

# **Swallow This:**

## **A Special Interview with Joanna Blythman**

By Dr. Joseph Mercola

**DM: Dr. Joseph Mercola**

**JB: Joanna Blythman**

**DM:** We all know that avoiding processed foods is one of the keys to staying healthy. But do you truly know how really terrible processed foods are? Hi, this is Dr. Mercola, helping you to take control of your health. Today we are joined by Scottish author, Joanna Blythman, who has written a book, *Swallow This: Serving Up the Food Industry's Darkest Secrets*.

If you have any concerns about the food you're eating, this is a must-read book because it's so challenging for us to avoid processed foods. It's really part of everyone's diet. The only question is how much? After you read this book, I can guarantee you that your motivation to avoid processed food will catapult.

Joanna is an award-winning British investigative journalist and she's written this book. It was interesting because she'd kind of had to go undercover because she found information that you and I can't find. You've got to be part of the industry. She's going to tell us how she was able to slide in, sneak through, and get the inside scoop on what the heck they're doing to our food.

Thank you so much for writing this delightful book. Welcome and thank you for joining us.

**JB:** Oh, it's a pleasure. I'm honestly delighted to talk to you.

**DM:** Why don't you give us a bit of your background, and describe what motivated you to write this incredible exposé on the industry and the deep secrets of its processing and production over the years?

**JB:** Yeah. I have been writing about food for over two decades. I've written six other books. They've dealt with the production side of food: how and what goes on in fields, what goes on in farms, how to tell a good chicken from a bad chicken, that kind of thing. I just knew that we weren't getting the full story. It wasn't about the production end. It was at the processing end.

We know quite a lot about how chickens are reared for our tables, but we didn't know very much, or anything really, about how chickens nuggets are produced in a factory for our tables. I knew that we had to get to this information about processed food. But of course, the food industry has created this fabulously effective security wall around its manufacturing activities.

It hides behind this rational, which is "These are our commercial secrets. We can't tell you too much but out our secret processes" or "All our competitors will be copying us." And they've got away with that for years. What that means is that basically, unless you're a food industry insider, you're just not going to know what's happening behind the scenes.

I realized that I had to – by just going up front to companies, I wasn't going to get anywhere – so I decided that I was going to have to kind of get my way in through the apartheid system that food processing industry very effectively operates.

What I did is I assumed a fake identity. I managed to get... Yes, it was the only way to do it. I managed to get a smaller food manufacturer, with some sort of ethics, to give me a cover. By using that cover, I managed to get below the skin and into the sub-inner arenas of the food manufacturing industry. The real tipping point for me in my research was when I attended a trade show for food manufacturers that's called Food Ingredients, and this one was in Germany. I think you can think of it as a sort of the equivalent of an arms fair for food manufacturers because it's where all the big chemical companies – and they really are chemical companies – arrive and they're really trying to sell their products to food manufacturers.

As a sort of person who inhabits this world thinking, "Labels tell us what we need to know and we can find quite a lot at the retail end," I walked right into this show. My mouth was hanging open. I can't believe what I was seeing. Nothing instantly recognizable as food as such but a whole series of very complex, highly sophisticated, technical components, ingredient-like things, food-like compounds that could be used to process food together.

Just after I was getting to... I couldn't take so much more of these. I saw this stand at the end that was selling... not selling, but promoting fruit salad. They were little packs of cartons of cut-up fruits, nice and healthy looking things like pineapple chunks, melon, and grapes. The sort of thing you get on a plane or when you would be in a hotel and you would think, "Gosh. That looks like a healthy option."

Then I noticed there was a date beside the fruit salad and the dates were a fortnight previous to the day I was visiting. So I said to the sales rep, "Could you explain to me what the dates are?" And he said, "Oh, yes. These fruits have been dipped in a miracle product and it has the effect of extending the shelf life. So we dipped them in this secret mixture, which is essentially fruit acids. That way, you can add a fortnight on to the sell-by date."

While still pretending to be someone who might actually sell this, I said, "Would I not have to write that on the label?" He said, "No, no, no. Not at all, because it's a processing aid."

