Essay 3: The investigative essay (9-10 pages 12-pt. TR or Cambria double-spaced)
Essay 3 is an essay organized around an inquiry: writers ask a question related to a food issue, research it, and formulate a thesis. Then they write up their investigation in a way that interests readers in the question and the results of the inquiry process.

Your goals
• To frame an inquiry question that you find truly interesting, and that is a good size and shape (e.g., not a “What is…” question). Ask a question whose answer requires judgment, analysis, interpretation.
• To find credible, relevant, timely source material.
• To deploy evidence accurately and effectively as you build your argument.
• To demonstrate your own thinking.
• To write clear, energetic sentences and to link them in paragraphs that unfold in a graceful, dynamic way.
• To make your essay as interesting as possible to readers—both a general educated audience and a more particular audience you would like to reach with your discussion.

Requirements
Your essay must:
• Begin with a clear inquiry question (which should appear in your Introduction) and provide a clear thesis statement, either in the Introduction or toward the close of the paper (i.e., you may pose the question up front and then build toward your answer).
• Develop an argument, i.e., an idea, that’s your own—not just be a whole lot of information.
• Use 3-4 section headings to structure your essay.
• Make clear and accurate use of source material, and cite all source material, whether the material is quoted, paraphrased or summarized.
• Follow the Format for Essays (Stellar→Materials→General→Format).
• Follow MLA style for in-text citation and a Works Cited page.
• Be 9-10 pages double-spaced, not including the Works Cited.

Options
• Your essay must take its ideas seriously, but the tone and approach are still yours to choose: exploratory or persuasive; straightforward, or playful and humorous.
• Your audience is high-school and college educated readers. But it may help you structure your paper and find its tone if you target a more particular audience—doctors; parents; school food programs; teenagers with eating disorders…