THE VISION

Everyone eats. And when we’re not eating, we’re often thinking about our next snack or meal. Eating provides great pleasure, especially when we’re dining with family or friends. But food, while abundant and delicious, also contributes to soaring rates of obesity and diabetes. And farming, while extraordinarily productive, contributes to environmental degradation, the climate crisis, and the grossly unnatural raising of farm animals.

The National Food Museum will be the first nationally significant museum that explores America and Americans through the wide angle lens of food: what we eat, what influences our food choices, food’s effects on our health and the environment, and solutions to food-related problems. Through highly interactive and experiential exhibits, the museum will help visitors make connections between the food they eat and the impact of those choices on themselves and our planet.

A visit to the museum may include a walk through a giant digestive tract; an interview with a cow using artificial intelligence; an animation of cattle’s contribution to climate change, pollution, and heart disease; hilarious snippets from old ads and TV shows projected onto a wall-size screen; and a nutrition analysis of the visitor’s diet. The museum will provide surprising information, help visitors recognize that they have control over their food choices, and enable visitors to participate in solving food-related problems, both locally and nationally. The museum also will add to the vibrancy of the civic life of its host city.

National Food Museum
GOALS
The museum aims to achieve three overarching goals:

◆ Impart important, interesting, useful information to visitors in a fun and engaging way
◆ Promote critical thinking about complex issues: the impact of food on health, the environment, animal welfare, and social equity, and how the food industry and politics affect America’s food system and what we eat
◆ Encourage engagement in local, national, or global efforts to solve food- and farming-related problems

A DYNAMIC AND ENGAGING EXPERIENCE
The exhibits will provide a rich variety of interpretive approaches for all ages and learning styles, including evocative immersive and themed environments; analog and digital interactive displays; challenges and multi-player games; and innovative multimedia experiences. In addition, the museum will offer live, on-site programming – cooking demonstrations, guest speakers, special events – and other activities that encourage participation from a diverse audience.
The National Food Museum’s website and other online activities will enable visitors to continue their relationship with the museum and connect people around the world to the museum’s programs and exhibits.

In its exhibits as well as in its visitors and staff, the museum will seek to reflect the diversity of ethnic and racial backgrounds, cuisines, and experiences with food. The museum’s mission will be to engage with the general public, especially children.

The National Food Museum, ideally located in Washington, DC, is tax-exempt and supported primarily by philanthropic donations and foundation grants. Early activities include developing a business plan, undertaking fundraising research and outreach, and determining a location. Simultaneous work will expand the Board of Directors and Advisory Council.
Michael F. Jacobson holds a PhD in microbiology from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He co-founded and then led a Washington-based health-advocacy organization, the Center for Science in the Public Interest, for more than four decades. CSPI led efforts to win passage of laws and regulations to ban trans fat, obtain Nutrition Facts labels, and improve school foods and food safety. CSPI also educated millions of consumers by means of its Nutrition Action Healthletter, books such as Jacobson’s Six Arguments for a Greener Diet, and countless media appearances.

Jacobson has received the Food and Drug Administration’s Commissioner’s Special Citation and Harvey W. Wiley Medal, Food Marketing Institute’s Consumer Service Award, American Diabetes Association’s Medal for Health Promotion and Awareness, CDC-Foundation’s Hero award, and American Public Health Association’s Award for Advocacy in Public Health.

Jacobson has loved museums since his childhood in Chicago, so after he left CSPI, he has continued his educational efforts related to food by creating the National Food Museum.

For more details, contact:
Michael F. Jacobson, PhD, Washington, DC
mjacobson@nationalfoodmuseum.org, 202-236-1903
MUSEUM ADVISORY COUNCIL
(in formation)

Honorary Co-chairs: Ann Veneman and Dan Glickman
Former U.S. Secretaries of Agriculture

Sheryll Durrant
Just Food, Board President

Jessica Fanzo
Bloomberg Distinguished Professor of Global Food Policy and Ethics, Johns Hopkins University

Angela Huffman
Co-founder and Vice President, Farm Action

Jennifer Jacquet
Associate Professor of Environmental Studies, New York University

A.G. Kawamura
Produce farmer, former California Secretary of Agriculture

Ellie Krieger
Cookbook author, Washington Post cooking columnist

Art Molella
Curator Emeritus and Founding Director, Smithsonian’s Lemelson Center

Bonnie Moore
Executive Director, Real Food for Kids

Michael Moss
Author of Hooked and Salt, Sugar, Fat and former New York Times writer

Mark Muller
Executive Director, Regenerative Agriculture Foundation

Marion Nestle
Professor of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health, Emerita, New York University

Fabio Parasecoli
Professor of Food Studies, New York University

Pamela Ronald
Distinguished Professor of Plant Pathology and Genome Center, University of California, Davis

Ricardo Salvador
Director and Senior Scientist, Food & Environment Program, Union of Concerned Scientists

Naomi Starkman
Founder and editor-in-chief, Civil Eats

Tambra Raye Stevenson
Founder/CEO, Women Advancing Nutrition Dietetics and Agriculture (WANDA)

Alice Waters
Founder, Chez Panisse Restaurant and The Edible Schoolyard Project

Stephen Whisnant
Philanthropic advisor

Walter Willett
Professor of Epidemiology and Nutrition, Harvard School of Public Health

Paul Willis
Co-founder, Niman Ranch
“A National Food Museum is a fabulous and important idea! Food can be a cause of good or ill health, and this museum can help tilt the balance toward health.”

Tom Frieden, President and CEO, Resolve to Save Lives, and former director of the CDC

“This new food museum looks like just what we need to teach and learn about the role of food in health and society. Even better, it looks like fun. I’m all for it.”

Marion Nestle, Professor of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health, Emerita, New York University, and author of books about food politics

“Devoted to a basic human need encompassing issues of science, health, and culture, the National Food Museum will be a civic treasure and essential destination for people of all ages.”

Art Molella, Curator Emeritus and Founding Director, Smithsonian’s Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation

“In the quest to regain control of our eating habits by changing the way that we value food, there isn’t a more powerful move we could make than to create this food museum.”

Michael Moss, author of *Hooked* and *Salt, Sugar, Fat* and former New York Times writer

“Your idea is great… a noble and laudable venture.”

Jane Brody, former New York Times personal health columnist

“The Food Museum will be an important way of increasing public understanding of and support for a different, vastly better food system for all.”

Ricardo Salvador, Director, Food & Environment Program, Union of Concerned Scientists

“The creation of a food museum is both important and timely. A museum that looks at our changing food opportunities and at the same time examines the diversity of foods and cultures will be a great addition to our heritage.”

Alan Goldberg, Professor of Environmental Health and Engineering, Emeritus, Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health

“You’ve got a brilliant idea—really exciting!”

Stephen Whisnant, Whisnant Strategies, Philanthropic Advisor