

regenerere.org

The website of a nonprofit that advocates for alternative health treatments. The site has frequently made false and misleading health claims, including about COVID-19.



Proceed with caution: This website severely violates basic journalistic standards.

Score: 30/100

Ownership and Financing

Regenerere.org is owned by Actinidia, a nutritional supplement and culinary products company based in Taulis, a town in the southern French department of Pyrénées-Orientales. Actinidia's president, Thierry Casasnovas, is also the manager of Regenerere.org and the publishing director of the magazine Régénère, published in partnership with French marketing agency Progressif Media. In 2020, Casasnovas was elected to the Town Council of Taulis.

Actinidia also sells online and in-person wellness training courses and nutritional products, and it organizes a food and health festival, Rencontres de la Régénération.

Casasnovas is a former baker who began to carve out a career as a YouTuber in 2011, promoting the “natural hygiene” movement, which advocates raw plant-based dieting and fasting to help the body fight diseases and “regenerate” itself. In 2012, two years before he launched the site, Casasnovas founded Régénère, a nonprofit whose stated mission is “to disseminate knowledge acquired about regeneration, especially in terms of food and lifestyle,” according to the site’s History page. (“Diffuser les connaissances acquises sur la régénération, notamment en terme d'alimentation et d'hygiène de vie.”)

Regenerere.org runs advertising for health and nutrition products as well as for training courses. The site also invites readers to donate money to the nonprofit.

-  Does not repeatedly publish false content (22points)
-  Gathers and presents information responsibly (18)
-  Regularly corrects or clarifies errors (12.5)
-  Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly (12.5)
-  Avoids deceptive headlines (10)
-  Website discloses ownership and financing (7.5)
-  Clearly labels advertising (7.5)
-  Reveals who's in charge, including any possible conflicts of interest (5)
-  The site provides names of content creators, along with either contact or biographical information (5)

Criteria are listed in order of importance.

[More information.](#)

Content

The site’s Legal Notice states that Actinidia supports Regenerere.org so that the nonprofit “can promote its activities: internships, online course for sale (video packages for download), conferences.” The homepage

states that Regenere.org provides “the best natural lifestyle and dietary principles” along with “general advice on healthy living, for a straightforward, informational purpose.” (“Les meilleures règles hygiéno-diététiques naturelles... des conseils généraux d’hygiène de vie, et ce, dans un but de simple vulgarisation.”)

In addition to promoting the nonprofit Régénère, the site posts YouTube videos produced by Casasnovas, in which he regularly presents natural hygiene as a better alternative to conventional medicine, including vaccines and chemotherapy. His videos often feature conversations with other proponents of alternative health practices, including anti-vaccine advocates Jean-Jacques Crèvecoeur and Christian Tal Schaller.

Typical headlines on the site have included “Coronavirus: Is a lockdown the best strategy?” (“Coronavirus : Confinement, est-ce la meilleure stratégie ?”); “How stress leads to overweight and diabetes” (“Comment le stress nous amène au surpoids et au diabète”); and “Celery juice: A new panacea?” (“Le jus de céleri : une nouvelle panacée ?”).

The website also publishes a Q&A section that provides answers to readers’ questions about health and nutrition matters.

Credibility

Content on Regenere.org routinely includes false and unsubstantiated claims about the medical benefits of alternative health practices. In 2020, the site published a series of videos advocating unproven methods to prevent or treat COVID-19.

For example, in a May 2020 video titled “Surviving the coronavirus” (“Survivre au coronavirus”) Casasnovas claimed that practices such as fasting and taking cold baths can help prevent COVID-19. “Beforehand, if you practice fasting regularly, strengthening the body by following the principles of the Law of Hormesis, which means some stress followed by a sufficient period of integration — either through fasting, through exposure to the cold, or through physical exercise, or through breathing — well, you're going to strengthen your

immune system in such a way that the coronavirus isn't going to be a problem," Casasnovas said. "It's over, coronavirus," he continued. "If I was the Minister of Health, it would be quickly settled: a cold bath and fasting for everyone, a little bit of carrot juice and there you go." ("En amont, si vous pratiquez régulièrement le jeûne, le renforcement de l'organisme en suivant les principes de la loi de l'Hormèse, c'est-à-dire un stress suivi d'un temps d'intégration suffisant, que ça soit avec le jeûne, que ça soit avec l'exposition au froid, que ça soit avec l'exercice physique, que ce soit avec la respiration, et bien vous allez suffisamment muscler votre système immunitaire de manière à ce que le coronavirus ne soit pas un problème... C'est réglé, le coronavirus. Si j'étais ministre de la Santé moi, ce serait réglé rapido : bain froid et jeûne pour tout le monde, un petit peu de jus de carotte et vas-y, vas-y que je t'envoie.")

