



# Semantic Mapping of Natural Language Input to Database Entries via CNNs

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# Motivation

America's Rising Obesity Rate

15%    22%    31%    34%



1980    1990    2000    2008

Percent of obese Americans



# Partial Solution: USDA

milk

[Try a new search](#)

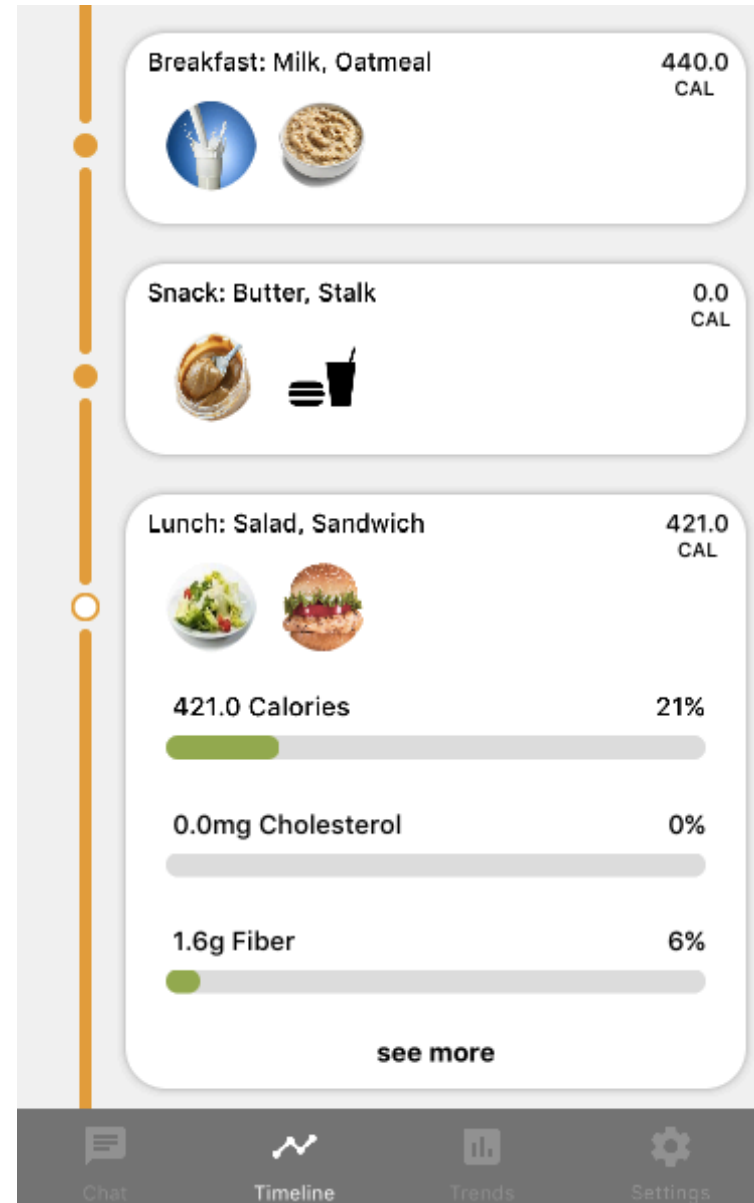
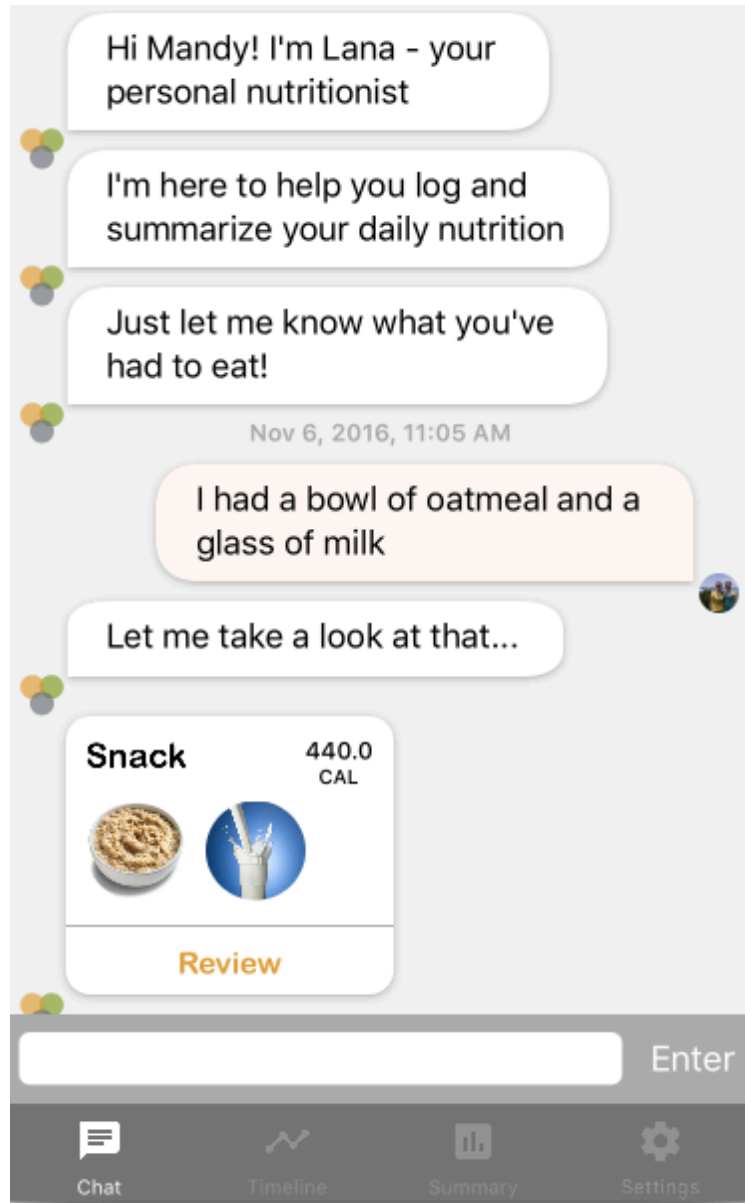
1,252 foods found Click on a food name to view details

