

## Did 2015 mark start of ‘transparency paradigm shift’ for Big Food?

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Today’s big food and agriculture companies work hard to protect their images. Companies like Coca-Cola, McDonald’s, and Monsanto spend a lot of time and money diverting attention away from negative science related to their products and associating themselves with groups that promote healthy food and families.

For a long time, those tactics appeared to be working; but several of this year’s developments suggest that they might not work for much longer. In fact, you might say that 2015 was the year transparency re-entered the picture. Here’s a timeline of what happened.

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) announced a [partnership](#) between its Kids Eat Right Foundation and Kraft Foods. In exchange for a grant, the Kids Eat Right Foundation logo would appear on packages of Kraft Singles. . . *The Daily Show* [quipped](#) that AND — [long-known](#) for its cozy relationships with food and beverage giants — was “as much an Academy as [Kraft Singles] is cheese.”

. . .

New York University professor Marion Nestle began an [ongoing series](#) on her blog [Food Politics](#) that published the results of industry-funded studies. As of December 15, the score is [90 to nine](#), with 90 industry — funded studies favoring the sponsor, and nine not favoring the sponsor.

. . . the food industry might just be in the early stages of a paradigm shift. For many nutrition groups, sponsorship by the food industry has often been considered a necessary evil, particularly at a time where federal nutrition funding is so paltry.

However, this year’s incidents suggest that many in the public health and nutrition sector want substantial change, starting with minimizing corporate influence on research. . .

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