I think that was real moment for me because I realized that there so much going on behind the scenes of food manufacturing. Most consumers, we just haven't got a clue, and we are not allowed to know. We're very carefully kept out. You can't even trust things that would seem to be the healthy choice.

**DM:** Well, that's what astounded me. There's a large percentage, perhaps the majority, I would hope so, of our viewers who are diligent reviewers of what they put pass their lips. If it's not whole and unprocessed themselves and they buy processed food, they're going to look at the label and read carefully what the ingredients are.

But what you've come to realize very quickly after reviewing your book is that it doesn't matter. You'll never find it on the label because they cleverly disguised it and it is not, simply not, there at all. There is no way to understand this unless you really delve into the industry's secret as you have. I have a question I forgot to ask you because I didn't do a research on this. But I suspect that there's no other book on the market that really has done this.

**JB:** No.

**DM:** This is an exposé on the whole industry that doesn't exist other than in your book.

**JB:** Yeah, it's an exposé. No one has this material. This material hasn't been in the public or everywhere in the world, so *Swallow This* was published. I am pleased with that because I feel that it's a whole new dimension to understanding and having, if you like, personal control over the food you eat. We have to understand what's going on behind the scenes of food processing.

I suspect, although I've uncovered... We can talk about some of the things I've uncovered.

**DM:** We need to, sure.

**JB:** Yeah. But I've uncovered... I suspect it's probably only fraction of...

**DM:** That's the seller, after all.

**JB:** It's probably a whole lot worse. But at least we have scraped the surface there. I think that's useful. We get the dialogue going. I think it has shocked the food industry, in Europe, anyway. Because they do have this very patronizing attitude toward consumers; that we should just trust them, we've no right to know anything about what they're up to, we should just let them go on with it. They really don't like that sort of public scrutiny of their secret recipes and dirty commerce.

**DM:** As I mentioned earlier, there is no other rational response to reading your book other than to be more incredibly committed to eating whole, unprocessed foods. Once you have this material in your knowledge, there's no going back to understand. You have no other choice but to look at processed food differently from this moment onwards.

There's so much information in the book, but why don't you give us some of the highlights of what you uncovered that are really astounding? Because there are so many of them in there.

**JB:** Okay. Well, yeah. It's interesting because everyone who reads the book, they find different things horrifying. It's always like "take your pick." There's quite a lot. I divided them into the most shocking and the most disgusting.

I'm starting with the most disgusting. I was, for example, quite shocked to know that meat processes, taking butchered carcasses, soaking them in hot water with added enzymes, which has the effect of releasing about another five percent of sort of meat-like substance from the carcass. And then, this is being added into cheap burgers, sausages, and products like that.

I was also quite disgusted to find that, again with enzymes, that enzyme-treated blood products are routinely added to products to the lower end of a processed meat. But in a way, I sort of expected those things. I mean, everyone knows that, everything to do with meat and that lower quality end isn't that great.

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But what really got me were the things that seemed to be really natural that I haven't expected. For example, I was amazed to find that there is kind of coloring that's known as the cloudifier. What a cloudifier is, it makes your juice look as though it's got more real fruit juice in it because it creates that just sort of hand-pressed, natural look. I found that quite amazing.

I also discovered this whole thing called Clean Label. This is really an interesting concept. The food industry realizes, on both sides of the Atlantic, that consumers don't like long chemical-sounding names on the ingredients list. When people like us see words like carboxymethylcellulose or mono- and diglycerides of fatty acids, we do not really want to buy it. They know, and they call them label polluters.

What they have decided is that they have to get those off the label. They invent this campaign called Clean Label, which is essentially removing all the old additives and long chemical names and replacing them with ingredients that sound an awful lot better. But the problem is, from my point of view, that these are really new additives by another name. They sound a whole lot better but actually, whether they are in their formulation – of course, those are very secret formulations – well, we still have to see.

