



The Path to Increasing Global Fruit and Vegetable Consumption

Global Consumption Action Committee Report

The Global Consumption Action Committee

When the newly formed International Fresh Produce Association launched in 2022, there was one thing every member, every volunteer, every staffer could agree on: *how can we as an industry grow consumption?* But that consensus gave way to questions:

What exactly do we mean by “consumption” and are the challenges and opportunities the same?

Are the things that keep the world’s malnourished from eating more fresh fruits and vegetables the same things that keep the world’s most over-fed populations from doing the same?

Those and many other questions prompted IFPA to create the Global Consumption Action Committee (GCAC). **Its mission: Identify the forces necessary to increase fruit and vegetable consumption around the world.**

The GCAC Members were:

- **Wyard Stomp, Chair**
Managing Director of Europe, Middle East & Africa, Driscoll’s
- **Alicia Adler**
Vice President Marketing and Business Development, Bryant Christie, Inc.
- **Maggie Bezart-Hall**,
Sr. Director, Strategic Sales & Marketing, La Bonanza Avocados
- **Kelly Bristow**,
Global Nutrition Affairs Lead, Bayer Crop Science
- **Jason Fung**,
Director of Category Development, The Oppenheimer Group
- **Jeff Goodale**,
Sr. Director of Sales Strategy and Analysis, Duda Farm Fresh Foods, Inc.
- **Dawn Gray**,
President, Dawn Gray Global Consulting
- **Adam Hollowell**,
Trade Policy Specialist, Bryant Christie, Inc.
- **Ian Jankelowitz**,
Head of Everyday Market, Woolworths Supermarkets
- **Cindy Jewell**,
Vice President of Marketing, Bobalu LLC
- **Denise Junqueiro**,
Vice President of Commercial, Tropicals, Apeel Sciences
- **Stewart Mann**,
Vice President/General Manager, Pioneer Growers Cooperative
- **Jaco Oosthuizen**,
Chief Executive Officer, RSA Group
- **Matt Quiring**,
SVP Sales & Marketing, Nature Fresh Farms
- **Jiunn Shih**,
Chief Marketing, Innovation & Sustainability Officer, ZESPRI International, Ltd.
- **Lori Taylor**,
Founder & CEO, The Produce Moms
- **Nichole Towell**,
Sr. Director of Marketing & Packaging Procurement, Duda Farm Fresh Foods, Inc.
- **Megan Zweig**,
President, DMA Solutions, Inc.

The Landscape at a Glance

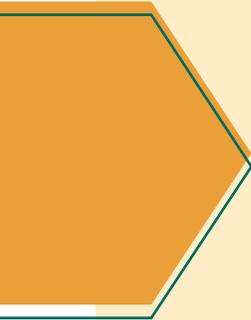
Around the world, people aren't eating enough fresh produce. Globally, rates of consumption are not enough to meet the World Health Organization's recommended standard of 400g, and certainly not enough for those populations to achieve optimal health. While not every country's condition is critical, many are. America is chief among them, where there is a "10% Crisis." Only 1 in 10 people eat the recommended number of fresh fruits and vegetables each day. Yet, you can argue that fruits and vegetables have never been more culturally relevant, fashionable, innovative, and trendy.

The reality is produce is part of a larger "foodscape" that transcends simple fueling of the body's functions. We don't just consume food; we have a relationship with it and that can be complicated.

The global food system is worth US\$9.4 trillion – or 8% of global GDP. Fruits and vegetables account for fully one-fifth of that. And if the food system simply maintains business as usual, by the time the world's population hits 10 billion in 2050, it will provide just 44% of the food those billions of people will need.

Yet we needn't wait until tomorrow to be sobered by some of the harsh realities in the food system. In what's been termed the "Food System Paradox":

- Unhealthy diets mean there are 2 billion people who are overweight or obese while there are 2 billion who are malnourished.
- 800 million farmers worldwide who work to produce food for others, don't get enough to eat.



