# Study: Diet contributes to laziness

**By Elise Craig, Outside**

A study out of UCLA suggests that eating a consistent diet of processed foods and carrying extra weight causes people to become tired and inactive—not the other way around. But on the upside, it indicates that a few processed food binges isn't enough to impair our motivation.

Researchers fed 32 rats two different diets – one a normal diet of foods like ground corn and fish meal, the other a processed diet with ingredients like corn starch, sucrose, and soybean oil. After three months, the rats on the processed diet had grown obese; they also took much longer breaks during tasks than the leaner rats.

After six months, the rats switched diets for nine days. The obese rats' weight and responses to tasks didn't improve, but the leaner rats' weight stayed about the same, and their responses to the tasks weren't impaired.

**Read the whole story**

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# Snippets about Lake Tahoe




• South Lake Tahoe is paring down the code books to make them less confusing to business owners. People may get involved in how to make the city more business friendly at a meeting May 7 from 5:30-7pm at Lake Tahoe Airport.

• Northstar Travel Media, *Travel Weekly*'s parent, has acquired Mountain Travel Symposium, an annual conference that focuses on mountain regions worldwide and changing trends in marketing, distribution and technology.

• Romantic Adventures has closed shop in South Lake Tahoe and moved to MontBleu.

• Disabled Sports USA Far West has bestowed its annual citizen of the year award on Andy Wirth, president and CEO of Squaw Valley Ski Holdings.

• The historic Virginia and Truckee Railroad season runs May 24 through Oct. 19, with a special train running Mother's Day.

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# Predominant way to lure tourists is with photos

**By Kathryn Reed**

Eye candy – it's what people are looking for first when they

start thinking about a vacation.

That is in large part why websites like Instagram and Pinterest are so popular. And those are the social media venues millennials are using in greater numbers than Twitter and Facebook.

People want to see pictures of pretty places and people doing the things they want to be doing while on vacation. And photos – even videos – of hotels (inside and out) are ways to get people to book a room.



Carol Chaplin with the LTVA and B Gorman of the chamber talk tourism on April 15. Photo/Lesia Witkowsky

All of this information was dispensed at the annual tourism conference April 15 that was put on by Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority and Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce. More than 70 people attended the event at Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel in South Lake Tahoe.

Michael Thomas with Nobel Studios talked about five technology trends that will impact travel. His company created LTVA's website nearly three years ago so it would be photo-centric, include blogs from people playing on the South Shore, events and more. It has content from the visitors authority and from users.

The trends are:

• People are starting their travel itinerary with visuals. “We as a destination need to make sure we have photos on the web,” Thomas said.

• People are going to travel to eat. Thomas said there are people who deliberately travel for food, some who are opportunistic by finding good places to eat when they get there, and others who are accidental. “If you can talk farm to fork, and about wine and beer your area produces, you will get the deliberate traveler,” Thomas said. No one in the audience is a member of the World Food Travel Association, which he said offers certification for restaurants.

• People will stay in homes more than hotels. Airbnb usage is skyrocketing. Thomas said the valuation of the home rental site is at $10 billion. This compares to Hyatt at $8.43 billion and Wyndham at $9.39 billion.

• Hotels will be more photogenic. Thomas said it is imperative hotels create a visual experience.

• Hotels will be renting workspace. “It is really, really not a good strategy” to charge for Wi-Fi, Thomas said. In today’s world people expect to work on vacation. Even leisure hotels are starting to provide people space to work outside their hotel room.

Other speakers included Eric Dunn with Duncan-Channon. That firm does the ad campaign for LTVA. Water sports will be a big part of the summer promotion.

Carol Chaplin, who heads the LTVA, and B Gorman, the chamber’s leader, spoke of a recent excursion to Park City to learn about how that mountain town is able to attract visitors.

Reliable transportation with drivers who are more like tour guides, culinary options that range from one to five stars,

public art and responsive government are the four main things they and others who traveled to Utah took away from the experience.

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# Opinion: Organic standards being eroded

**By Ronnie Cummins**

The Organic Consumers Association has a long history of defending the integrity of organic standards.

Last September, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, under pressure from corporate interests represented by the Organic Trade Association, made our job harder.

