New Zealand Food Safety
Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua

NZ Food Safety

LECTURE SERIES 2019

23 September 2019, Auckland

Welcome

Trust in the food safety system for different segments of society

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NZ Food Safety LECTURE SERIES

Nadine Tunley

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Organic, Conventional, GMO free, OMAR's, ICPR's

Does Trust in Food Safety systems mean the same for different segments of society?

What is a Food Safety System?

Segments of Society?

New Zealand

International

Food Safety Systems

Segments of Society

Thoughts that came to my mind

International Food Scare Brief History

- **1981: Spanish Tainted Oil** – 1,200 people die Colza oil sold as a substitute for Olive Oil

1986: Mad Cow Disease (BSE) – In 1996 it became clear it could be transmitted to humans, presenting as Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. WTO says there has been 224 case between 1996 to 2011 mainly in Britain.

1990: Benzene tainted Perrier – Mineral Water 160 million bottles worldwide recalled

1999: Chickengate - dioxin, a highly carcinogenic substance, is discovered in feed for poultry and livestock in Belgium, contaminating the whole food chain. The scandal leads to the resignation of two Belgian ministers and costs Belgium €650 million as consumers shun industrially produced eggs and chickens

1999: Coca-Cola recall -

In June, 1999 several countries withdraw millions of bottles of soft drinks made by US-based beverage giant Coca-Cola after around 100 people fall ill in Europe after drinking its products. The drinks are subject to a blanket recall for several days in Belgium and Luxembourg, and partially withdrawn in the Netherlands and France. The cause of the sickness is discovered: bad quality carbonic gas used in a Belgian factory and fungicide employed to treat wooden pallets in a French factory. The company, criticised for poor management of the incident, admits responsibility

2003: 30 Italians were hospitalised after drinking bottled water contaminated with bleach or ammonia, which police suspected had been injected under the plastic caps.

Closer to home

- **2008** - The Melamine scandal

  In 2008 Fonterra subsidiary SanLu milk powder was found to have melamine contamination.

  China reportedly found melamine in milk powder produced by more than 20 companies and hundreds of thousands of children are estimated to have been affected, with six dying. SanLu was seen as the main culprit.

  2012 - The DCD issue

  In September 2012 Fonterra found traces of dicyandiamide (DCD), an agricultural chemical, in its dairy products.

  The DCD product was withdrawn from the market by fertiliser companies. Levels of contamination were low and Fonterra and Government officials reassured consumers there was no risk to health

2013 - The Botulism Scare

Tests on a Fonterra whey protein indicated the possible presence of a bacteria that can cause botulism.

There followed months of testing, trade bans by some countries including Russia, emergency trips to reassure the crucial China market – and elsewhere – by Fonterra executives and Prime Minister John Key and product recalls by Danone and Nutricia.

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Nadine Tunley

Contamination, Communication and Confidence

Contamination, Communication and Confidence

Paul Dansted

Director, Food Regulation

New Zealand Food Safety

What I’m going to talk about

Food contamination

Risk perception

Needles in strawberries

Lessons learned

What is food contamination?

Any biological or chemical agent, foreign matter, or other substances that may compromise food safety or suitability.

