



Is food too risky to eat?

*Professor Anne Glover CBE
Chief Scientific Adviser
to the President of the European Commission*



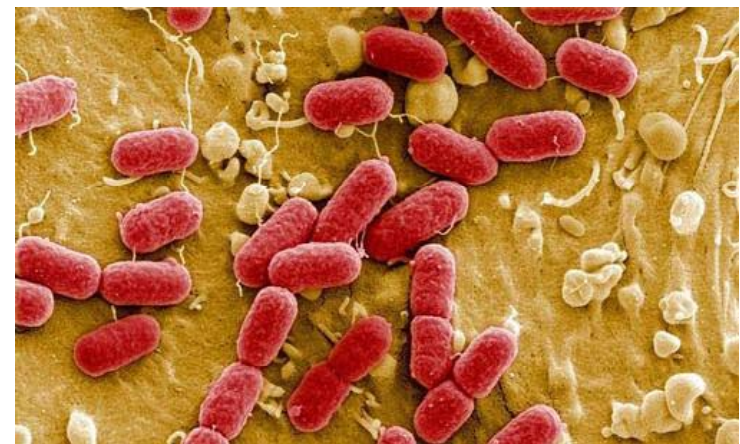
Let's start with a fact:

Eating is risky.





- 1) You can die from swallowing a fishbone
- 2) You can suffer an allergic or diabetic shock
- 3) You may become infected with viruses or bacteria
- 4) You can develop cancer
- 5) You can die from eating too much or too little
- 6)