They also made it more important than ever for consumers to do their homework, even when buying USDA certified organic products.

Without any input from the public, the USDA changed the way the National Organic Standards Board decides which non-organic materials are allowed in certified organic. The change all but guarantees that when the NOSB meets every six months, the list of non-organic and synthetic materials allowed in organic will get longer and longer.

The USDA's new rule plays to the cabal of the self-appointed organic elite who want to degrade organic standards and undermine organic integrity. For consumers, farmers, co-ops and businesses committed to high organic standards, the USDA's latest industry-friendly move is a clarion call to fight back against the corporate-led, government-sanctioned attack on

organic standards.

The NOSB, a federal advisory committee appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, decides what is allowed on the National List of non-organic materials approved for use in organic. Prior to last September's new ruling, each non-organic material on the list had to be reviewed every five years, using what's called the "sunset process." Under this process, five years after a non-organic material was added to the National List, it would be automatically removed, unless a two-thirds majority of the NOSB board voted to keep the material on the list.

The intent behind this process was clear. Maximize flexibility for the organic industry, minimize the use of non-organic materials in organic, and encourage continuous improvement of the organic standard.

But last September, the USDA reversed this process. Now, instead of automatically coming up for review after five years, each non-organic material will automatically – and indefinitely – stay on the National List unless a two-thirds majority of the NOSB board votes to remove it. And that's not likely to happen, given that the 15-member board of the NOSB is stacked with industry reps who consistently vote with industry against consumers.

Should you just give up on the organic label? Absolutely not. With all its flaws, USDA Organic is still the only credible and comprehensive certification program in the natural foods marketplace. The new rules mean you'll have to scrutinize labels more carefully than ever. But even then, you won't get the whole picture when it comes to non-organic substances in organics.

Certain non-organic or synthetic materials can be used in up to 5 percent of a "USDA Organic" product, and in up to 30 percent of a "Made with Organic" product.

Under the new rules, the list of non-organic or synthetic ingredients allowed at those percentages will likely grow. But here's something most consumers don't realize: The National List isn't just about synthetic and non-organic ingredients that are allowed in food. The list also governs every non-organic material or synthetic material used in the production of organic food, from farm to fork. As that list, too, grows, organic standards will continue to erode. And as a consumer, you'll have a difficult time identifying those materials as they won't be listed on the product's label.

What non-organic materials should you look for on food labels? Here are a few of the worst ones:

• Carrageenan, an additive linked to gastrointestinal inflammation and higher rates of colon cancer.

• Synthetic nutrients including DHA and ARA which have beenlinked to severe gastrointestinal distress, prolonged periods of vomiting and painful bloating.

• Sausage casings made from processed intestines.

What won't you find on food labels, but should be aware that the NOSB has approved for organic? And because of the new rule, likely won't revisit?

• Synthetic methionine: In 2001, the NOSB approved the synthetic version of methionine, a sulfur-based essential amino acid, for use in livestock feed – but only, as the Rodale Institute points out, after organic poultry farmers realized the substance was already in the feed they were using. As long as synthetic methionine remains on the list of approved substances in organics, organic farmers can continue to keep chickens confined. Why? Because, again according to the Rodale Institute, synthetic methionine keeps confined chickens healthy. Take the synthetic out of the feed, and you have to allow the chickens access to outdoor pastures in order to maintain their health. But wouldn't that be a good thing?

• Genetically engineered vaccines: Genetically modified organisms, and the genetic engineering process itself, are not allowed in certified organic products. But there's one exception. Genetically engineered vaccines can be used in organic livestock production, on the condition that the vaccines are included on the National List. So which genetically engineered vaccines did the NOSB approve for the National List? All of them. Instead of reviewing the safety of each vaccine individually, as the law clearly intends, the NOSB included all genetically engineered vaccines on the list, as a single group of "synthetic substances." Now that the sunset process has been weakened, what are the chances of getting genetically engineered vaccines off of the list of approved substances? Next to none.