Food Standards Code 3.1.1

Food Safety Hazards: 3 Types of Contamination

Physical

Plastic
Glass
Metal
Wood
Bandages
Jewelry and other personal items

Chemical

Allergens
Pesticides
Sanitizers
Lubricants

Biological

Parasites
Viruses
Bacteria

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How it usually happens

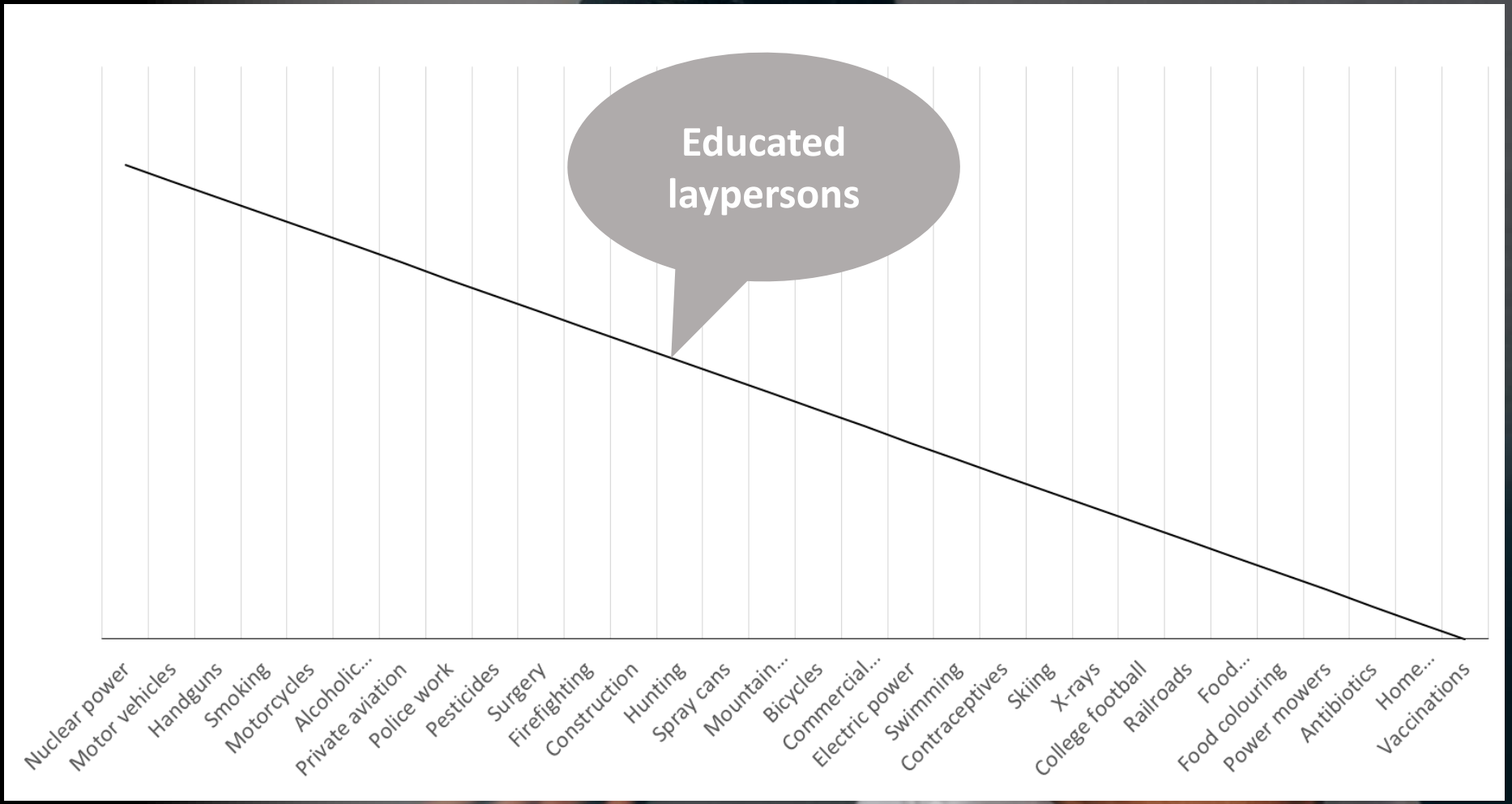
How do we manage it?

CLEAN
COOK
*CHILL

DON'T
GET
ILL

Who cares?