According to the World Health Organization, the French Ministry of Health, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there is no specific medicine or other substance recommended to prevent or treat the strain of coronavirus responsible for the 2020 outbreak. In 2014, the French Institute of Health and Medical Research published a report concluding that there is no evidence that fasting has any meaningful therapeutic effects.

In May 2020, the site posted a video — titled "Health alert, freedom alert" ("Alerte à la santé, alerte à la liberté") — of a conversation between Casasnovas, anti-vaccine advocates Jean-Jacques Crèvecoeur and Christian Tal Schaller, and conspiracy theorist and YouTuber Silvano Trotta. The participants made numerous false claims about vaccines and the COVID-19 pandemic, such as Tal Schaller's claim that "when you will be given the mandatory vaccine, which is a chip, you will be connected to artificial intelligence, this sort of enormous cloud created to dominate you, and then we'll all be slaves." ("Quand on vous aura mis le vaccin obligatoire qui est une puce, vous serez reliés à l'intelligence artificielle, cet espèce d'énorme cloud créée pour vous dominer et là nous serons tous des esclaves.")

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. Moreover, PolitiFact and Reuters, among others, have reported that there is no vaccine in development that involves a chip. Dr. Wilbur Chen, an infectious disease scientist at the University of Maryland's Center for Vaccine Development and Global Health, told PolitiFact that even the smallest microchips "are rather large, such that none would ever fit into a vaccine needle — these are very small-bore needles."

Tal Schaller's claim may have stemmed from a debunked conspiracy theory claiming that Bill Gates is developing a COVID-19 vaccine that involves tracking microchips. A paper published in December 2019 by researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, with funding from Gates' philanthropic foundation, described a developing technology that can keep a vaccination record on a patient's skin with an ink-like injection that could be read by smartphone. However, this research is unrelated to COVID-19, the study's lead researcher, Kevin McHugh, told FactCheck.org. Bill Gates denied the claim in a June 2020 call with journalists, stating, "I've never been involved in any sort of microchip-type thing.... It's almost hard to deny this stuff because it's so stupid or strange."

In the video posted on the site, Tal Schaller also claimed that the COVID-19 pandemic was used as a cover to install a 5G network. "There is an important point to note, it's that behind this whole COVID-19 story, for me, I always told myself, but why are they doing all this? And the reason was to throw up a smokescreen on what they do, which is ten times worse. It's to put up 5G everywhere... It's toxic, we know it, the radio frequencies." ("Il y a un point important à signaler, c'est que derrière toute cette histoire du COVID-19, pour moi, je me suis toujours dit, mais pourquoi ils font tout ça? Et la raison c'était de jeter un écran de fumée sur ce qu'ils font qui est dix fois pire. C'est de mettre de la 5G partout... C'est toxique, ça on le sait, les radio fréquences.")

There is no evidence that a 5G network was rolled out in France during the pandemic. The first version of 5G is set to launch by the end of 2020, according to France's Electronic Communications, Postal and Print media distribution Regulatory Authority (L'Autorité de régulation des communications électroniques, des postes et de la distribution de la presse). Moreover, a March 2020 report from the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection, a Germany-based organization that studies the health effects of non-ionizing radiation such as radio waves, found no evidence that 5G exposure posed a risk to human health. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration says on its website that "to date, there is no consistent or credible scientific evidence of health problems caused by the exposure to radio frequency energy emitted by cell phones."

Commenting on the Regenera.org video, the French Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Prevention of Delinquency and Radicalization, a government agency that works to prevent extremism, tweeted, "One single objective for these 4 speakers: to help grow their business. Don't be fooled by false promises that put your health in danger." ("Un seul objectif pour ces 4 intervenants : faire prospérer leurs affaires. Ne vous laissez pas abuser par de fausses promesses qui mettent en péril votre santé.")

The site has also made unsubstantiated claims about cancer. The site's Q&A section features an undated article, written in response to a reader who wrote, "I have advanced cancer, I'm exhausted, I'm at the end of my rope. Can you contact me to do a consultation with you?" ("J'ai un cancer à un stade avancé, je suis épuisé, je me sens au bout du rouleau. Pouvez-vous me contacter pour faire une consultation avec vous ?"). The site replied, "It is difficult for us to establish a protocol remotely and we don't do any consultation or prescription."

