

# The Canadian Diabetes Association

## Glycemic Index Initiative

**Joanne Lewis**, Director Healthy Eating and Nutrition Programming  
**Carolyn Gall Casey**, Director Education

# The GI Initiative

- Opportunity to be the host charitable organization driving the development, **launch, coordination, evaluation, and implementation** of a Glycemic Index (GI) initiative.
- GI was 'born' in our CPGs and this program is the perfect investment in **dissemination and implementation** - we have rigorous and systematic D&I.
- Vision is a GI initiative that would enable Canadians to make **informed choices** about low glycemic index foods.
- Since January 2015, the CDA has reached out to a range of stakeholder representatives from the medical, educational, and food communities to gain insight into **how to effectively implement** a GI program in Canada.

# The GI Initiative

- The merits of a low GI diet have the **support of a growing community of healthcare providers and researchers internationally.**
- Helping people affected by diabetes, and Canadians more broadly, make informed food choices to lead to healthier lives through a low GI diet appears to be a **worthy cause for the CDA to champion.**
- The initiative has also received **positive support from food industry** where there is alignment.

# Glycemic Index Initiative: Process

## IDENTIFY

Stakeholders

Parallel Initiatives

Existing Gaps

Potential Business Models

A clearer vision of the opportunity for a Glycemic Index initiative, key challenges, and strategic considerations.

## CREATE & VALIDATE

Stakeholder Collaboration

Prototype

Consumer Research & Testing

Media and Education

A well-defined manifestation of the solution.

## IMPLEMENT

Business Model

Partner Relationships

A set of guidelines and requirements for strategic implementation.

# GI Development Framework

<b>Program Summary</b>	<b>Current State (CDA)</b>	<b>Expanded Programs</b>	<b>Food Associations</b>	<b>Food Manufacturers</b>	
<b>Key Resources &amp; Req'ts</b>	Basic information about GI benefits and optimal food choices	Developing more proactive programs and technologies to engage consumers	Work with food/commodity associations to promote low GI	Designing and licensing a product-specific designation system	
	Expanded use of technology (e.g., portals, apps) Increased coordination with healthcare associations (e.g., Dietitians of Canada)		Coordination with retail to create presence at point of sale	Standardized licensing agreement structures	
	Public health research, consumer testing and dissemination of benefits of Low GI diets				
	Standardized product testing protocol and qualification criteria			Regulatory endorsement (i.e., Health Canada, CFIA)	

# Consumer Insight & Education

The success of a glycemic index program will depend on its ability to serve as part of a **needs-based and evidence informed** holistic approach that includes education, and that addresses some of the broader issues around food, nutrition, and diabetes.

# Consumer Insight:

- Consumer research will serve as a powerful tool for navigating:
- Relevance among stakeholder groups (general public, people at risk of diabetes, people with diabetes)
  - Behaviours and beliefs with respect to carbohydrate foods (good carbs vs bad carbs)
  - Rational and emotional benefits in the eyes of consumers
- What problem is the solution trying to solve? – What is the messaging going to be?

# Education:

- Compelling academic research continues to be performed evaluating the effectiveness of a variety of educational platforms.
  - Educational Tools (e.g. Stop Light Education Model) have demonstrated proven results
  - New consumer, patient and healthcare provider resources/teaching toolkit coming Spring 2017





## Focus initial effort around educating, influencing, and engaging people living with diabetes and those directly affected.

- Allows the GI message and delivery mechanism to be highly **targeted**; to gain fast and effective **traction**
- GI initiative has the potential to be broadly targeted and multifaceted.

# Implement two streams for the GI initiative:

**Education campaign** targeted to people affected by diabetes and healthcare providers (HCP), with active support from HCP societies, academic community, and industry partners.

- There is an existing strong relationship with HCPs through CDA's professional membership, plus societies such as Dietitians of Canada that can help bring an education program to the intended target audience quickly and easily. As well, dietitians are calling for more GI education support for their clients.



# Labeling strategy targeting commodity groups, food industry, and agriculture associations.

- Develop top-line guiding principles and possibly exclusion/inclusion foods. Criteria for food inclusion will be “simple” and aligned with Health Canada nutrient content principles (%DV) for items.
- Food manufacturer or processor to have their eligible product(s) analyzed by a certified GI lab; CDA reviews product for additional criteria and provides licence for use of symbol.



## Potential Risks:

- If consumers believe that the GI initiative is intended to be profit-generating for the CDA, credibility of the initiative will be at risk.
- In the current labeling climate, there could be a high risk of consumer confusion if GI labeling is added to labels already crowded with multiple, and often conflicting, claims.

# Success depends on sustained engagement and support from:

- **Stakeholders**

- Healthcare providers
- Industry
- Consumer/patient groups

- **Government/Regulatory Bodies**

- CFIA
- Health Canada
- Local Ministries of Food and Agriculture

- **Healthcare and Research Key Opinion Leaders**

- **Other Institutional Partners:**

- E.g. Dietitians of Canada, Canadian Nurses Association, regional HCP associations and societies, FCPC

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Ultimately, understanding and integrating the points of view and interests of **all stakeholder groups** is paramount. A collaborative process will ensure universal support and endorsement.

## **“Call to Action”**

1. Draft messaging that respects the science and writes with the consumer in mind
2. Agreement that we will work toward, gain consensus and translate this common messaging into programs