No, really! Who cares…



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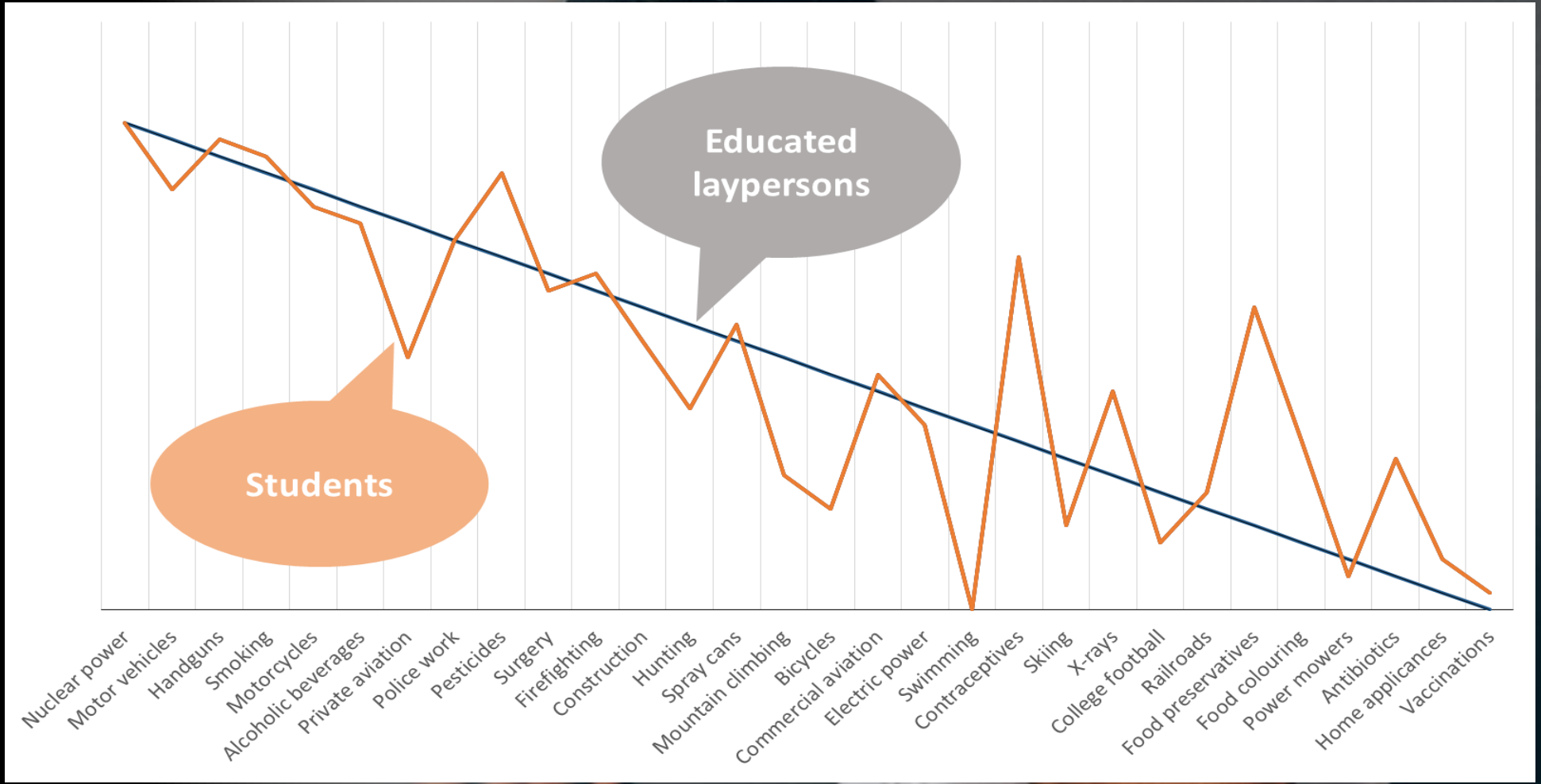