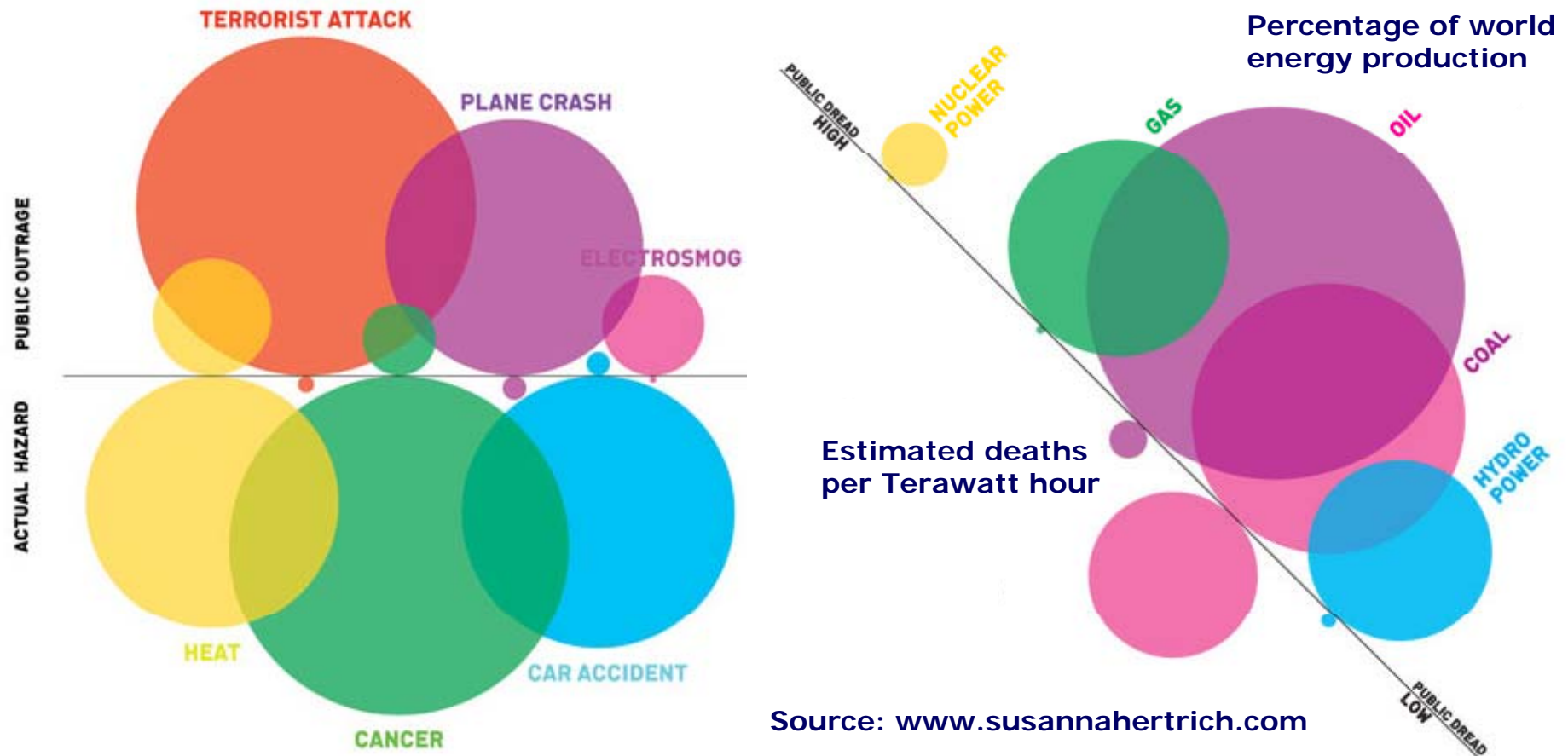


**Why don't we
stop eating then?**

**Because we think that
the benefits of eating
outweigh the risks**



But: risk perception and evidence are two different things

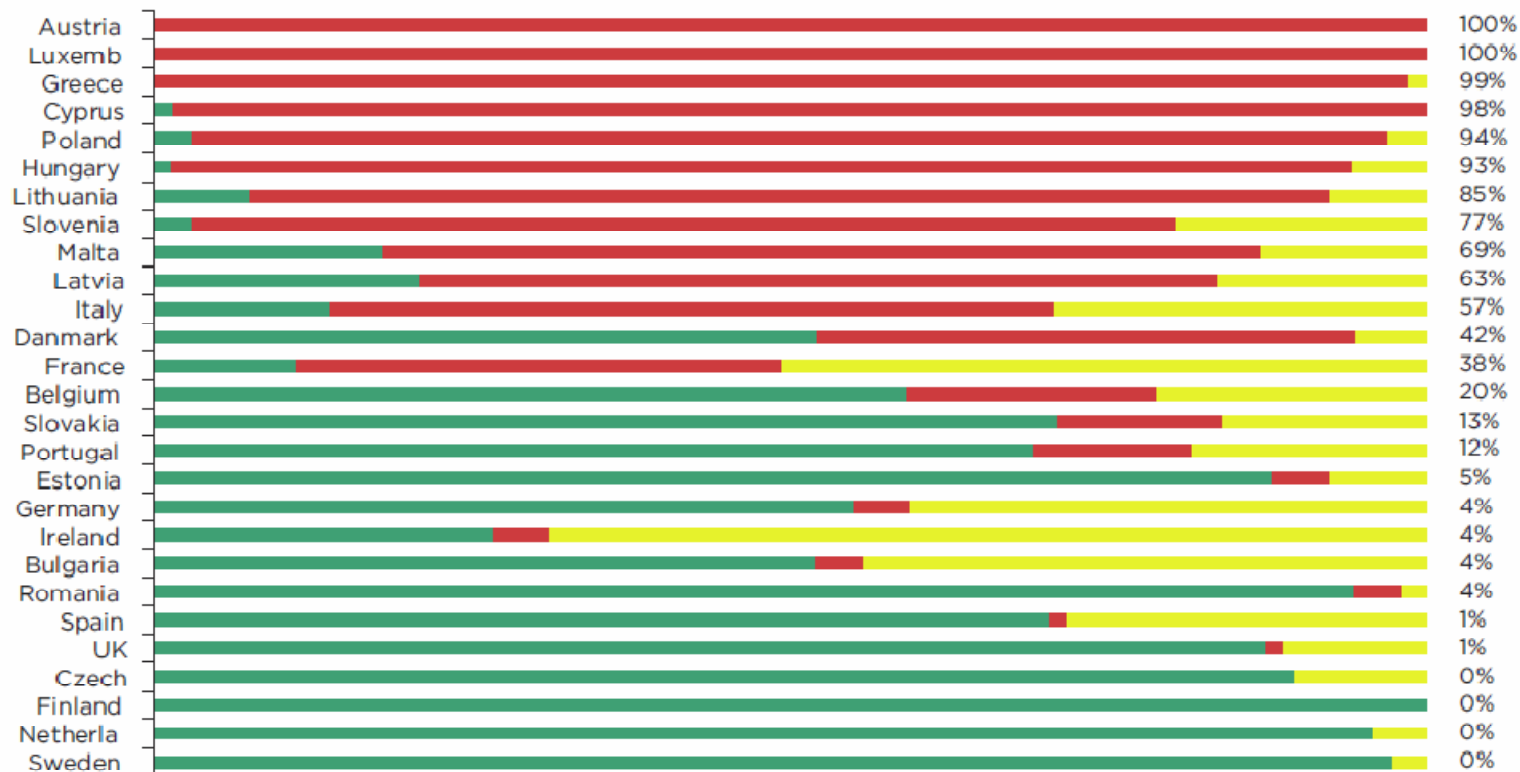




GMO approval

Member States voting on EFSA scientific opinion

% negative votes



Yes No Abstain

Source: EuropaBio, Approvals of GMOs in the European Union, Oct. 2011



**How can science achieve
that evidence plays a
bigger role in societal
debate about risks?**





1) Speak up

2) Stand up

3) Gang up





1) Speak up

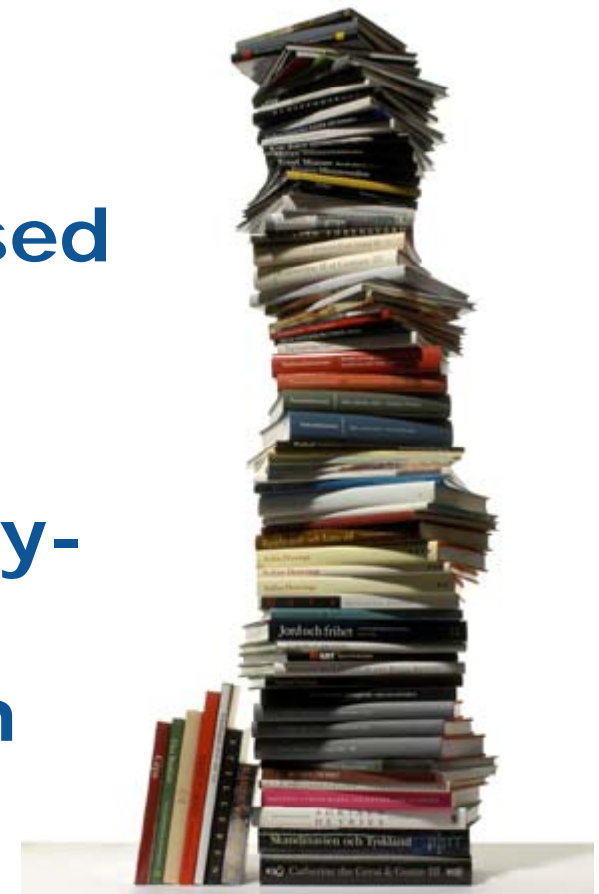
- We need to communicate much more **proactively** – otherwise others will fill the void
- We need to speak a language everybody understands
- We need to show empathy for public concerns and avoid being perceived as arrogant ("we know the truth")





2) Stand up

- We need to raise our voice when science is being misused (including by scientists themselves!)
- We must demand from policy-makers to be transparent about their motivation when they ignore the evidence





3) Gang up

**We all sit in the same boat –
let's pool our forces**





EFSA plays a key role in this context.

Its independence and scientific credibility are of crucial importance.

**Let's give EFSA
a strong voice of support!**





Happy Birthday!