• Antibiotics: Under organic standards, antibiotics can't be used in animals. But there's a little-known loophole applicable only to poultry, that says the standard doesn't take effect until "the second day of life." So as it turns out, the eggs that hatch into organic chickens are routinely injected with an antibiotic called gentamicin, which is also used to treat bacterial skin infections in humans. Because of the loophole, the use of gentamicin in organic poultry production has never been subject to the NOSB's sunset process. The process does, however, govern the use of antibiotics sprayed on apple and pear trees to control something called fire blight. Under the old rules, the NOSB voted to end the use of those antibiotics – tetracycline and streptomycin – as of Oct. 21, 2014. But industry is fighting that ruling. If it succeeds, and the NOSB ever re-lists those antibiotics, the changes to the sunset process will make it more difficult than ever to get tetracycline and streptomycin off of the National List of approved substances.

• Mutagenesis: There's another loophole in the "no genetic engineering in organics" standard. It's called mutagenesis. In 2011, the NOSB approved synthetic DHA and ARA for use in

organics. As mentioned above, these synthetic nutrients, used in baby formula, are linked to side effects. But what you won't learn from reading the labels on baby formula, or any other product containing DHA or ARA, is that these synthetic nutrients are derived from mutated microorganisms, created through a process called mutagenesis. We believe mutagenesis is a form of genetic engineering, and others support our position. But when Martek Biosciences Corp., the manufacturer of synthetic DHA, argued that mutagenesis should be allowed because the process is nothing more than a form of classical seed breeding, the NOSB sided with the company. So while consumers can see DHA and ARA on product labels, few will know that they are produced using a technique that has dangers similar to genetic engineering.

The NOSB meets again April 29-May 2. For the first time, it will be operating under the new rule. The USDA didn't give the public an opportunity to comment on its change to the sunset process, but that doesn't mean the agency is immune to public outcry. Starting with President Obama and USDA Secretary Vilsack, we need to press USDA leadership to reverse this disastrous new rule.

*Ronnie Cummins is director of Organic Consumers Association.*

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# Baseball season opens Saturday in S. Tahoe

South Tahoe Little League opening day is April 19.

A parade of all the teams – representing 400 kids – will start from South Tahoe Middle School parking lot at 9am and travel down to the Al Tahoe fields.

There will be a welcoming ceremony, national anthem, Color Guard to raise the flag

CalStar will drop the first pitch ball for Mayor Hal Cole to throw.

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# Vaughn redeems himself in ‘Delivery Man’




**By Jeremy Miller**

Let me just open this by saying that I love Vince Vaughn. I’ve really missed him the past couple years and felt like maybe we’d lost him forever.

I was definitely not a fan of “The Internship” and felt like it was a sad, desperate attempt to revive the comedic genius that was “Wedding Crashers”, but hey, I’ll forgive him.

“Delivery Man” I well stocked with comedic talent as it stars Vaughn, Chris Pratt and Cobie Smulders. David (Vaughn) is a washed up middle-aged deliveryman working for his family’s meat company. He’s in over his head in debt and struggles to maintain even a shred of mature responsibility. His disappointed girlfriend Emma (Smulders) gives him a firm talking to; letting him know that he’s either got to man up,

or get out.

While dealing with the disappointment from her, he's also getting it from his father and brothers back at the meat shop because he can't seem to keep his word on anything. As if the guy doesn't have enough problems already, an attorney from a fertility clinic contacts him. The attorney informs him that while he was running his sperm like the Mexican cartel runs drugs the clinic made a mistake and accidentally impregnated a few too many women.




The load he's left with (pun?) is a hefty 533 children. At first he flips out a bit as I imagine most would. He consults his friend Brett (Pratt) who had some sort of legal experience some time ago. They decide to take action against the clinic and sue them for their mishap. In the process David is given an envelope with a profile for each of his 533 children.

With David's girlfriend threatening the end of their relationship unless he creates a real life for himself, he quickly sees opportunity to use this as way to turn his life from minimal existence, to actual meaning and self-worth. From here David takes a turn for the responsible and starts going from on kid to the next, trying to positively impact their lives and assume some sort of responsibility for their existence.

I loved the flick. I thought to myself, he's back! I loved Vaughn's timing, and his ability to turn simple gestures and faces into absolute hilarity. The film was also pretty touching and had a good message to it. I liked the way the story and script (for the most part) steered clear of most

cliché Hollywood rom-coms.

