

Biography
Eric Hentges, PhD
Executive Director
ILSI North America

Dr. Eric Hentges joined the North American Branch of the International Life Science Institute as the Executive Director on September 4, 2007. He works closely with ILSI North America members, trustees, science advisors, and staff to enhance the organization's programs and the impact of its scientific output.

Dr. Hentges brings over 25 years of prior experience in nutrition research and education to ILSI North America. He has directed strategic research priority planning and administration of competitive research grant programs for several organizations. Additionally, he has directed the development and implementation of nutrition education programs and consumer market research programs.

Most recently, he served as the Executive Director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's, Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion. In this position he had oversight of the USDA's involvement in the development of the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPyramid, Food Guidance System. Prior to this, Dr. Hentges served in key positions at the National Pork Board, the National Pork Producers Council, and the National Live Stock and Meat Board.

Dr. Hentges holds degrees from Iowa State University, Auburn University and Oklahoma State University. He is a member of the American Society for Nutrition and the Institute of Food Technologists.

Abstract

A Public-Private Partnership: Branded Food Products Database for Public Health

Assessing the nutritional health of the American people depends on accurate and comprehensive data regarding the nutrient composition of commonly consumed foods. USDA maintains a National Nutrient Database of the composition of such foods, and although the food industry has compositional data for their own products, very little of that data is publicly available through the database. Accordingly, the USDA/ARS, the International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI) North America and the ATIP (Agricultural Technology Innovation Partnership) Foundation have formed a Public-Private Partnership to enhance public health by augmenting the USDA National Nutrient Database with "nutrient composition of branded foods and private label" data provided by the food industry. This partnership will ensure this information will be made available to those who utilize such data including the government, the scientific community, proprietary end users, and the food industry. The Partnership has established expert groups that are determining the specific requirements for execution of the project.

ILSI North America's involvement in the Partnership stemmed from its work on a publication on 12 principles for the establishment and operations of research public-private partnerships¹. As part of USDA/ARS' response to the Presidential Memorandum in October 2011, ARS approached ILSI North America to see if the organization would join with the Agency in enhancing the USDA National Nutrient Database with branded food products nutrition information. Previous efforts by USDA/ARS on their own had seen limited success which is not unexpected given the volume and fluidity of branded food products in the U.S. marketplace.

A public-private partnership provides the framework to convene the expertise to compile nutrient data on branded and private label products, secure the private sector engagement in providing this information, as well as the broad-based constituent funding necessary to maximize content and provide timely information for nutrition, agricultural and diet-related health policy on the nutrient composition of the U.S. food supply.

¹ Principles for Building Public-Private Partnerships to Benefit Food Safety, Nutrition and Health Research, Rowe, S. et.al *Nutrition Reviews* 2013; 71(10):682-691.