The produce industry is committed to ensure that the world is fed properly. It also has the resilience and passion to deliver.

With that landscape in mind, committee members came together unified in their belief that fresh fruits and vegetables are the cornerstone of a full and vibrant life.

A Process of Realization



The committee was diverse in their geographic locations (Australia, Canada, Netherlands, Singapore, South Africa, United States) and their roles (retail, seed production, produce market, production, marketing, media), and in their opinions.

It soon became apparent that growing consumption is a bigger, more complex challenge than first imagined. That's because:

- 1. Industry members often define “driving demand” differently.** This happens even when they use the same words to talk about it. For every definition of the problem there is a wide variety of potential solutions. Conversations can rapidly become overwhelming and unfocused based on the sheer number of variables – and definitions.
- 2. It's easy to talk past each other.** Clinging to preconceived notions gets in the way of a real exchange of ideas and deep thinking. The committee's work illuminated blind spots and the committee quickly adopted an attitude of openness to suitably capture and absorb the totality of the issues and opportunities and to learn from the differences among members with various experiences and from various geographies.
- 3. Confusion increases paralysis.** There is confusion about the role of the association and that of member companies when it comes to increasing consumption. The committee realized that confusion stemmed from a sense of urgency and good intentions, but persisted, nonetheless.
- 4. The urge to find fast, tactical solutions frequently gets in the way of defining the problem itself.** Clarity comes from specificity. The committee determined the first need was to reduce the challenge to its parts.



As an example of how these realizations came to the fore, consider this highly fictionalized dramatization of the very real but somewhat less dramatic conversations that unfolded as the committee navigated its initial explorations:

“We can’t grow consumption without a major awareness campaign to consumers.”

“Yeah, but that will mean nothing if people don’t have access to produce in the first place.”

“Access to a zucchini doesn’t matter if you don’t know what to do with a zucchini; we need greater education, first and foremost.”

“I’ll tell you who we need to educate: Doctors. They need to tell people their lives literally depend on this stuff.”

“But who wants to be told ‘it’s good for you’? So’s my gym membership and we know how well that’s going. People want to eat food that makes their mouths happy. We need to make produce fun, desirable, and exciting for what it is, not what it does.”

“And that’s not going to happen until we see more innovation from producers. We need new varieties, formats, and packaging otherwise we’re just selling the same old thing and telling the same old story.”

“It’s not the same old story I’m worried about, it’s the same old markets. We’ve got to open up literal new territories.”

“But why try to build from nothing when we can grow where we already are by expanding occasions? Look how avocados broke into breakfast with toast. Why not breakfast broccoli? There are day parts and holidays and snacking occasions we haven’t begun to exhaust yet.”

These types of conversation are common and can feel circular with no clear path forward.

But ultimately, this conversation was exactly what was needed. It’s what drove the committee’s most potent realization:

It’s no one thing.

Getting the world to consume 400g of fresh fruits and vegetables per day – call it “The 400 Gram Challenge” – is what scientists call a “**multifactorial problem**,” one for which there are many factors at play at the same time, all of which have to be addressed in order for the desired change to occur.

The obvious implication of the realization that no one thing created the conundrum is that no one thing is going to solve it – not one organization, not one segment of the supply chain, or one company, or one job function in the industry. A multifactorial problem requires a multifactorial solution. The entire industry working together is the answer. We must widen our lens to the full range of consumption drivers and take action on every front that matters.

Parsing the Problem and Identifying Opportunities



Based on the preceding epiphanies, the committee undertook three tasks:

1. Map the issues and challenges affecting consumption by industry or consumer.
2. Articulate critical success factors.
3. Develop sample roles and opportunities for IFPA, member companies, and individuals and map them to the critical success factors.

Task 1: Map the issues and challenges affecting consumption by industry or consumer.

Consistent with the realization that increasing fruit and vegetable consumption is no one person’s responsibility, the committee determined that some of the factors are industry based and that others are consumer based. They compiled a list and organized the items into two categories.