**DM:** Well, that's not so bad in itself because antioxidants are healthful. But what is part of the equation that isn't listed is that these antioxidants are extracted from the plant, usually with toxic organic solvents like hexane that you can't remove. That's still in there and they're not required to disclose it. The impression I got is that it's all about perception. The moment, and there's a lot of money involved, the food industry finds out that there's a public perception that one of those ingredients on that label that they're required to put has a negative impact, they will put loads of resources to find some other alternative that may be just as bad, and typically worse, but doesn't have that impact.

**JB:** That's absolutely right. You put your finger on it. Perception is a really good word for understanding what the food manufacturing industry is up to. They have this thing called perceived naturalness. Their whole job is to try give you ingredients that sound natural, but actually aren't the same as natural.

Another one is fresh-like quality. It doesn't talk about fresh any longer. They talk about a fresh-like quality. There are number of technologies that they can use behind the scenes and mainly on labels that will give products this fresh-like quality.

Everything to naturalness and freshness is just being manipulated constantly. On my desk, at the moment, I have some chocolate chip muffins that I bought six weeks ago. I've got them on my desk and they have not changed in any way. They look identical. I'm keeping them as a sort of science project to see how they eventually, if they ever, change.

You may be standing in a coffee shop and think, "Great, I'm just going to have one of those lovely muffins." We consumers, we always want to think the best, don't we?

**DM:** Sure.

**JB:** We want to think that someone in the back of the shop must be making them just come out the oven, nice and fresh for us. We're being conned a lot of the time. There's all these [inaudible 14:49] and we're seeing the emergence of things called concentrates and extracts.

**DM:** Before we go there, let's go back to the bakery because you kind of brushed over that. But there's a whole section in the book about bakery.

**JB:** Yeah.

**DM:** When you go to your local grocery store, most all of them have bakeries, and you smell the fresh bread being made and all these other confections. They actually are made right there but what you don't understand is they're not making them from scratch. Why don't you go into that exposé because that was really intriguing?

**JB:** Yeah. You're doing grocery shopping and you smell that lovely smell. It's usually something like cinnamon or vanilla. And then you just think, "God, I really want to have some of that." But those bakeries, they're basically tanning salons for prepared frozen products that had been cooked in factories thousands of miles away.

What happens is they're shipped into these stores, frozen. The job of the baker, at least the person called the baker (the fact of the matter), is to take them out of the box, to read the instruction manual which says, "Put it into the oven at this program for so many minutes and then bring them out again and sell them as fresh."

One of the things here is that if you sell food loose, if you sell things like loose donuts, you don't need to have any ingredient label on them. You don't put it in a packet. You would if it were wrapped up. But

because they're so loose and seemed ultra-fresh, then you can get away without telling people what the ingredients are.

**DM:** That's another industry secret you just exposed.

**JB:** Yes.

**DM:** Who would know? I think restaurants use the same strategy also.

**JB:** There's a lot of it. When you realize this, you often think, "That's funny. I noticed that that grocery store, their donuts are kind of similar to the ones I had in that station bakery that's got a different name or in that hotel I stayed in another city overnight." Because it's a very global industry and it's getting more and more global, the economics or such, that you forget local, that it's going to be a big company that specializes in these kinds of products. They're going to be shipping them thousands of miles away, but they have this fresh-like quality.

One of the reasons I started writing the book is I just knew because I eat natural food, and I cook a lot. That if I made a muffin at home, it didn't taste anything like a bought one. I wanted to get to find out why. It's really interesting to find out why because the ingredients are completely different and the processes are completely different.

And these are great lies perpetuated by food manufacturers, that what goes on in the factory is just a scaled up fraction of home cooking. But that really is a lie. It's quite a different activity.

**DM:** Absolutely. Why don't you continue to go on and expose some of the others, as I interrupted you about the bakery because I thought that was so intriguing? You're telling us some of the other things that you've uncovered.

**JB:** You often buy a product, and if you're a kind of thoughtful shopper, you read the ingredient label. As we have established already, you see a long chemical name, you're probably not going to buy it. But if you come across something that says "carrot concentrate" or "lemon extract" you think, "Ah, it doesn't sound too bad."