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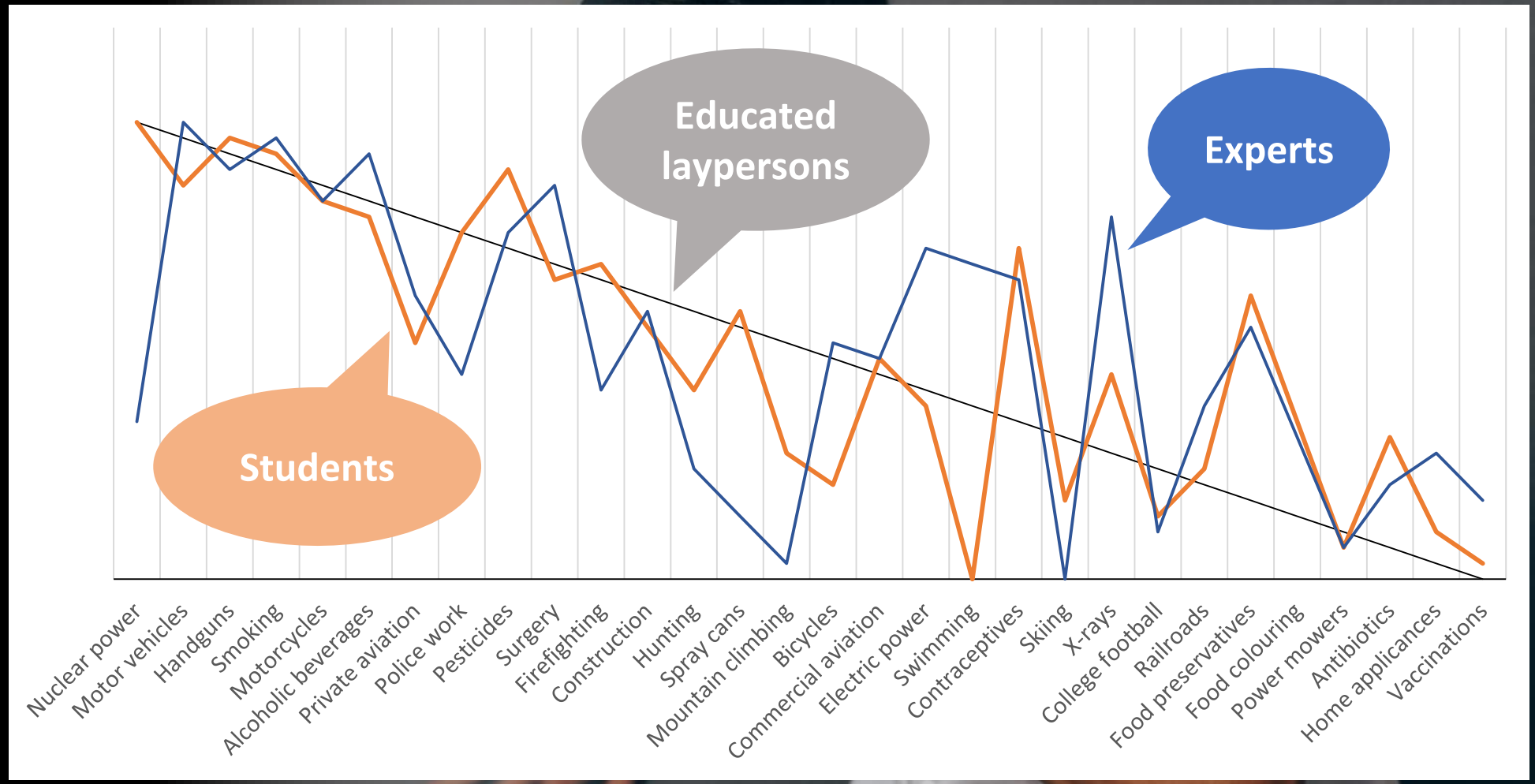