However, the response went on to recommend several controversial cancer diets, including the Gerson therapy, which is a raw-food plant-based diet, and the Breuss therapy, a method of juice and tea

fasting. “In advanced cancer cases,” the site stated, “detox cures such as the Breuss cure or the Gerson cure work wonders, it is a juice protocol, for the Gerson cure, it is apple and carrot juice on one hand, alternated with vegetable juice, between about 8 to 12 cups a day.” (“Il nous est difficile d'établir un protocole à distance et nous ne faisons ni consultation, ni de prescription... Dans des cas de cancers avancés, des cures de détoxination de type cure de Breuss ou cure Gerson font merveille, il s'agit d'un protocole de jus, pour la cure Gerson, c'est jus pomme et carotte d'un côté, alterné avec jus de légumes, entre 8 à 12 verres par jour environ.”)

Studies dating to the 1940s have found no evidence that the Gerson therapy can treat cancer, according to the U.S. National Cancer Institute. The British nonprofit Cancer Research UK has noted that Gerson therapists often encourage people not to have chemotherapy while on the Gerson diet, because it can damage the immunity system. “Stopping your conventional cancer treatments and methods of symptom control can be harmful,” Cancer Research UK states on its website. “Many websites are advertising or promoting Gerson therapy. But reputable scientific cancer organisations do not support them,” the website adds.

A 2012 review, published in German medical journal *The Deutsche Medizinische Wochenschrift*, analyzed multiple studies and research on cancer diets, including the Breuss diet, and said that it “did not find any scientific publication of a clinical study which describes positive results regarding survival. On the contrary, data show malnutrition and side effects.”

Because Regenere.org promotes false and misleading health information and medical claims, NewsGuard has determined that the site repeatedly publishes false content, does not gather and present information responsibly, and does not avoid deceptive headlines.

Regenere.org does not publish a corrections policy and NewsGuard did not find corrections on the site.

Because Regenere.org is the website of an advocacy organization and is transparent about its mission, NewsGuard has determined that the criterion covering the separation of news and opinion does not apply.

Regenere.org did not respond to two NewsGuard emails seeking comment on the articles cited above and on the site's approach corrections.

Transparency

The website's Legal Notice page discloses that it is owned by Actinidia and promotes the activities of the nonprofit Régénère. The page identifies Casasnovas as its publication manager and includes general email addresses.

The Videos & Articles section identifies Casasnovas as the primary content creator. (Videos posted on the site are hosted on Casasnovas' official YouTube account.) The Legal Notice page also states that Casasnovas is responsible for the content on the site.

On the site's History page, the site discloses that it "offers juice extractors for commercial gain; a commission is received by Régénère for each sale, which allows it to operate, thanks to your support." ("Commercialement, Régénère vous propose déjà des extracteurs de jus, une commission est perçue par Régénère à chaque vente, ce qui lui permet de fonctionner grâce à votre engagement.")

However, the site does not include this disclosure on individual posts and videos that promote products — which is why NewsGuard has determined that the site does not meet its standard for clearly labeling advertising.

Regenere.org did not respond to two emails seeking comment on the site's labelling of commercial content.

History

The biography of Casasnovas on Actinidia's website states that he survived advanced tuberculosis, hepatitis, acute pancreatitis "thanks to a mostly raw diet." ("grâce à une alimentation majoritairement crue.") This experience led him to become an advocate of the natural hygiene movement, according to the site. He

posted his first video on the raw food lifestyle in 2011 and created a site called VivreCru.org, which has since been taken down.

Regenere.org launched in 2014. That year, Casasnovas was asked in an interview with French newspaper 20 Minutes if he had a medical degree. “I don’t have any, except for an American school of naturopathy and iridology. It’s about doing diagnostics by studying the eyes and nerve markers,” he said. “Then, when I was very young, I learned herbal medicine and I read a lot about physiology. I don’t have the knowledge of a doctor and I don’t pretend to compete.” (“Je n’en ai pas, si ce n’est celui d’une école américaine de naturopathie et d’iridologie. C’est le diagnostic par l’étude des yeux et des marques nerveuses. Après, tout jeune, j’ai appris l’herboristerie et j’ai beaucoup lu sur la physiologie. Je n’ai pas les connaissances d’un médecin et je ne prétends pas rivaliser.”)

The Paris prosecutor’s office opened a preliminary investigation into Casasnovas for allegedly endangering the lives of others, a judicial source told NewsGuard in August 2020, confirming information first disclosed by LCI.

Editor’s Note: This Nutrition Label was updated on Aug 6, 2020.

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Send feedback to NewsGuard: [Click Here](#)

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Financing

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