

# DANONE



DIPA 2<sup>nd</sup> edition  
AWARD

April 27, 2021

## Dr. Jess HAINES

(University of Guelph, Canada)

awarded the **Danone International Prize for Alimentation**

*for her pioneering work on*

**Promoting Sustainable Healthy Eating among Families,**  
through novel, interdisciplinary research and knowledge mobilization



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***Promoting Healthy Eating Habits among Families***  
*through novel, interdisciplinary and knowledge mobilization*



**Dr. Jess Haines**, Associate Professor at the University of Guelph, Canada, is the **Laureate of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of 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 award-winning research helps build sustainable healthy eating habits among families;** this pioneering research could form the foundations for strategies that contribute to the health of the individuals and the health of the planet, with concrete and practical implementation in communities.

**Dr. Jess Haines**, Associate Professor of Applied Nutrition at the University of Guelph in Ontario (Canada) is the **Laureate of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of the Danone International Prize for Alimentation (DIPA)**.

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

Dr. Jess Haines, PhD, MHSc, RD is an Associate Professor in the Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition at the University of Guelph, Canada. Prior to her appointment at University of Guelph, Dr. Haines was a faculty member at the Obesity Prevention Program at Harvard Medical School.

Dr. Haines has made important contributions to research focused on **community and family-based interventions aimed at promoting healthful behaviors among families with preschool 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 food waste”*

*Jess Haines*

Among several studies and projects, she is the co-director of the Guelph Family Health Study, a family-based cohort study designed to identify early life risk predictors of chronic diseases and examine the influence of interventions and policies on the health behaviors and outcomes of families. She co-leads an interdisciplinary team of experts in nutrition, epidemiology, health economics, microbiology, biostatistics and genetics. To date, the cohort includes over 300 families with the goal of recruiting an additional 300 families over the next 2 years.

After years of work focused on interventions to support healthful eating, Dr. Haines's research has expanded to also explore strategies for sustainable eating among families.

## **Bridging research findings and practical guidance, promoting sustainable healthy eating among families, through novel, interdisciplinary research and knowledge mobilization.**

**The overarching goal of Dr. Haines's research is to identify strategies to promote sustainable healthy eating among families to support the health of the families and of the planet.**

Ensuring the world growing population has adequate nutritious food while also preserving the planet is one of the most pressing challenges facing our world today. Data show that current diets across much of the world are of low nutritional quality and include many foods produced in ways that rely on non-renewable inputs and unsustainable practices. In addition, approximately one third of the food produced worldwide is lost or wasted and, in Canada, nearly 50% of food waste occurs at the household level.

*"Our study found that families throw away up to \$1,600 food waste each year and that the majority of this food waste is fruits and vegetables (...) We could improve nutrition intake by reducing food waste."*

*Jess Haines*

To preserve the health of the planet and our own health, **we need to identify effective strategies that support consumers to eat a sustainable healthy diet and reduce food waste.** The program of research developed by Dr. Haines directly addresses this challenge. Her research bridges cutting-edge epidemiologic and direct observational research on the predictors of sustainable healthy eating and household food waste with the development of behavior change interventions and knowledge mobilization tools, focused on supporting families to adopt sustainable healthy eating practices.

Dr. Haines uses interdisciplinary research approaches, engaging key knowledge users in the research process and working to mobilize results to inform programs and policies about real effects and lasting change that benefits the health of families and children. Her research is focused in three key areas: food literacy, positive food parenting, and fathers' influence on children's eating.

### **1. Impact of food literacy to support sustainable health behaviors**

Dr. Haines's interdisciplinary team has led research to understand how factors, such as food literacy, are associated with diet quality and household food waste. They have translated these findings into novel behavior change interventions and education tools to support sustainable healthy eating among families.

A pilot intervention study "Weeknight Supper Savers", funded by Danone Institute North America's One Planet One Health Initiative, was designed to improve food literacy and reduce household food waste among families with school-age children. The intervention includes a

dedicated cookbook, with tips and recipes designed to reduce food waste, a family cooking and education class, and behavioral supports, such as meal planning worksheets.

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.

## 2. Positive food parenting to support healthy eating in children

Much of the existing research exploring how food parenting behaviors influence children's dietary intake has used parent self-report and may not be valid due to inaccurate recall and bias. To address this gap, Jess Haines established the Parent-Child Feeding Lab with infrastructure funds from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation. Using state-of-the-art audio and visual recording technology, this lab allows her research team to observe directly how parental feeding behaviors influence children's eating behavior.

Building on this observational work, Dr. Haines and her team recently conducted focus group interviews with parents of young children to understand how their attitudes regarding sustainability are influencing their food choices. The conclusions will be used for the messaging for the sustainable healthy eating interventions with families.

## 3. The potential role of fathers

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. Dr. Haines and her team led the first Canadian study to examine fathers' food parenting, which found that fathers', but not mothers', modeling of healthy eating was associated with healthier eating habits among children.

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.



## A knowledge-to-action cycle for a more sustainable diet among families

**Dr. Jess Haines's research spans the entire knowledge-to-action cycle.** She bridges epidemiologic and observational research on the predictors of sustainable healthy eating with the development of novel and scalable behavior change interventions and knowledge mobilization tools.