PRODUCTION	CONSUMER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability/(Distribution) • Farmer Welfare • Market Access • Value Chain Economics • Production Practices • Sustainability • Food Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer Messaging/Experience • Trial/Conversion • Expanding Occasions • Repeat Purchase • Affordability

Task 2: Articulate critical success factors.

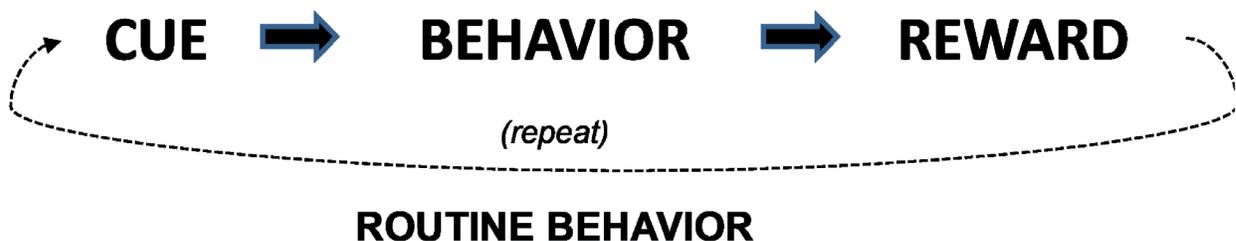
The committee was mindful of the need to be consistent and clear about the origins and desired outcomes of this work in the coming years as subsequent volunteer committees take the baton from one another. Toward that end they articulated “The Why Narrative.” In addition, they identified the imperative to close the gap on relevant data, and the thinking behind the essential role of the Production/Consumer domains debuted above:

- **The Why Narrative** – An explanation that provides context, clarification, and a common vocabulary to galvanize the industry. **Increased consumption is good for all.** We believe that increased produce consumption is not only good for growing our industry, but also good for creating the vibrant future for all that we are committed to. More people eating more fresh fruits and vegetables more often creates value up and down the supply chain and among all stakeholders – investors, producers, retailers, and consumers alike. This is what the celebrated economist Bruno Roche has called the “economics of mutuality.” At its core, the value proposition for increased consumption is literally life-giving solutions for people and the planet.
- **Data and Analytics Imperative** – No business can be fueled without data. The produce industry is already measuring many things, often in isolation, and not in the aggregate, which makes it difficult for the industry as a whole to let data lead a holistic effort to increase consumption. The committee recommends the industry:
 1. Create a process to identify and align on the key issues that need to be addressed at an individual business level and then aggregate the relevant data.
 2. Equip individual businesses to mine, analyze, and apply that data for their own purposes.
- **Production** – While driving demand is often thought of as the marketing department’s job, the farm gate paves the way to deliver on a promise with flavor, quality, nutrition, and shelf life. These are the factors that can ensure the long-term viability of the business. If the business is not viable and thriving, companies cannot invest in innovation and improvements to meet organizational, customer and consumer needs. But the pursuit of organizational viability cannot be at the expense of the consumer experience. In the long run, it erodes trust and generations of volume. When done well, it cements habits for multiple generations.

- **Consumer** – Consumers are at the heart of everything we do, yet they can be finicky and don't behave as they tell you they would. Consumers buy products to meet their needs that are not always rational. So, what is it that people need from us to inspire change in behavior and make produce consumption a habit? They won't simply bend to our will. We have to nurture mutually beneficial habits in them by addressing the four characteristics of behavior change and habit building (drawn from models such as that of acclaimed Stanford behavioral science professor BJ Fogg):
 1. **Understandable** – The desired habit must be specific and clearly understood.
 2. **Easy** – The desired habit must not require inordinate effort.
 3. **Desirable** – The desired habit must be rooted in something the individual genuinely wants.
 4. **Rewarding** – The desired habit must deliver a benefit and create a positive feedback loop.

How are habits formed?

It's behavior (doing), but we need to know a lot about how habits work to help people create them.



