



Cheryl Toner, MS, RDN

Director, Food Sector Engagement

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Contributing author:

Section 1 Showcase:

“Nutrition Communication is an Art and a Science”

As Director of Food Sector Engagement for the American Heart Association (AHA), Cheryl Toner is responsible for the Foodscape Innovation™ Awards, Annual Foodscape Innovation Summit, Industry Nutrition Forum, and alignment with nutrition programs throughout the association. Prior to joining AHA, Cheryl led CDT Consulting, LLC for 12 years, providing strategic counsel and program management services to organizations and companies around the nexus of food and health. She completed a 3-year fellowship with the Nutritional Science Research Group in the Division of Cancer Prevention at the National Cancer Institute, where she supported a public/private initiative on “Enhancing Translation of Nutrition Science from Bench to Food Supply,” and served as Director of Health Communications with the International Food Information Council. Cheryl has been an active member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics for 20 years, serving in leadership for the Sports, Cardiovascular, and Wellness Nutrition and Dietitians in Business and Communications dietetic practice groups, Northern Virginia and District of Columbia affiliates, and the New Member Advisory Committee. She earned a BS in nutrition at the University of Houston with a minor in Spanish and MS in nutrition at Texas Woman’s University and completed her dietetic internship at the Houston Veteran’s Affairs Medical Center.

What led you to contribute your time and expertise to writing *Communicating Nutrition*?

Sylvia and I are passionate about communication. It is one of the most challenging and important activities we engage in. Poor communication creates division and misunderstanding, while good communication builds bridges that support understanding and partnership. Nutrition communication IS both an art and a science. It must integrate evidence from a wide range of scientific disciplines, including communications and behavioral sciences. Nutrition communicators must also be sensitive to context, to their own instincts developed through relationships and experience, and to diverse perspectives.

What is the impact you hope this book, and specifically the portion you helped write, has on the profession of nutrition and dietetics? Sylvia and I hope that nutrition communicators, both new and experienced, will be challenged by this book to consider viewpoints different from their own. Whether exploring research, cultural perspectives, flavor, environmental impact, or any other aspect of food and health, an expert always has more to learn. Dialogue with people who think differently than we do is the best way to stretch ourselves and strengthen our expertise.

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