Carrot concentrate. That can be something you have in a health farm or something. It has that sort of aura of health about it. But again, carrot concentrate is instantly used as a coloring. Lemon extract is a flavoring. It's a lot of real skillful manipulation of our perception, and getting us to buy into this idea that processed food is really much more natural nowadays. They've taken up all the ingredients, not just because we need to worry about so we can just trust them.

Actually, what you might know is, having researched it, they just got a lot cleverer at pulling the wool over our eyes. We really do need to wise up and understand what's going on there.

**DM:** Well, there's this whole other issue of trust that you just mentioned. The implication is that there are federal regulatory agencies or governmental agencies that carefully monitor this and protect us. In your research, what did you uncover that – I can't think of the correct term now – denies this assertion?

**JB:** Yeah. Well, I have this idea, the sort of comforting idea, that somewhere there must be some government committees or American or European bodies that were kind of looking out for the consumer's best interest. But it isn't at all like that.

What you have is, usually government committees, the people who are on those committees are often from the industries that have a vested interest in commercializing these chemical ingredients or they're

academics who appear on first glance to be independent but actually, in their day job, are getting a lot of funding from the same companies.

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I get it, absolutely, the same or worse, in the US. But in Europe, in Brussels, for example, it's now the case that there are between 20,000 and 30,000 professional lobbyists, whose job is to knock on the doors of the people who make decisions and kind of relax them about their products. Very often, it's the companies that are making the product that provide the dossiers that go to the regulators upon which they based their judgements.

A lot of the research is being fed to establish safety of whatever it should deal with. These sort of questions are based on the industries' own research. And obviously, it will structure the research to show that its products are safe.

Another thing that really shocked me and I really didn't know is, we know that there are a lot of toxins that are routinely used in manufacturing, food manufacturing. But we're told that that's okay. You gave the example of hexane, which is a very good example. A solvent used in the making of many flavorings, colorings, and so on.

But the thing about this... That the assumption is based right back on the musings of Paracelsus. He was a 16<sup>th</sup> century doctor. He coined this phrase, and I'm paraphrasing, "The dose makes the poison." In other words, if something can be a poison at one level, it can be toxic, but as long as you don't have too much of it, then that's not a problem.

That has been the assumption that is underlying modern toxicology and the so-called regulatory framework. But what really is a real issue is that Paracelsus obviously lived in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. We didn't all drive or ride in cars. We weren't spraying pesticides onto fields. His environment was a lot cleaner and purer than ours.

And no one's really looking at the exposure to toxins. The modern citizens have is completely different from those during the Renaissance. So we have to say, "What happens to people who eat large quantities of processed food, maybe people who really based their diets on that?" No one is doing any research on that. So there are all these assumptions that it's fine in small quantities, but that's not really looking at the cocktail effect for people, particularly children who are obviously whose bodies are still growing and are more prone to being affected by a chemical overload. No one is looking at that at the moment.

This idea that, "Yes, something is toxic, but hey, you don't need to worry about it. That's cool because it's only in a low dose..."

**DM:** And some of these toxins, even at a lower dose, they're more toxic because they have hormonal [effects]. They act as a hormone at a very specific concentration. At higher concentration they don't but a lower concentration, they do.

**JB:** That's absolutely right. I'm particular, there's quite a lot of evidence now, about chemicals in packaging, in food packaging, things like phthalates and Bisphenol A (BPA).

**DM:** Yes. Phthalates and BPA.

**JB:** Absolutely. Those are sort of gender benders. They affect the endocrine system. That is now quite well-established. They do that, but yet no government is saying, "We'll require, we're allowing there to be a food system that packages food and not only..."

**DM:** And circling back to the government again is, you mentioned, [there's] 25,000 to 30,000 lobbyists in Europe. I suspect it's the same as it is in United States. You can make an argument, that's fine. It's just... They should be able to do that. But I've mentioned a significant percentage of those lobbyists had former paid physicians in their regulatory agencies.

In other words, they were insiders who worked there. They know how the system works then they go back to industry usually at a salary that's multiple times of what they were earning because they can leverage that government experience to have massive influence from the industries. So at a relatively small price, they can manipulate the regulatory controls.

