CONSUMER REPORTS
A Chronic History of Misreporting on Seafood and Nutrition

JANUARY 2014
Consumer Reports sends out a newsletter claiming that white albacore tuna is “not healthy” because it can be “high in mercury.” Predictably, Consumer Reports does not disclose that white albacore tuna falls well within FDA safety guidelines.

SEPTEMBER 2012
Ned Groth releases a non-peer reviewed “report” warning about possible mercury contamination in tuna served for school lunches. When challenged, Groth admits that his “numbers” were nothing more than an extrapolation based on a single anecdotal reference taken from a friend’s grandson about his school lunch.

DECEMBER 2010
Consumer Reports announces “new tests” show white tuna contains more mercury than light tuna and issue warnings despite no change in average mercury levels, consistent with FDA monitoring.

DECEMBER 2009
Consumer Reports’ former point man for their seafood misinformation campaign, Ned Groth, reaches out to NFI, suggesting that for a small consulting fee he could work to quash the same unscientific objections he had spent years raising. NFI refused and Groth continued his scaremongering ways.

JUNE 2006
Between 1992 and 2006, Consumer Reports backtracks from their earlier advice that canned tuna poses no risks and instead issues unsupported warnings to limit tuna to pregnant women.

1992
The beginning: Consumer Reports warns consumers that 40% of seafood they tested had mercury levels above recommended levels. Despite this, they claim that “the amount of mercury in the typical American diet—even a diet that includes a serving of tuna practically every day—poses virtually no risk to the average healthy adult.”

THE FACTS
Here are real facts Consumer Reports chooses to ignore.

Canned tuna is one of the best sources of omega-3s in our diets. The USDA, the Institute of Medicine, and the Food and Agriculture Organization/World Health Organization have all said that fish (like tuna) are critical to heart health and baby brain development.

Americans, on average, eat so little seafood they are at risk of missing out on key health benefits. In fact, U.S. women have one of the lowest omega-3 levels in human milk in the world, just slightly ahead of women in the Sudan in Africa or vegan vegetarians, all groups with extremely low consumption.

Research has shown that lack of seafood in the diet of pregnant women contributes to weaker cognitive development in their children. More than half of a baby’s brain is omega-3s.

Light and white tuna fall well within the Food and Drug Administration’s threshold for safety, a standard that includes a one-thousand percent safety factor.

Researchers at Harvard have determined low seafood consumption is the second-biggest dietary contributor to preventable death in the U.S. The study found some 84,000 cardiac-related deaths could be prevented each year with a diet rich in seafood.

The number one cause of death in the U.S is heart disease, taking 599,413 lives a year. According to the American Heart Association, the cost to treat heart disease will triple by 2030, from $273 billion to $818 billion. Eating seafood two times a week lowers your risk of a fatal heart attack by 36%.

NATIONAL FISHERIES INSTITUTE