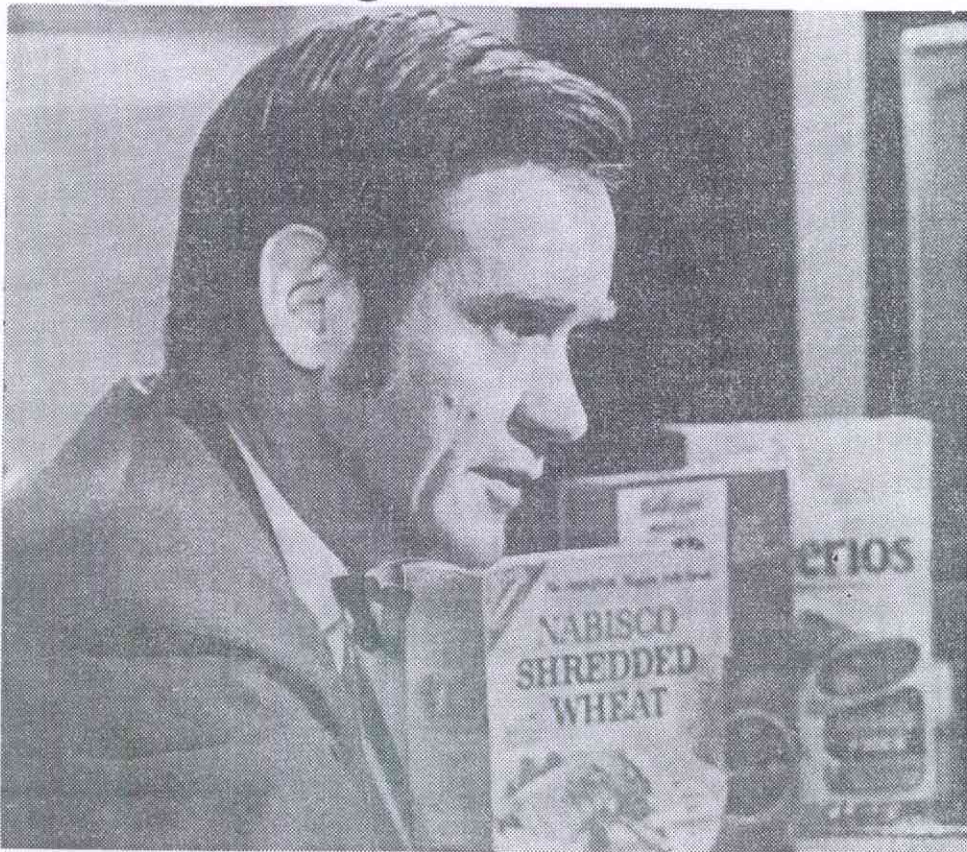


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Expert Degrades Most Cereals



United Press International

Nutrition specialist Robert Choate: "Tony the Tiger is a great big fraud."

By Morton Mintz

Washington Post Staff Writer

A specialist in hunger and nutrition charged on Capitol Hill yesterday that 40 out of 60 dry breakfast cereals in a survey are extremely deficient in nutrients—proteins, minerals and vitamins.

He said that the manufac-

turers shape their television advertising to make children crave the deficient products, while the more nutritious cereals "are advertised to older viewers."

The specialist, Robert B. Choate, testified before the Senate Commerce consumer subcommittee. Chairman

Frank E. Moss (D-Utah) termed his testimony "startling."

After the hearing, Moss sent a letter to the Federal Trade Commission suggesting "action to prevent unfair and deceptive advertising of certain of these cereals."

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Nutritionist Assails Breakfast Cereals

CEREAL, From A1

An FTC spokesman said Moss's suggestion falls logically within an already announced commission investigation of alleged consumer deception and antitrust aspects in the cereal industry.

Choate is a private consultant here who has worked in the White House and on Capitol Hill. He made the following charges, which drew general denials from manufacturers:

- The 40 cereals deemed very low in nutrients consist mainly of "empty calories" similar to those in alcohol and sugar—calories that "fatten but do little to prevent malnutrition."

- In nutritional value, bran cereals rate in or near the top third of the 60 products. Corn cereals "gravitate toward the bottom. All of the shredded wheats seem anxious to stay at or near the bottom." The lowest-ranked product is Nabisco (National Biscuit Co.) Shredded Wheat.