**JB:** Yeah, that's absolutely right. Here, we call it the revolving door. There's an unhealthy closeness and intimacy between the regulators, the so-called regulators, and the food industry and food manufacturers, and of course, food manufacturing is basically chemical industry by another name.

**DM:** And a drug industry by another name.

**JB:** And a drug industry, too.

**DM:** Which came out of the chemical industry.

**JB:** Yes. The take home message for me is that, in Europe, we have this idea that processed food is getting better. Everything was going a little bit not more natural and actually, that's wrong. We really can't trust our regulators to get it right. What that means is that we have to adopt our own, what I call PPP: It's Personal Precautionary Principle. You are the only person who's going to really bother to think about these issues to deal with your food. You can't rely on anyone else doing it for you.

**DM:** There is no question that before I read your book, I eat better well than over 99 percent of the population, probably 99.9 percent, But I'm telling you, my motivation to eat even better was radically increased because of the awareness and the understanding after hearing all these industry secrets that you exposed.

It's relatively easy for me to do that. But for many people it's not because of their income and their time pressures. For me, it's about motivating and empowering people to pursue the path of avoiding processed food. From my understanding, the first step is to be aware. The simple shortcut to that is to benefit from your years of research. Read the book. In a few hours, you'll have the knowledge. You'll be inspired to motivate and be motivated to pursue this path.

But after they have the knowledge, what would you recommend as a strategy to make sure that they're avoiding these chemicals that the industry is putting in there and deceiving us with?

**JB:** Yeah, I've given this a lot of thought. I know there are people who say, "Well, you know what? I'm going to die sooner or later."

**DM:** Yes, that's a common response.

**JB:** Actually, I sympathize with these people. Because it's a whole lot easier to say, "You know what? I'm just going to be philosophical. I'm not going to worry too much." And I think that's fine if you take that attitude as long as you really understand what's going on. You've told me that, I've heard that but I don't want to, I'm not going to change what I do. I think that's fair enough.

But I think at the moment, a lot of people are buying what they consider to be mainstream food that millions of other people are eating.

**DM:** Let me just stop there for a moment, if you can hold your thought because it occurs to me, I just turned 60 last year. My network of friends and relatives are aging also. It becomes more common for me to have personal experiences with those who are dying of cancer, who typically are those individuals who had [thought], “I’m going to die anyway some time.”

These are individuals who are typically are at very young ages. They’re dying. My guess is that you could use that, whether it’s a friend, a relative, or someone you know, to inspire you to not have to undergo that pain, suffering, and premature demise of that individual.

**JB:** I think that’s right. It’s interesting because it’s not just cancer, obviously but the number of sort of inflammatory gut and diseases that now seems to be affecting so many people. We have irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), Crohn’s, celiac, and all that spectrum. That seems to be really common, children and adults reporting some sort of bad reactions to food.

It was interesting. I was talking to my mother who is 89 and she was saying, “I just don’t remember all these people with allergies and things when I was young. This is really something very recent.” And I think she’s right. We are basically living through what has been the big processed food experiment. I would say that we can probably predict how it’s going to end without going to the end of the path.

I think we should be jumping ship earlier on. But what I do is I understand people as they’re like. I just can’t deal with what you’re telling me. It’s too much. I think that for people who are listening and they were saying, “Okay, I am concerned but what can I do?” For me, it’s very, very simple. I have three words and then one word.

The three words are “avoid processed foods” and the other word is “cook.” Basically, if you will cook and you will choose ingredients that are whole, then right away, I’m not saying there aren’t any issues with whole ingredients. I mean, they’re still...

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**DM:** I think you may want to modify the word “cook” to “prepare your own food.” Because in some cases, like making a salad, you’re obviously not cooking.

**JB:** Right. In fact, prepare your own foods. That’s exactly what I mean. In other words, you’re in charge of the food processing for yourself. You know what goes into it. I thought about this very carefully in the book because... Actually, my background is I love foods. I mean, I come to this because I want to defend what I see as real food. I don’t like to see it being compromised and corrupted.

