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Compare and Contrast

Have you ever wondered if what you are putting into your body is actually good for you? Although they bear some similarities, the differences between “The Poor Get Diabetes, The Rich Get Local and Organic” and “Claims Crazy: Which can you believe?” are clear. Everyday people everywhere are getting deprived of rich nutritious foods. When will we start doing more to help with the major health issues that the United States is facing caused by unhealthy food. Many companies put false advertising on their products due to structure/function claims. We need to educate ourselves and start to be more careful when deciding what we are going to eat.

The article, “The Poor Get Diabetes, The Rich Get Local and Organic” shares a lot of information about how hard it can be for low income families to get their hands on local and organic, or even just unprocessed food. Studies have been done to show that low-income families are more likely to get diseases like diabetes. This is due to the lack of nutritious foods that are available to them. In 1989 organic food started to become the new fad and the fastest growing portion of the food industry. All parents at that time wanted to buy local and organic to make sure their children would get the best nutrition they could, sadly this wasn’t an option for low income people or families.

Organic and locally grown food didn’t gain popularity in low income neighborhoods. This is because organic is very expensive, and not readily available to low income families whom live in low income neighborhoods. Most families who would want fresh or organic foods would have to drive to another city to get any. Which to them, wasn’t worth the time or the money. Even though they couldn’t afford it low income families were still very educated on Organic foods.

The Hartford Food System used to interview low-income families to get their point of views on the issue of organic foods. They would say they preferred fresh food, yet it wasn’t readily available or affordable to them where they lived. When they were questioned about organic foods they would often describe it as: “real food”, “fresh”, “natural”, or “healthy”. While processed food was most often described as “toxic”. Thankfully some companies are stepping forward, Like the CSA, who is donating 40 percent of its produce to local, low-income communities.

Much like in the previous article “Claims Crazy: Which can you believe?” talked a lot about the quality of foods. The difference though, is that this article talked more about the labels on foods. Food companies can claim almost anything they want and put it on the label for us all the see as long as they word it a certain way. Although before they can put claims about their product being able to cure or help a disease they have to get it approved through the FDA, they have discovered loop holes. The problem with this is that most consumers cannot tell the difference between an approved claim, or a claim that has been reworded and doesn’t have any scientific back up.

If a claim on the package describes how the product affects the body’s function or structure it does not have to get the FDA’s approval before being printed. Structure-Function Claims used to only show up on supplements until businesses discovered they could use it to their advantage. All a company has to do is put the words, “not evaluated” somewhere on the package to make it legal.

Basically there is a very fine line between real claims and Structure-Function claims. How are you supposed to trust anything you are putting into your body if a company can slap literally anything they want to on a package. How long will it take for people to realize what’s going on with the food industry? The answer is I am not sure. The sooner people take a stand against Structure-Function claims, the sooner the problem is fixed. The sooner the problem is fixed the sooner we don’t have to worry about false advertisement. We are all being tricked into believing things we are consuming have good benefits for our health. What if they really don’t? We have all been paying a premium for high quality products that are supposedly good for us. Have we really been being tricked out of our money?

In conclusion, although rich people have been able to afford organic foods this whole time, it doesn’t mean they have actually been consuming food that is good for them due to Structure-Function Claims. Not all Structure-Function claims are false, but because of the low regulations provided by the FDA it is just as easy, if not easier, to use false claims. People in poor communities haven’t been able to afford local or organic foods for a while now. Price isn’t the only problem though, it’s also availability. If more organic and healthy food was available to low income people at fair prices they would be able to eat food that is as high of quality as the rich people’s food. Thankfully many people, companies, and organizations are starting to take a stand. For example many farmers markets are now starting to accept EBT food stamp benefits as a form of payment. Hopefully the things this is doing and any other companies are also doing will make it so the diabetes rate for low income-people isn’t two to three times higher than the nation average anymore. Over the next couple of years we hope to start to see a drop in disease in The United States as a whole. So next time you’re going to get something to eat think to yourself, “should I really believe what this label says and be putting this stuff into my body?”

Work Cited

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