*"Translating our research findings into of practical guidance for families is a critical aspect of my work."*

Jess Haines

She led interdisciplinary teams including agriculture economists, geographers, food producers and nutrition researchers to understand how family food literacy influences both healthy eating and household food waste. This interdisciplinary collaboration led to the most comprehensive household food waste study to date. These results informed the development of Weeknight Supper Savers, a novel intervention designed to improve family food literacy and reduce household food waste.



Her team has moved the field of food parenting forward using direct observation of parent-child feeding interactions and her interdisciplinary approach has led to **pioneering advances in the understanding of how best to support sustainable healthy eating among families.**

### 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](http://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/](http://www.guelphfamilyhealthstudy.com/2019/09/19/rock-what-youve-got-recipes-for-reducing-food-waste/)

## My vision of “Alimentation research”

by Jess Haines

*“Food is the single strongest lever to optimize human health and environmental sustainability.”*

*(The EAT-Lancet Commission - 2019)*

My holistic approach to alimentation research **not only considers individual health, but also planetary health.**

The overarching goal of my research is to identify strategies to promote sustainable healthy eating among families to support the health of families *and* the planet. Achieving this goal will require **a continued and enhanced focus on planetary health**, in addition to individual health. Building on decades of knowledge regarding determinants of eating behavior, **I believe alimentation research will play a critical role in promoting sustainable healthy eating to support planetary health over the next few decades.**

Addressing the complex challenge of feeding the world sustainably and nutritiously will also require an **interdisciplinary, systems-based approach** that reaches beyond a single sector or academic discipline. We need innovative solutions that consider multiple perspectives.

**By elevating and supporting global interdisciplinary collaboration, the Danone International Prize in Alimentation will ensure that alimentation research continues to benefit from collaborations across multiple disciplines as we work toward the shared goals of human health and environmental sustainability.**

Dr Jess Haines



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## For more information

- The Guelph Family Health Study. (2019). [www.guelphfamilyhealthstudy.com](http://www.guelphfamilyhealthstudy.com)
- The Guelph Family Health Study cookbook: **“Rock What You’ve Got: Recipes for Preventing Food Waste”**. Available at: [www.guelphfamilyhealthstudy.com/cookbooks](http://www.guelphfamilyhealthstudy.com/cookbooks)





## The Danone International Prize for Alimentation rewards mid-career scientists for outstanding research

**The Danone International Prize for Alimentation (DIPA) recognizes innovative research leading to strategies promoting sustainable and healthy eating habits. It represents a far-reaching initiative to achieve marked improvements in global health.**

The 100,000 Euro prize is awarded every two years, by the Danone Institute International and the French “Fondation pour la Recherche Médicale”.

The purpose of the DIPA is to **encourage and support cutting edge, innovative and multidisciplinary scientific research 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 organisation, and their determinants.

The award is intended to **raise the profile of a mid-career researcher** and accelerate his/her career, as well as help develop knowledge on the topic and inspire junior researchers and will recognise the work of a single researcher, or a representative of a research team, who is leading a pioneering and collaborative approach in Alimentation.

### The DIPA aims to:

- advance understanding of Alimentation through cutting edge research,
- encourage and inspire pioneering approaches that integrate nutrition research into lifestyle, cultural and socio-economic aspects,
- boost collaboration between the different disciplines affecting nutrition, from anthropology to economics,
- support talented and highly motivated mid-career researchers whose work contributes to scientific excellence in the field of Alimentation.



*“DIPA is a prestigious and recognized Prize in the field of Alimentation, away from basic research for a more holistic, practical and concrete approach within communities. The Prize also reflects the Danone Institute mission, as “supporting nutrition research locally and disseminating relevant scientific knowledge on food, diet, and nutrition” is more than ever at the center of science commitment to improve people’s health. In this 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, we received almost 40 applications from all over the world in a clear confirmation of the DIPA impact and the importance of the Alimentation topic within the scientific community”*

Prof. Olivier Goulet (Necker-Sick children Hospital, Paris, France – President of the Danone Institute International)



The application process of DIPA is a two-stage process. For this 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, an international call for application has been opened from May to October 2020, leading to the reception of 34 applications from all over the World. After pre-selection by the Prize Committee, 10 short-listed applicants were invited to submit a full proposal by the end of 2020.

The 10 final applications have been analysed by a dedicated Jury, gathering experts on the topic of “Alimentation”, including the previous laureate of DIPA and presided by Prof. Luis Moreno (Univ. of Saragoza, Spain).

**For more information about the Prize, the Jury or the previous laureate:**  
[www.danoneinstitute.org/nutrition-science-support/dipa](http://www.danoneinstitute.org/nutrition-science-support/dipa)



**DANONE**  
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INTERNATIONAL

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 DII comprises a network of 13 Danone Institutes around the world and involves over 200 experts in this field of science.

Find out more at [www.danoneinstitute.org](http://www.danoneinstitute.org)



The French “**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, which operates through the generosity of its donors.

Find out more at [www.frm.org](http://www.frm.org)

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