



Highlights from the JBF 2017 Food Summit: *Consuming Power*

~ Ninth annual conference featured over 30 thought leaders and results of the James Beard Foundation's first-ever research project exploring food beliefs and behaviors ~

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New York, NY (October 25, 2017) – The James Beard Foundation (JBF) hosted its ninth annual [Food Summit](#), ***Consuming Power***, at Convene Conference Center in New York City on October 23 and 24. The summit explored the evolution of consumer power and its impact on the food movement. The two-day conference brought together a diverse group of experts from across disciplines to look into the genesis and changing dynamics of consumer influence.

Following are session highlights and select quotes from the JBF Food Summit:

Day 1: October 23

Your Brain on Food: Mapping Brain Function and Belief

“A lot has happened in the last year. What hasn’t changed is our desire to feed ourselves, our family, and our friends.” – **Mitchell Davis**, Executive Vice President, James Beard Foundation

“Changing beliefs is like changing a load-bearing beam in your house — it’s not just changing one piece of wood.” – **Jonas Kaplan**, Assistant Research Professor of Psychology, Brain, and Creativity Institute and Co-Director of the Dana & David Dornslife Cognitive Neuroimaging Center, University of South Carolina

“Farmers, mothers, and chefs are trusted voices on food for swing voters.” – **Eric Kessler**, Founder and Chairman, Arabella Advisors; Board Trustee, James Beard Foundation

A Global Context

“Consumers shouldn’t have a choice about sustainable products; every product on the shelf should be sustainable.” – **Jason Clay**, Senior Vice President, Food & Markets and Executive Director, Markets Institute, World Wildlife Fund

Shopping for Identity: Culture as a Motivator to Consumer Behavior

“Eating is highly cultural and a reflection of identity. You eat who you are.” – **Darren Seifer**, Food Consumption Industry Analyst, NPD

"Nearly 1 in 3 people say they don't care where their food was grown or raised." – **Jill Gress**, vice president, Radius Global Market Research

"Readers want sustainable products and labeling transparency. They want to follow issue trends but also want their food to be easy, affordable, and tasty." – **Rachel Rothman**, Chief Technologist, Good Housekeeping

Leading with Taste

"For farmers, the choice between yield and flavor is a false choice." – **Dan Barber**, Chef and Author, Blue Hill at Stone Barns; 2017 JBF Leadership Award recipient

"We need to invest more in understanding what natural foods do for us." – **Mary Wagner**, Founder and President, MK Wagner & Associates; and formerly Research and Development with Starbucks, Mars, E. & J. Gallo Winery, and Taco Bell

Money Where Your Mouth Is: Companies Adjusting to Changing Consumer Beliefs, Behaviors, and Tastes

"Why is there tension between making a profit and doing the right thing?" – **Mehmood Khan**, Vice Chairman and Chief Scientific Officer of Global Research and Development, PepsiCO

"The word that keeps on coming up is trust. It may be the asset most at stake for food companies today." – **Josh Anthony**, Vice President of Global Nutrition, Campbell's

"In America, the concern about food is more individual, about 'what am I feeding my kids?' In Europe, there's some more concern from investors about sustainability and the environment." – **Alexia Howard**, Senior Research Analyst, U.S. Food, AB Bernstein

Why Food? Why Chefs? Redux

"It can be that simple; you make a decision to help the right people, the right farmers. Make the right sourcing choices, and eventually that will create a demand." – **Jamilka Borges**, Chef, S+P Restaurant Group, JBF Chefs Boot Camp for Policy and Change Alumnus

"We wanted to set up a place that didn't take advantage of its workers and supported them; what we found was that this creates staff loyalty, which leads to customer loyalty, which gets them to come back, and leads to profits." – **Christine Cikowski**, Chef/Co-Owner, Honey Butter Fried Chicken; JBF Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership Program Alumnus

Cultivating Consumers into Citizens: Perspectives from the Media

"First thing I do is find the smartest person who doesn't agree with me and listen." – **Tamar Haspel**, Journalist, *Washington Post*

"Food media is a game changer. It's about more than journalism or storytelling. Those words and pictures can and often do create real change." – **Helen Rosner**, Journalist

"What we do is tell really good stories about people. It's the most gratifying kind of reporting." – **Kate Cox**, Editor, *New Food Economy*