I come to as someone who likes to eat. I’m not one of those people who thinks, “My body is a temple and I won’t let anything that’s not good for me pass my lips.” But I do think that if you can prepare, if you can take that control over your daily ingredients... There will still be the old processed food that we will buy. I mean you can buy mustard. You can buy... There are various [inaudible 31:08].

**DM:** Condiments.

**JB:** Yeah, condiments. I’m happy to buy pasta. There are things that I will buy. I don’t grow wheat. I’ve never baked sourdough bread in my life. I’m always going to be someone who buys bread rather than bakes it, although I really respect people who do that. But obviously, we all have to find a sort of medium course.

But I just know that for me, it make sense to base my diet and my family’s diet around whole foods as they kind of grow whole cuts of meat, foods that are not wrapped in a packet in some way, and food that has its own integrity. I think that’s the way it’s going.



I think the thing is when you don't cook or prepare your own food, it seems like the most enormously complex thing. But when you get into it, and you do it regularly, it just becomes routine, and you realize just how much more pleasure you get from the whole business of eating. I mean, it should be one of the most life-enhancing things that we do.

Also, you're just going to feel better, and I believe – well, I know – you'll save a lot of money because you're not paying for packaging, boxes, plastic, and all these [inaudible 32:21], fresh-like, perceived to be natural fruit. You're getting the genuine article.

**DM:** Well, thanks. And let me give you a little insight because hopefully I can motivate you to bake your own bread. My own personal experience is now that I'm walking seven miles a day, I actually have a relatively significant calorie need that have I have to replace other than my normal diet. I need a source of calories. I said, "I got some extra coconut flour in an order by mistake, how do I use this?"

I figured out that banana bread was an easy solution. It's a simple thing to make. I'll give you the recipe. It's four bananas, four eggs, quarter pound of butter (the highest quality butter you can get), some cinnamon, baking powder, and baking soda. Mix it all up. Add a little stevia, if you want. And then, you're set. You can scale that up and you've got bread that only takes literally maybe 10 minutes to prepare. You can freeze it if you need to. It's really tasty.

**JB:** Sounds really good apart from stevia, which I...

**DM:** Stevia is an extract but you can take whole stevia plants, ground up stevia.

**JB:** Yeah.

**DM:** You put that it.

**JB:** Yeah. I've learned something because we haven't seen that in the UK. What we have is seen is kind of stevia extract.

**DM:** Yeah. That's more common, but you can go to health food stores and find the ground up stevia.

**JB:** Yeah, all right. That's really interesting. I'm going to get that.

**DM:** Or grow it yourself. Grow it yourself. It grows really well indoors.

**JB:** Yeah. Not only do I have to become a baker, I have to become a gardener now.

**DM:** Oh. Listen. That is the ultimate progression, Joanna, of anyone who's seriously interested in their own food. At least in my decades of studying health, the ultimate progression is to realize that the quality of the food is directly related to the quality of the soil, and that you ideally optimize the soil around your house and grow your own flora inside your house sometimes.

I mean, it could be as simple as sunflower seed sprouts that you grow inside. That's easy. But eventually you get inspired to do some serious gardening.

**JB:** Yes.

**DM:** Slash farming.

**JB:** I'm feeling you like here. I'm absolutely convinced of that. That is a growing movement, isn't it, of people growing things more and more, even if it's just few herbs or something, or huge dashes on the windowsill.

**DM:** Sure.

**JB:** It's lovely. But what I feel is that my book is about trying to get people to realize that they're not going to find that the food that they think they're getting from traditional manufacture sources, and to look again at preparing food at home and growing some. It actually says the obvious logical extension of that.

**DM:** I'm wondering... You were able to slide your way into the industry and basically become an industry insider. I'm wondering what the response has been from the industry since you published the book.

**JB:** Well, it's very interesting. From the food industry, there hasn't been a truth. Nothing, no words. I think they want it to go away. But there is a very important magazine here in the trade called *The Grocer*. It's read by food retailers and food manufacturers. When they covered my book, they went to the industry. The best they could get was a sort of trade associations, to speak on behalf of the industry, in a sort of vague, nebulous way.