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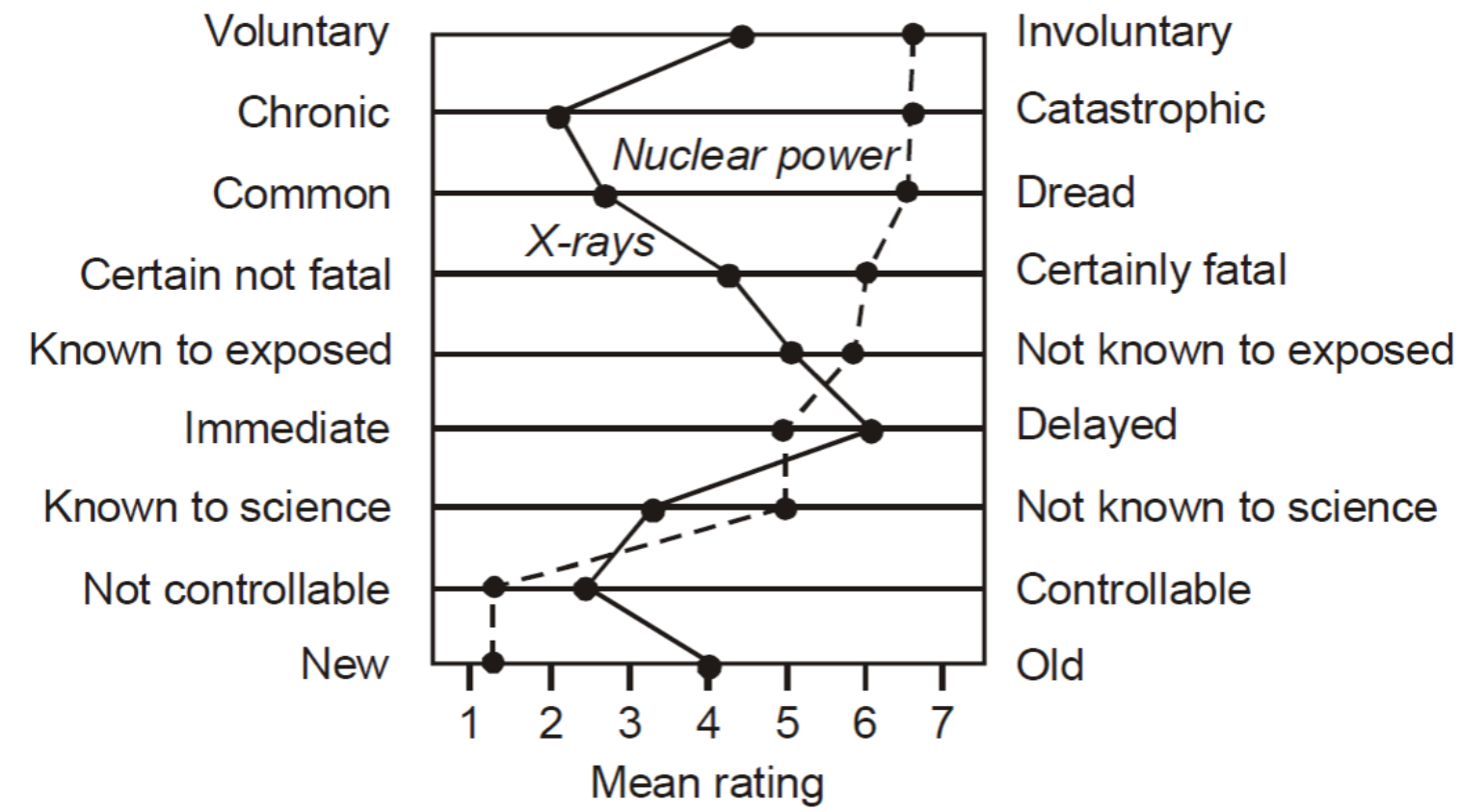
What drives perceptions of risk



vs

Outrage!

	"Safe"	"Risky"
1.	Voluntary	Coerced
2.	Natural	Industrial
3.	Familiar	Exotic
4.	Not memorable	Memorable
5.	Not dreaded	Dreaded
6.	Chronic	Catastrophic
7.	Knowable	Unknowable
8.	Individually controlled	Controlled by others
9.	Fair	Unfair
10.	Morally irrelevant	Morally relevant
11.	Trustworthy sources	Untrustworthy sources
12.	Responsive process	Unresponsive process

