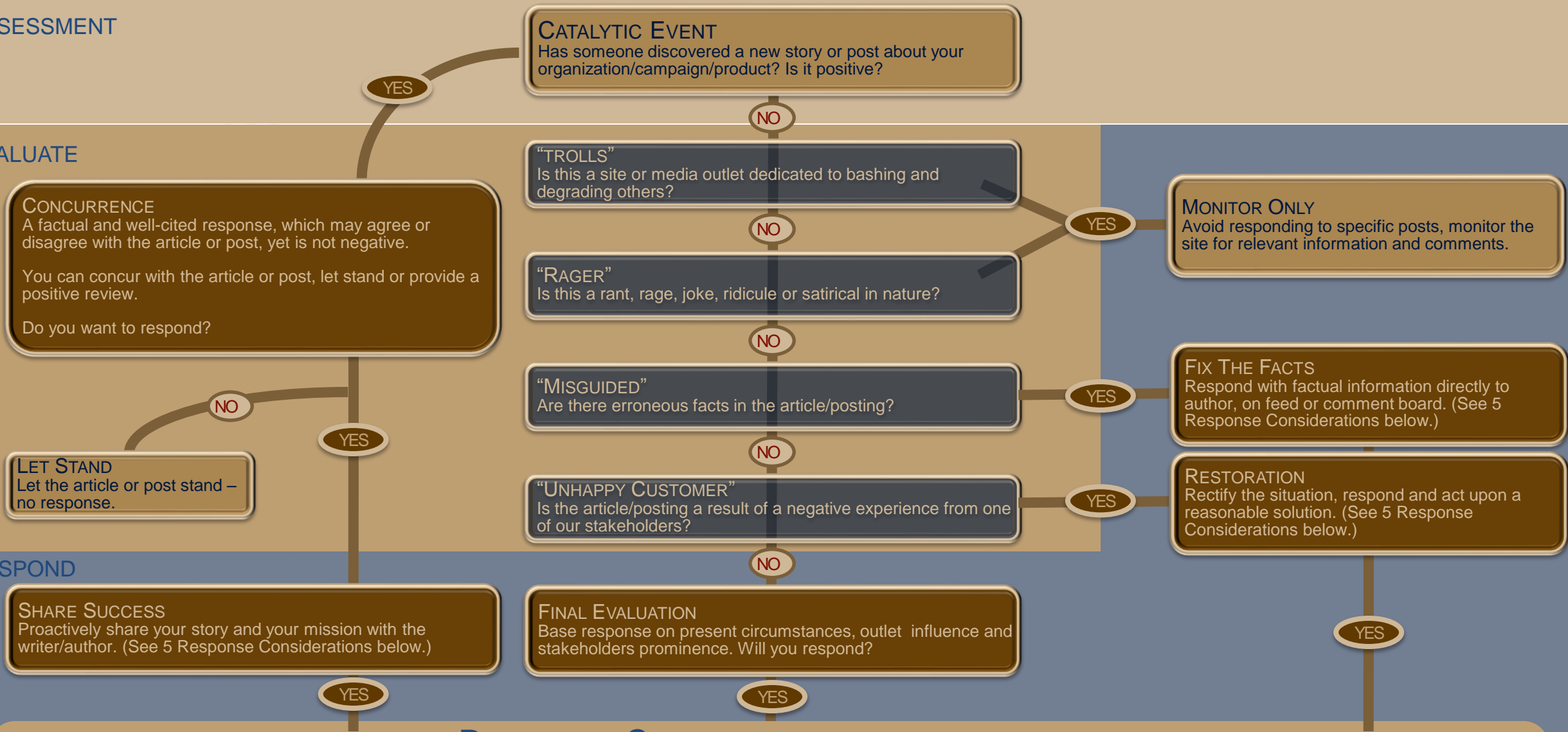
# Communications Decision Tree

# Traditional, Online and Social Media Assessment

## ASSESSMENT

## EVALUATE

## RESPOND



**CONCURRENCE**  
A factual and well-cited response, which may agree or disagree with the article or post, yet is not negative.  
You can concur with the article or post, let stand or provide a positive review.  
Do you want to respond?

**CATALYTIC EVENT**  
Has someone discovered a new story or post about your organization/campaign/product? Is it positive?

**"TROLLS"**  
Is this a site or media outlet dedicated to bashing and degrading others?

**"RAGER"**  
Is this a rant, rage, joke, ridicule or satirical in nature?

**"MISGUIDED"**  
Are there erroneous facts in the article/posting?

**"UNHAPPY CUSTOMER"**  
Is the article/posting a result of a negative experience from one of our stakeholders?

**MONITOR ONLY**  
Avoid responding to specific posts, monitor the site for relevant information and comments.

**FIX THE FACTS**  
Respond with factual information directly to author, on feed or comment board. (See 5 Response Considerations below.)

**RESTORATION**  
Rectify the situation, respond and act upon a reasonable solution. (See 5 Response Considerations below.)

**LET STAND**  
Let the article or post stand – no response.

**SHARE SUCCESS**  
Proactively share your story and your mission with the writer/author. (See 5 Response Considerations below.)

**FINAL EVALUATION**  
Base response on present circumstances, outlet influence and stakeholders prominence. Will you respond?

## RESPONSE CONSIDERATIONS

**TRANSPARENCY**  
Disclose your affiliation or connection.

**SOURCING**  
Cite your sources by including hyperlinks, video, images or other references.

**TIMELINESS**  
Take time to create good responses, from a few hours to a day.

**TONE**  
Respond in a tone that reflects highly on your organization.

**INFLUENCE**  
Focus on the most influential outlets related to your organization.



# Response Process Overview



# Process Overview: Incoming Media Inquiry

- Identify the following:
  - Reporter
  - Outlet
  - Story Angle
  - Deadline
- Determine appropriate spokesperson
  - Contact spokesperson (and include relationship owner)
- Alert the rest of the grain chain (in case a reporter contacts multiple organizations)

# Process Overview: Proactive Media Outreach

- Determine your story angle/pitch you'll be sending to the media
- Identify appropriate spokesperson
- Contact spokesperson (and include relationship owner) to approve angle/pitch
- Share results with grain chain members

# Process Overview: Rapid Response Scenario

If grains-offensive story runs in the media:

- Use Crisis Communications Decision Tree to determine if response is warranted
- If yes, identify response angle and content
- If spokesperson required, contact spokesperson (and include relationship owner)
- Alert the rest of the grain chain to story and response recommendation/strategy