They haven't really challenged it and I think they hope that it would just pass over and they can continue. But I think, they do now realize that at least this whole Clean Label thing has been blow apart, and that people understand that Clean Label is semantic.

**DM:** Can you expand on that because you really didn't discuss it previously. You discussed it well in your book.

**JB:** Yeah.

**DM:** But maybe just discuss what Clean Label is.

**JB:** Okay. So Clean Label is what the food industry realizes is that for the last 10 to 15 years, it's been obvious that the sort of articulate, thoughtful consumers, the act of consumers on both sides of the Atlantic, want natural food. If we look at a label and we see that it's full of ingredients that we don't understand or long, complex names with numbers attached to them, we're not going to buy it.

What they've done is try to remove those additives and ingredients that would cause us alarm and make us [say] "What is that in my food?" and replace them with ones that sound a lot better. These are the things that we were discussing earlier. Thing like carrot concentrate would appear now in a label instead of a coloring, which would just say "coloring" and have a new number in our case attached to it. This is the Clean Label swap. The food industry really organized attempt to try and calm us down by processed foods and convince us that really it's fine nowadays.

That's the kind of concept of Clean Label. I think my book has kind of blow that apart because what I can see, when I look at Clean Label substitute, is that there really are additives by another name. They're not really anymore natural. But they just sound better. They don't have a bad ring to them. That's essentially what the food industry has been up to.

**DM:** Well, thank you for explaining that. You know, one of the principles in my eating healthy program or my Nutrition Plan, as I call it (it's just free and available on my website, on the homepage), is that you have to pay... Someone has to spend serious time in the kitchen, as you allude to earlier. Either yourself, your spouse, or you pay someone to do it.

There's just no question around it. I think you'll be inspired to abide by that principle if you read this book. So clearly, the first step is to pick up a copy of your book, *Swallow This: Serving Up the Food Industry's Darkest Secrets*. Definitely, get it.

Do you have a website or any other resources that come by with this?

**JB:** Yes, I do. My website is [www.JoannaBlythmanWriting.com](http://www.JoannaBlythmanWriting.com), all one word. And it has...

**DM:** We'll spell that, J-O-A-N-N-A-B-L-Y-T-H-M-A-N.com?

**JB:** That's [www.JoannaBlythmanWriting.com](http://www.JoannaBlythmanWriting.com).

**DM:** Oh, sorry.

**JB:** But even if you just google Joanna Blythman, you will find it.

**DM:** It will come right up.

**JB:** Yeah.

**DM:** Perfect.

**JB:** And that has all my [inaudible 39:11] journalism. It covers everything. It covers things from the book. And online, there are quite a few links and you'll be able to get them from our website, of articles that had been written from the book that have quite an impact in the UK. So there, if you want to get a taste of the book without actually first ordering it, then please look at those because I hope then you would want to read the book.

**DM:** Good. Do you have plans for a follow up?

**JB:** Well, yes. I have some ideas in my head, actually. Because I think this whole area of... I mean, I've scratched the surface. There are so many developments happening now on food.

We're also looking at synthetic biology which is called SynBio. This is a completely artificial biology. We see things like vanilla flavorings being produced by SynBio methods but they are basically like an extreme form of genetic engineering, genetic modification (GM). And obviously weighs a whole number of risks.

**DM:** And it's coming. Craig Venter is like probably the leader in the United States in this area, SynBiology.

**JB:** Yeah.

**DM:** There are some others. Harvard is doing it, but this is definitely coming. The technology is improving exponentially to allow this to occur more easily and inexpensively. You can be guaranteed that you're going to see more and more of this in the future. There's just no question about it.

**JB:** I think that's right. There are just so many technologies. I mean, we haven't really much touched on in discussion the enzymes. Enzymes are huge now behind the scenes of food processing. To do things like when eggs are pasteurized, they lose their color. Therefore, you then introduce an enzyme which then gives them a better color.

There are all sorts of uses of enzymes now in food processing. We know that in this country, anyway, there are 150 enzymes being used in food manufacturing. They're not mainly on the label. At least one enzyme-modified ingredient in every processed food. Certain foods have... Like bread have five if you buy standard bread.