- Fifty of the 60 cereals are sugar-frosted, sugar-coated or otherwise pre-sweetened; and are "advertised on a sugared basis." This, Choate said, "has serious implications for children's teeth." Yet sugar is seldom used to attract children to the high-nutrition cereals.

- Manufacturers keep secret the fact that the "efficiency" of the proteins in most of the 60 cereals is "very low."

The three most advertised cereals on television, their 1969 TV ad budgets, their nutritional rank in Choate's survey and their share of the market are:

Cheerios, \$29.4 million, 25th in nutrition, 7 per cent of the market; Kellogg's Rice Krispies, \$3.6 million, 39th in nutrients, 5 per

cent; Kellogg's Sugar Frosted Flakes, \$2.7 million, 58th in nutrition, 5 per cent.

"Tony the Tiger," the energetic, strong representative of Sugar Frosted Flakes on TV, "is a great big fraud," Choate testified.

The Kellogg Co., Tony the Tiger's sponsor, said in a statement in Battle Creek, Mich., that "ready-to-eat cereals are among the best bargains in nutrition to be found on the grocery store shelf." The statement specifically mentioned only one of the 17 Kellogg products on the Choate list, the relatively high-ranking Special K.

Kellogg has 43 per cent of the \$900-million cereal market and a TV ad budget of \$12 million. General Mills (21 per cent, \$15.9 million) said Choate's charges were "contrary to many scientific studies" and "disregard the fact that no single food is complete in itself." General Foods, for its Post division (18 per cent, \$7.7 million), said pre-sweetened cereals, contrary to Choate's testimony, "provide a measure of control" over children's sugar intake.

Choate said the Food and Drug Administration "is not interested in nutrition," while the Agriculture Department "carefully avoids" actions that could enlighten consumers about high-nutrition cereals. He asked Moss to investigate the Agencies role and the senator said, "We intend to do just that."

The witness said that within 100 minutes on a recent Saturday morning—when an estimated 50 per cent of the nation's children between the ages of 2 and 11 were watching television—CBS and NBC carried 73 ad "spots" for cereals, candies, cookies, popcorn, soda pop and toys.

Senate Witness's Rating Of 60 Breakfast Cereals

In order to rate 60 cereals, Robert Choate classified nutrients into nine groups. He determined, from manufacturers' data where available, the percentage of "typical person's" daily needs of each nutrient group which each cereal provides. Finally, he added together the percentages for each cereal. The results below are the percentages given as numerical units. The listings are in descending order of rank.

Between 433 and 205, and "nutritionally meritorious": Nabisco 100% Bran, Quaker Oats Life, General Foods Fortified Oat Flakes, Kellogg's Special K, General Foods Super Sugar Crisp, Kellogg's Super Smacks.

Between 143 and 88, and having "some redeeming features": Kellogg's 40% Bran Flakes, Quaker Oats Quake, Quaker Oats Quisp, Kellogg's Raisin Bran,

General Foods Bran Flakes, General Foods Raisin Bran, General Foods Bran and Prune Flakes, Ralston Purina Wheat Chex, Ralston Purina Raisin Bran Chex, Kellogg's All Bran, Kellogg's Bran Buds.

Between 58 and 12, and warranting the term "empty calories": Kellogg's Froot Loops, Kellogg's Apple Jacks, Quaker Oats Puffed Wheat, General Mills Clackers, General Mills Cheerios, Nabisco Team Flakes, Nabisco Wheat Honey's, General Foods Grape Nuts Flakes, General Foods Wheaties, General Foods Lucky Charms, Kellogg's Stars and General Mills Twinkles.

Also, General Mills Sugar Jets, General Mills Frosty O's, Nabisco Rice Honey's, General Foods Grape Nuts, Kellogg's Sugar Pops, Kellogg's Corn Flakes, Kellogg's Rice Krispies, Ralston Purina Rice Chex, Kellogg's Cocoa Krispies, General Mills Kix and General Mills Cocoa Puffs.

Also, General Mills Trix, General Mills Corn Bursts, Quaker Oats Puffed Rice, Quaker Oats Cap'n Crunch, Quaker Oats Crunchberries, Kellogg's Puffa Puffa Rice, General Foods Alpha Bits, General Foods Crispy Critters, Kellogg's Shredded Wheat and General Foods Krinkles.

Finally, General Foods Post Toasties, Ralston Purina Corn Chex, Ralston Purina Sugar Frosted Chex, General Foods Honeycomb, Kellogg's Sugar Frosted Flakes, Quaker Oats Shredded Wheat and Nabisco Shredded Wheat.