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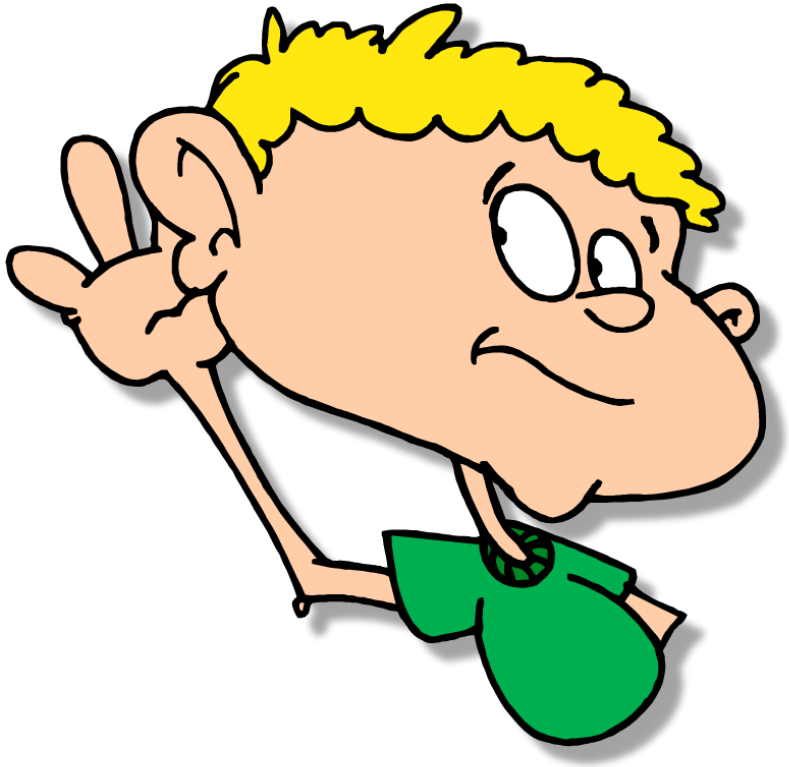
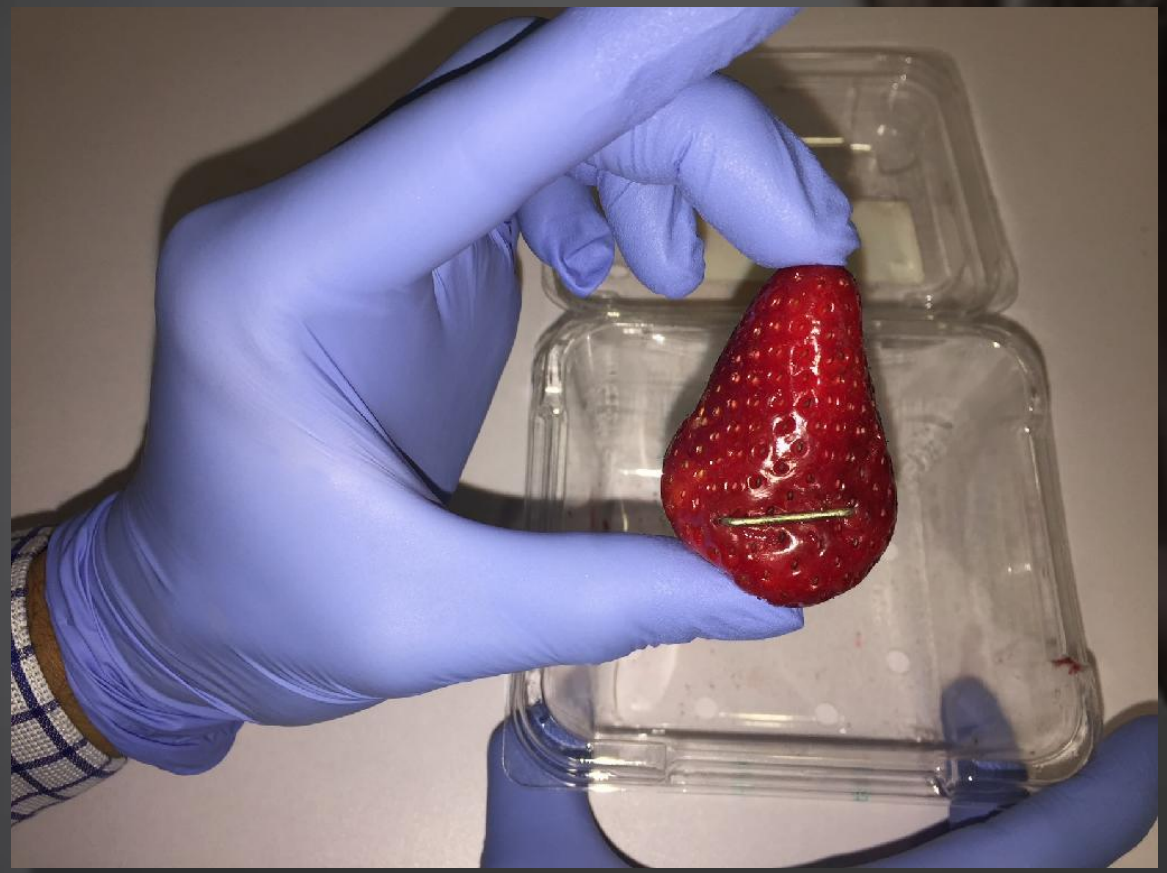
Why does this matter?



