



Dr. Jess Haines (Guelph University, Canada)
is the Laureate of the Danone International Prize for Alimentation,
 DIPA 2nd Edition, for her outstanding work on
Promoting Healthy Eating Habits among Families

The award-winning research helps build sustainable healthy eating habits among families.

Dr. Jess Haines, Associate Professor at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada, **is awarded the Danone International Prize for Alimentation (DIPA)** for her groundbreaking research into **“Promoting sustainable healthy eating among families, through novel, interdisciplinary research and knowledge mobilization.”**

The DIPA is awarded every two years by the Danone Institute International (DII) in collaboration with the Fondation pour la Recherche Médicale (FRM).



Dr. Jess Haines,
 Associate Professor of Applied Nutrition
 University of Guelph, Ontario (Canada)

This pioneering research could form the foundations for new advices on promoting healthy and sustainable eating in families and children.

“To preserve the health of our planet, and our own health, we need to identify effective strategies that support consumers to eat a sustainable healthy diet and reduce also food waste” – Jess Haines

Bridging research findings and practical guidance for families for a more sustainable healthy diet.

After years of work on family-based healthy eating interventions, Dr. Haines has expanded her research to focus on sustainable healthy diets.

The overarching goal of Dr. Haines’s research is to identify strategies to promote and encourage sustainable healthy eating habits among families that support the health of the people and the health of the planet. To do this, she bridges epidemiologic and observational research on the determinants of eating behavior **with novel and scalable behavior change interventions and knowledge mobilization tools**. Dr. Haines’s uses interdisciplinary research approaches to create interventions and tools for real, lasting change that benefits the health of families and children.

Concretely, food waste is a global concern with important economic, environmental, and nutritional consequences. Vegetables and fruits are the highest contributors to household food waste underscoring the staggering nutritional loss associated with food waste. Effective strategies to reduce household food waste and improve dietary intake are needed to ensure the sustainability of our food systems and the health of individuals.

To address this challenge, Dr. Haines’s research is focused in three key areas: food literacy, positive food parenting, and fathers’ influence on children’s eating.

Impact of food literacy to support sustainable health behaviors

Dr. Haines’s interdisciplinary team has led research to understand how food literacy can be associated with diet quality and household food waste. The findings have been translated into novel behavior change interventions and education tools to support sustainable healthy eating among families, through an intervention study “Weeknight Supper Savers”. This pilot intervention study includes a dedicated cookbook, with tips and recipes designed to reduce food waste, a family cooking and education class, and behavioral supports.

Results showed that the intervention can reduce household food waste and that families enjoyed participating in the intervention. These results will inform a full-scale trial of the intervention.

Her research team is also collaborating with Health Canada to develop a cookbook designed to support families in meeting Canada's 2019 Dietary Guidelines focused on sustainable healthy eating.

Food parenting to support healthy eating in children

To focus on the food parenting, Dr. Haines has established the Parent-Child Feeding Lab to observe directly, how parental feeding behaviors influence children's eating behavior. These observations have resulted into "best practices" for food parenting.

Dr. Haines is expanding this work to understand how parental attitudes regarding sustainability are influencing their food choices. The conclusions will be used to inform sustainable healthy eating interventions with families.

Do fathers have a specific role?

While substantial research has shown that parents are the primary influence on young children's eating behaviors, most of the studies focused exclusively on mothers.

In collaboration with Dr. Kirsten Davison from Boston College, Dr. Haines has created the Fathers & Families Study, which will be the largest cohort of fathers to date in the United States. Through this cohort, they will explore how father's engagement in child feeding, their food parenting practices, and their own eating behaviors, influence their children eating behaviors. Results will provide a framework for effectively engaging fathers in efforts to promote sustainable healthy eating among children.

An interdisciplinary engaging approach recognized by the DIPA jury:

"The jury of the 2nd Edition of the Danone International Prize for Alimentation awards Dr. Jess Haines for her strong contribution to the field of Alimentation; her ability to lead interdisciplinary teams to make pioneering advances that promote sustainable healthy eating habits and her commitment to mobilize her findings to effect real, lasting change that benefits the health of families." – Prof. Luis A. Moreno, President of the DIPA Jury

Five tips to help families eat a sustainable healthy diet

1. **Add plant-based proteins to the menu.** Plant-based proteins, like beans, chickpeas, and lentils, are healthy choices that also benefit our planet. To start, families can try to replace one or two meat-based meals each week with plant-based options.
2. **Choose local foods.** Selecting foods produced closer to home will reduce the need for the food to travel large distances, which will reduce carbon emissions and your food footprint.
3. **Cook meals at home.** Cooking at home can help families control where their food is sourced and what ingredients are used. It also saves money and is a great way to teach children cooking skills. Our team has created 5 cookbooks with delicious, easy-to-prepare recipes to help get children involved: www.guelphfamilyhealthstudy.com/cookbooks
4. **Plan your meals.** To reduce food waste, families can plan meals and purchase only the foods they need each week. This not only helps the planet, but also helps save money.
5. **Use up your leftovers.** When planning meals for the week, families can include a "use it up day" when they will use up leftover meals or foods in their home. Our team created the "Rock What You've Got" cookbook that includes recipes designed to help families use up the foods in their fridge to reduce food waste: www.guelphfamilyhealthstudy.com/2019/09/19/rock-what-youve-got-recipes-for-reducing-food-waste

To sum up, Dr. Haines's research focuses on identifying modifiable family-level factors that influence children's health behaviors and translating that knowledge into effective behavior change interventions. The DIPA Jury recognizes her innovative and interdisciplinary approach towards sustainable healthy eating and food waste in families.

Notes:

- The Danone International Prize for Alimentation (DIPA) is awarded every two years by the Danone Institute International in collaboration with the "Fondation pour la Recherche Médicale". The DIPA is a 100,000 Euro award open to mid-career researchers, set up to recognize multi-disciplinary research that represents a major advance in Alimentation – the umbrella term for sustainable eating and drinking practices that contribute to the health of individuals, including food choice, purchase, preparation, cooking and meal organization, and their determinants.
- The Danone Institute International (DII) is a not-for-profit organization aiming to promote human health through developing and disseminating knowledge about the links between food and health, and to highlight the importance of nutrition in health.
- The "Fondation pour la Recherche Médicale" (FRM) aims to contribute to the development of pioneering and innovative French medical research, leading to medical advances for all. It is an independent organization that operates through the generosity of its donors.

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