

# Reinventing the Food & Beverage Industry

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## Declare or Die - *Why ingredient transparency will become the next business norm*

Louise Wicker

Louisiana State University, USA

There are increasing consumer concerns over the safety of the food supply that is driving the purchase of organic, non-GMO, antibiotic free, hormone free, clean label, fresh-not processed foods, in the expectation that these foods are healthier. This 'fear of food' crosses socio-economic lines and is no longer attributed to the concerns of the affluent few. The rise of the influence of social media on food preferences are transforming the conversations and re-defining the definitions of healthy foods. The incongruity between the definition of 'healthy food' by the internet food advocate and the US dietary guidelines is detracting from science driven healthy food choices. The demand for clean label ingredients is creating an environment that potentially creates gaps that ensure safety of foods, potentially threaten food security and creates additional food quality and stability issues. In addition, major societal issues related to chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease are associated with obesity, especially in the populations with persistent poverty; and obesity remains the major health care concern in the US. Emphasis on clean label ingredients does little to reduce the impact of obesity on health and quality of life. Renewed conversations that focus on protecting the consumer, the community, and health are needed. Ideas and thoughts will be presented to catalyse those conversations.

### Biography

Louise Wicker is the Director and Professor with the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences with the Louisiana State University AgCenter in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. With over 36 faculty, instructors, research and extension associates, the School programs have some of the largest greatest capacity in the US for community programs, research and teaching. She actively promotes private-public partnerships that enable commercially viable, healthier food choices, palatable foods that fit into the lifestyle of working professionals. Engaging the food industry is essential to the process to develop healthier food products and to develop, validate and craft tailored messages to consumers that will help them buy and consume healthful foods.

She was elected a fellow of the Institute of Food Science and Technology (IFST) in 2005, a fellow of the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) in 2007, and a member of the International Academy of Food Science and Technology of IUFoST in 2010. She is a lifetime member of Phi Tau Sigma and past president. She is author or coauthor of over 200 publications on topics dealing with pectic substances and quality of foods. She has published 9 peer-reviewed book chapters, 90 peer-reviewed journal articles, 1 patent, and numerous published abstracts. She was recognized by Gamma Sigma Delta for excellence in teaching (2003) and research (2005).

[LWicker@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:LWicker@agcenter.lsu.edu)

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