Source: *Hacks to Habits Research A Behavioral Research Study to Bolster Fruit & Vegetable Consumption (2022)*

Task 3: Develop sample roles and opportunities for IFPA, member companies, and individuals and map them to the critical success factors.

To guide future action plans, the committee developed examples of how the association and its members play a role in the above critical success factors:

	ASSOCIATION	INDUSTRY MEMBERS
Why Narrative	<p>Develop overarching framework for organizations to share.</p> <p>Reinforce the importance of the work and the pride the industry can have in undertaking it.</p>	<p>Share the Why Narrative with leaders and employees.</p> <p>Discuss the complexities and challenges of produce and the powerful role they have in people’s lives, in their communities and around the world.</p>
Data and Analytics	<p>Partner with volunteer leads to answer the key questions about consumption.</p> <p>Deliver the White House Commitment of the “Produce in the Public Interest Database,” designed to measure and track the most important metrics relevant to the long-term increase of fruit and vegetable consumption.</p>	<p>Identify, be clear about, and align on the key individual-level questions we are trying to solve as an industry.</p> <p>Ensure companies have the acumen to mine the data and translate it into implications for their individual businesses.</p>
Production	<p>Support the work of the industry through subject matter experts, education opportunities, and global insights, as well as connecting the global supply chain.</p>	<p>Take a holistic approach to business decisions that affect consumers’ purchases and experiences.</p> <p>Account for farmer welfare, prosperity, and viability in strategies designed to increase consumption.</p>
Consumer	<p>Research needs and opportunities related to teaching people how to incorporate fruits and vegetables into their diets. Determine what consumer education is needed, at what level, for which audience, through what medium, and toward what specific end.</p> <p>Develop a plan based on that research to become a stronger voice to consumers on behalf of the industry.</p>	<p>Put consumers at the center of business strategy.</p> <p>Be curious and share the insights across the organization.</p> <p>Embrace and evangelize the four-part behavior change model. Ensure products and services are delivered through that lens.</p>

Actions Moving Forward

The Global Consumption Action Committee’s central thesis is that the road to 400g must be paved with thoughtful, detailed, data-driven, integrated, strategic efforts up and down the supply chain. Increasing global fruit and vegetable consumption cannot be addressed with a slogan alone.

The work will continue as dedicated IFPA volunteers take the mantle from the committee and further translate this work into an action plan. We hope you will commit to joining them and the IFPA in breaking down silos and bringing the industry together to get on the path to 400g for all. We all want the same outcome, but we must link arms as we work toward it from different directions.

Along the way we must not only hope for change among consumers but embrace change within ourselves. As the saying goes, keep doing what you’re doing, and you’ll keep getting what you’re getting. With this work the committee has brought our industry to a precipice of true culture change – the consumer’s culture and our own.

Take Action with Your Team To Grow Consumption

1. Today, schedule a meeting with a cross functional group of your organization to review the production and consumer challenges identified above.
2. During the meeting, each cross functional group member picks one thing from either the production or consumer challenges that they do not know about and asks a team member with knowledge about the topic to explain it.
3. Then each cross functional group member picks one thing from either list of challenges that is in their area of expertise, completes the following sentence, and shares with the group.

*“As a _____ (role in supply chain),
my/our role in addressing _____ (one of the issues listed below)
is to _____ (develop ideas uniquely suited to your abilities).”*

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About IFPA

The International Fresh Produce Association is the member-driven association that advances the global fresh produce and floral industries and addresses their business needs. IFPA:

- Unites our global member network and allies around the world to create a strong community
- Connects with people, companies, ideas, and insights to bolster your business and take advantage of opportunities
- Advocates for a strong business climate and increased consumption globally to grow a healthier world and healthier sales
- Guides members and our global allies with resources, thought leadership, and expertise to help solve challenges facing your business, our industry, and the world

We are guided by the best and brightest of the industry – our volunteer leaders such as those who participated on the Global Consumption Action Committee.

For more information on how you can get involved, contact:

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