

COMPLES - NESHEIM



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

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May 21, 1980

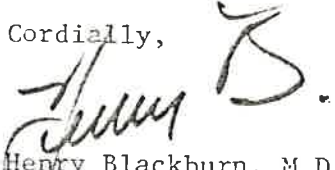
Robert O. Nesheim, Ph.D.
Vice President
Science and Technology
The Quaker Oats Company
617 West Main Street
Barrington, Illinois 60010

Dear Dr. Nesheim:

I have been pleased and interested to read the final review draft of the Committee on Food Consumption Patterns sent me April 22. First, I want to indicate I think its a first rate job and should provide the basis for a sound data collection system in the future. Second, I want to apologize to you for my lack of active participation. Over the last year I have been struggling with a terrible problem of cerebral malignancy in my oldest son. Between this and trying to keep an active and expanding research operation going, I simply have not been very useful for any outside commitments. I should have been more forthright in informing you of this along the way. But I see that you have obtained other consultations in the several areas of disease and consumption assessments and the issue is well treated.

I am particularly impressed with your considerations in Table 3 in which you would measure intermediate risk variables related both to nutrition and to disease (such as obesity, high blood pressure and blood lipid levels). This it seems to me is the absolutely essential matter, to provide the scientific rationale and basis for interpretation of the effect of trends in food patterns and disease. Parenthetically, I would not be particularly interested in health screening programs as a source of health status data; rather the population surveys are the ones likely to provide valid data both in terms of sampling method and quality control.

Our Laboratory has been given the only NIH-supported grant to pursue the approach that you recommend in which we simultaneously monitor, over the current seven year period in the seven county metropolitan area, changes in food intake and eating pattern, intermediate risk variables, and disease, disability and death rates. We hope that the procedures established will allow us to say something about their efficiency and cost. I can assure you that this undertaking or the one you propose is not inexpensive.

Cordially,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director

HB:mb