**DM:** Well, enzymes by themselves aren't intrinsically toxic. They're just merely proteins and amino acids that are broken down. But what they do is they masquerade and deceive the underlying process, and fool you into believing that you're buying something that you really aren't.

**JB:** Well, that's absolutely right. The classic one is a mature cheese flavor. If you matured cheese the proper way, you do it old school, then you have cheese. You keep it for three months or six months, even longer, to develop that nice, mature flavor. But you can do that in a few days with an enzyme. You can create a fake flavor.

I think in your lovely banana bread recipe, it just really caught my interest, and you don't sub butter and one of the key things that I mentioned on food processing is that food technologist, their goal in life is to reduce the real ingredients and find substitutes.

**DM:** Oh yeah, sure. There's a whole section in the book about the butter.

**JB:** It had the same effect.

**DM:** The butter is expensive so they do not want to put butter in the food. They want to put something that gives the same impact in flavor and taste, but at a fraction of the cost. It's all about the cost.

**JB:** That's right. They really want to take out the butter and then they'll add something like water, coloring, and some very cheap and very chemically processed oil. Then they'll bind that...

**DM:** Vegetable oil that's genetically modified.

**JB:** Yeah.

**DM:** Omega-6, it's toxic. Omega-6.

**JB:** Yeah, absolutely. That will go in. But they will still put in enough butter that they can put on the "made with butter." Exactly, it's very interesting. One thing that I haven't said that I would just love to share is that one of the things I've discovered is that most processed food wouldn't look at all attractive if it didn't have colorings added. It would be gray and beige.

The classic case here is margarine. If you saw what it really was like without coloring, we wouldn't want it.

**DM:** Does anyone buy margarine nowadays?

**JB:** There are booming shelves here with things called spreads which are really [inaudible 44:19].

**DM:** Oh, geez. That's so sad.

**JB:** It's being renamed. Of course, the flavorings are replacing... They try to replace the flavors that have been removed in processing. Flavorings do two jobs in processed food. They cover up the unpleasant taste that comes as a result of processing. Flavor masking is one of the main reasons why food industries use flavorings.

But they also use flavorings to try and give food flavor when it's been through a manufacturing process that has totally stripped it of flavor. They have to try and add back something that sort of resembles the flavors that have gotten lost. Because food processing is high temperature, high pressure, a lot of stress in ingredients. They're sort of left for dead on the pavement after that. Something has to be done to them to kind of make them taste better again.

That's a sort of logic of flavoring and coloring.

**DM:** Terrific. I think you've given us a really good taste of what's in the book and describe some of the highlights. Again, it's no mystery that we need to avoid processed foods. I'm sure that probably everyone watching this knew this before they turned the video on. But there's just no question, at least in my mind, that the magnificent research you did, it's really not available anywhere else.

As an insider to find out the specific details of why this is so, it's one of the most empowering, motivating, inspirations that you could possibly do. I strongly encourage everyone picking up a copy of this book, reading, and passing it around. Create awareness that will eventually, hopefully, inspire more and more people to vote with their dollars, and not buy this processed food garbage. The industry's going to respond if we vote with our dollars.

If we don't buy this garbage anymore, they're not going to be producing it. Ultimately, the bottom line is they're business people. They are not going to be providing this type of product if there's no market for it. They're not stupid, they will lose money and they don't want to do that. You can spend your money on better things.

Thank you so much for putting this together, for doing the hard, diligent work you did, to compile this information because no one else has done it before. It's a real treasure to find these all in one place.

**JB:** Oh, well. I'm really delighted that you find it useful. That's what the book is all about, for people to just kind of upgrade their understanding of processed food. I feel that we are all stuck on reading book one and we now need to rapidly progress your reading book.

**DM:** Yeah, we've got to catch up with the industry because they really bypass our comprehension of what the heck they're doing to our food.

**JB:** Yeah, that's absolutely right. I'm so pleased to talk to you. It's been a great pleasure, absolutely, just to discuss this and to feel that this information is out there in the public arena. It's a resource for people who are interested. I'm delighted to be able to do that.

*[END]*