Levers for Change: Grass Roots Advocacy and Action

"Corporations don't talk about labor at all. We need to push the conversation in that direction." – **Jose Oliva**, Co-Director, Food Chain Workers Alliance; 2017 JBF Leadership Award recipient

"Wherever you're from, whatever your politics, people want fresh healthy food on your family table." – **Chellie Pingree**, Member of Congress, Maine's First Congressional District; 2017 JBF Leadership Award recipient

Day 2: October 24

Science and Society

"The great crime of agriculture in the last 40 years was the proprietization of knowledge that life gives to us all ... it won't work in a networked world ... and it stops now." – **Caleb Harper, Principal Investigator and Director, Open Agriculture Initiative, MIT Media Lab**

"Experts are not the only ones that should have a voice. They have the same biases as the rest of us." – **Jennifer Kuzma**, Goodnight-NC GSK Foundation Distinguished Professor in School of Public and International Affairs and co-Director of the Genetic Engineering and Society Center, NC State University

Cultivating Consumers into Citizens: Perspectives

"Of course we nourish as chefs, it's what we do well. We must nourish ideas as well as with food." – **Hari Pulapaka**, Chef and Associate Professor Mathematics, Stetson University

"We want food knowledge to be baked into education." – **Pamela Koch**, Executive Director, Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy, Research Associate Professor, Program in Nutrition, Department of Health & Behavior Studies, Teachers Colleges Columbia University

"The food system is not being changed by regulations and government decrees, but by ordinary women and men understanding that they have a role in changing the food system." – **Olivier DeSchutter**, Co-Chair, International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems and Former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food; 2017 JBF Leadership Award recipient

"We're looking to promote African food, from Africa to the Americas. We're looking to create a model that can be used in marginalized communities throughout the world. We're looking to bring people together; to bring *you* all together as a part of this process." – **Phil Jones**, Chef and Project Manager, City Food

Cultivating Consumers into Citizens: Changes

"We live in a zero sum world where the more people get, the less other people receive." – **Tunde Wey**, Chef and Activist

"Anything you do for me, without me, you do to me." – **Jon Alexander**, Co-Founder, The New Citizenship Project

During the two day summit, the [James Beard Foundation also unveiled findings from its first-ever research study](#) undertaken to understand U.S. adult consumers motivations and thought processes behind their food choices, beliefs, and behaviors. The research project, coordinated by Karen Karp & Partners (KK&P), and conducted in collaboration with Radius Global Market Research and the Good Housekeeping Institute, focused on what people have been eating, doing, and thinking about food over the last three years.

Day one of the conference was capped off by the seventh annual [James Beard Foundation Leadership Awards](#) dinner and ceremony at Hearst Tower, co-hosted by *Good Housekeeping* with founding support from GRACE Communications Foundation. The awards, emceed by *The Chew* co-host Carla Hall, honored six visionaries across a broad range of backgrounds who influence how, why, and what we eat. Many of the 2017 Leadership Awards recipients — **Dan Barber, Olivier De Schutter, Joann Lo** and **Jose Oliva**, and **Chellie Pingree** — also participated in the conference.

For more information or to watch archived videos of panels and presentations at the ninth annual JBF Food Conference, please visit jamesbeard.org/foodsummit or follow #JBFSUMMIT2017 on social media.

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About the James Beard Foundation

Founded in 1986, the James Beard Foundation celebrates, nurtures, and honors chefs and other leaders making America's food culture more delicious, diverse, and sustainable for everyone. A cookbook author and teacher with an encyclopedic knowledge about food, the late James Beard was a champion of American cuisine. He helped educate and mentor generations of professional chefs and food enthusiasts, instilling in them the value of wholesome, healthful, and delicious food. Today JBF continues in the same spirit by administering a number of diverse programs that include educational initiatives, food industry awards, scholarships for culinary students, publications, chef advocacy training, and thought-leader convening. The Foundation also maintains the historic James Beard House in New York City's Greenwich Village as a "performance space" for visiting chefs. For more information, please visit jamesbeard.org. Get food news, recipes, and more at the James Beard Foundation's [blog](#), or subscribe to the free digital newsletter [Beard Bites](#). Follow @beardfoundation on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Pinterest](#), and Snapchat. Watch the James Beard House Kitchen Cam, James Beard Awards, and more on the Foundation's [Livestream](#) channel. Find more JBF-related video on the Foundation's [YouTube](#) channels.