Needles in strawberries



9 Sept 2018 – Australia

Widespread media attention

23 Sept 2018 – first NZ report

Followed by numerous more

Context:

13 over previous 5 years
500 complaints / year
90 related to ‘foreign matter’

Who would do this?

Motivations complex:

- **payback**
- **copycats**
- **pranks**
- **often children**

What we did…

Protecting consumers paramount

- all reports needed to be followed up
- not just strawberries and not just needles
- reports through social media

Tampering a criminal matter

- supported Police investigations

What we did…

Industry liaison group

informing

coordination

advising on measures

Reactive media

27 media enquiries (23 – 25 Sept)

Radio, TV, print, online

Consistent messaging

Responsive media

Reduce the outrage

Consumers can be vigilant

Talk to your retailer or us

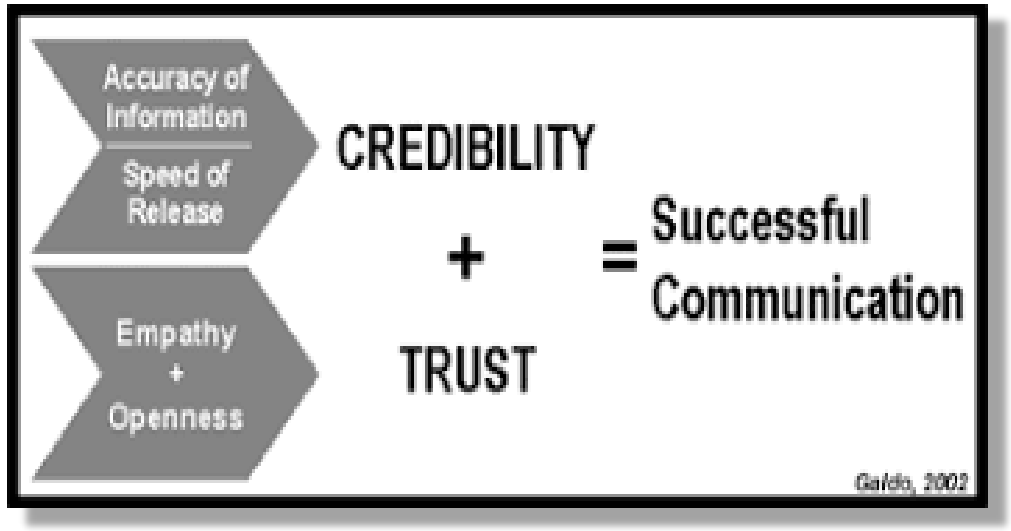
Putting power in consumers' hands

Lessons learned

- **Pre-established relationships are key**

- **Statements from Police reduced copycats**

- **Communications critical**



Thank you

Q&A Session

Thank you