The basic plot layout definitely fit the cookie cutter mold of PG-13 – let's make our money back studio pictures, but for the most part, pretty original. I liked the realism of a not so realistic story. Each kid he came across had his or her own problems, faults or perfections, none of which was too over the top or to the point of being unbelievable.

As these films typically climax, he's met with conflict between his new world and his past. He's in deep with the wrong people and needs money to get himself out. If he sues the clinic, he can pay off his debt and move forward with his girlfriend and be free of 533 kids. If he doesn't, he'll owe hella money and most certainly piss off his already sensitive girlfriend, but he'll be able to continue his personal quest to provide for these kids a father figure, or self-proclaimed "guardian angel" (super cheesy, but I'm quoting the movie so don't judge me).

Overall, great flick. I had fun; I laughed, and was impressed with its emotional touch.

Cons? The ending was a bit of a let down, borderline anti-climactic and I felt like the very end of the film could have been executed with more resolve and satisfaction.

If you like Vaughn and his comedy, check this one out.

*South Lake Tahoe resident Jeremy Miller has more movie reviews online.*

# Suspected drug lab blows up in Truckee

A house in Truckee was destroyed Wednesday when a drug lab blew up, according to police officers.

Douglas Hall, 54, received burns to his face and hands, according to police. His girlfriend and daughter were not injured.

Hall faces charges of suspicion of possession of concentrated cannabis, manufacturing controlled substances with chemicals and felony child endangerment.

“Investigation revealed the blast was the result of a butane honey oil extraction process that went awry,” officers said in a statement. The explosion was reported at 4:44pm April 16.

Officers found more than 1,000 empty cans of butane, police said.

*– Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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# Nearly half of voters open to changing Prop. 13

**By Jessica Calefati, Contra Costa Times**

SACRAMENTO – Proposition 13’s restrictions on property tax growth have been untouchable in California politics for almost 40 years, but a new Field Poll shows about half of voters are open to tweaking the landmark measure.

Asked in a general way if they favor making some changes, 49 percent of registered voters said they supported the idea, while 34 percent are opposed, the poll found.

Deciding how to alter California's rigid tax rules is the multimillion-dollar question. The Field Poll found far less consensus around a proposal to reduce the threshold needed to boost local taxes from a two-thirds majority to 55 percent. Only 39 percent of voters said they support that idea, and Republicans are strongly opposed, with 67 percent disapproving.

**Read the whole story**

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# Tahoe celeb golf tickets on sale at reduced price

Discount tickets are available for the 25th installment celebrity golf tournament at Edgewood Tahoe.

For six days it costs $50 – or $8.33 per day for a tournament pass to the July 15-20 American Century Championship. The price is good through May.

The tournament's silver anniversary will feature Golden State Warriors superstar Stephen Curry, Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers, comedian Larry the Cable Guy, Olympic skier and gold medalist Bode Miller, NFL Hall of Famers and Forty Niners Steve Young and Jerry Rice, NBA head coach of the Brooklyn Nets Jason Kidd, Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Alex Smith and University of South Carolina football coach Steve Spurrier.

For more info, go online.

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# Tahoe sustainability projects receive TRPA funding

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency in its role as the Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization has awarded more than $550,000 in grants to Lake Tahoe organizations for community-based planning projects aimed at sustainability and improved mobility options around the lake.

The On Our Way Community Grant Program is a new program that is designed to help community organizations and local governments identify transportation and other improvements that improve walking and biking, create safer streets, and support economic vitality.

Recipients are:

| Organization | Project Name | Amount Funded |
|---|---|---|
| Lake Tahoe Unified School District | South Tahoe Middle School Area Connectivity Plan | $153,625 |
| Placer County Public Works | Tahoe City Mobility Improvements | $73,469 |
| El Dorado County | Meyers Sustainable Mobility Plan Project | $200,000 |

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|---|---|---|
| Washoe County | Mt. Rose Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan (Lake Tahoe Portion) | $46,733 |
| Washoe County | Signage Master Plan for SR 28 National Scenic Corridor & NV Stateline to Stateline Shared Use Path | $53,000 |
| Tahoe Rim Trail Association | Connecting Tahoe Rim Trail Users to Transportation Alternatives | $25,744. |