NDB No.	Description
45100704	...IC, CHOCOLATE MILK STRAWS, CHO
01223	...plement, milk based, Muscle Milk, pow
42131	Milk dessert, frozen, milk-fat free, chocolate
01224	Protein supplement, milk based, Muscle Milk Ligh
01244	Milk dessert bar, frozen, made from lowfat milk
11379	Potatoes, mashed, dehydrated, prepared from flat
11929	Potatoes, mashed, prepared from granules, witho
01083	Milk, lowfat, fluid, 1% milkfat, with added nonfat r
01086	Milk, nonfat, fluid, with added nonfat milk solids, v
01152	Milk, reduced fat, fluid, 2% milkfat, with added no



Recent	Frequent	My Foods	Meals	Recipes
BBQ Chicken Breast ✓				141
Aladdin, 1 Breast				
Tyson Chicken Breast				165
Protein, 3.5 oz				
Roasted Chicken Breast ✓				147
Aladdin, 1 Each				
Smoked Chicken Breast ✓				113
Aladdin, 2 oz				
Pesto Chicken Breast ✓				180
Aladdin, 1 Each				
Rotisserie Chicken Breast ✓				120
Costco, 3 oz				
Shredded Chicken Breast				165
Plain, 100 g				
Grilled Chicken Breast ✓				171
Aladdin, 1 Each				
Chicken Breast Cutlets ✓				

# Our Solution



(Matt McEachern, Karan Kashyap)

# Old Approach: Simple Word Matching



I drink

**a glass**

of

**Tropicana**

**orange**

**juice**

Quantity

Brand

Description

Food

**Tropicana**

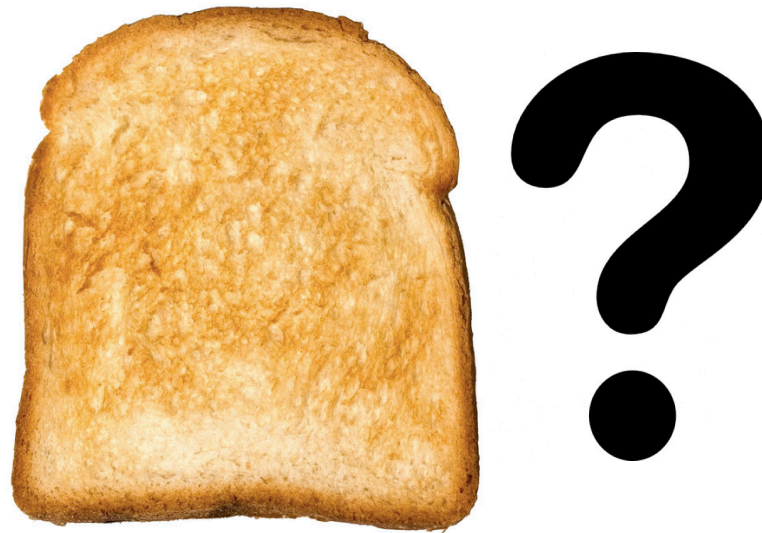
**orange**

**juice**



09206	Orange juice, raw
09207	Orange juice, canned, unsweetened
42270	Beverages, Orange juice drink
09209	Orange juice, chilled, includes from concentrate

# Problem



# New Approach: Direct Mapping to USDA

for dinner I had a bowl of **chili** over **rice** and an **apple**



**chili with beans**  
canned



**rice white**  
short-grain  
cooked



**apples raw**  
with skin



# Step 1: Data Collection

## Instructions

Using the images below, create a meal as if you had eaten some of the foods depicted:

- You've eaten **at least THREE** of the items in the images
- **Check the boxes** of the items you use
- Database names are provided, however, **describe the foods how you would normally say them** (i.e. Kiwifruit -> Kiwi)
- **Specify** appropriate **quantities** (i.e, a cup, a bowl, two tablespoons, one)
- **Do not just list** the food items
- **Do not add** additional items to the meal
- If the same image appears more than once, just select one. It doesn't matter which



X

Oranges, Raw, All Commercial Varieties



Corn, Sweet, Yellow, Cooked, Boiled, Drained, Without Salt



X

Strawberries, Raw



Melons, Casaba, Raw



Mushrooms, White, Raw



X

Kiwifruit, Green, Raw



Sweet Potato, Cooked, Baked In Skin, Flesh, Without Salt



Carrots, Cooked, Boiled, Drained, Without Salt



X

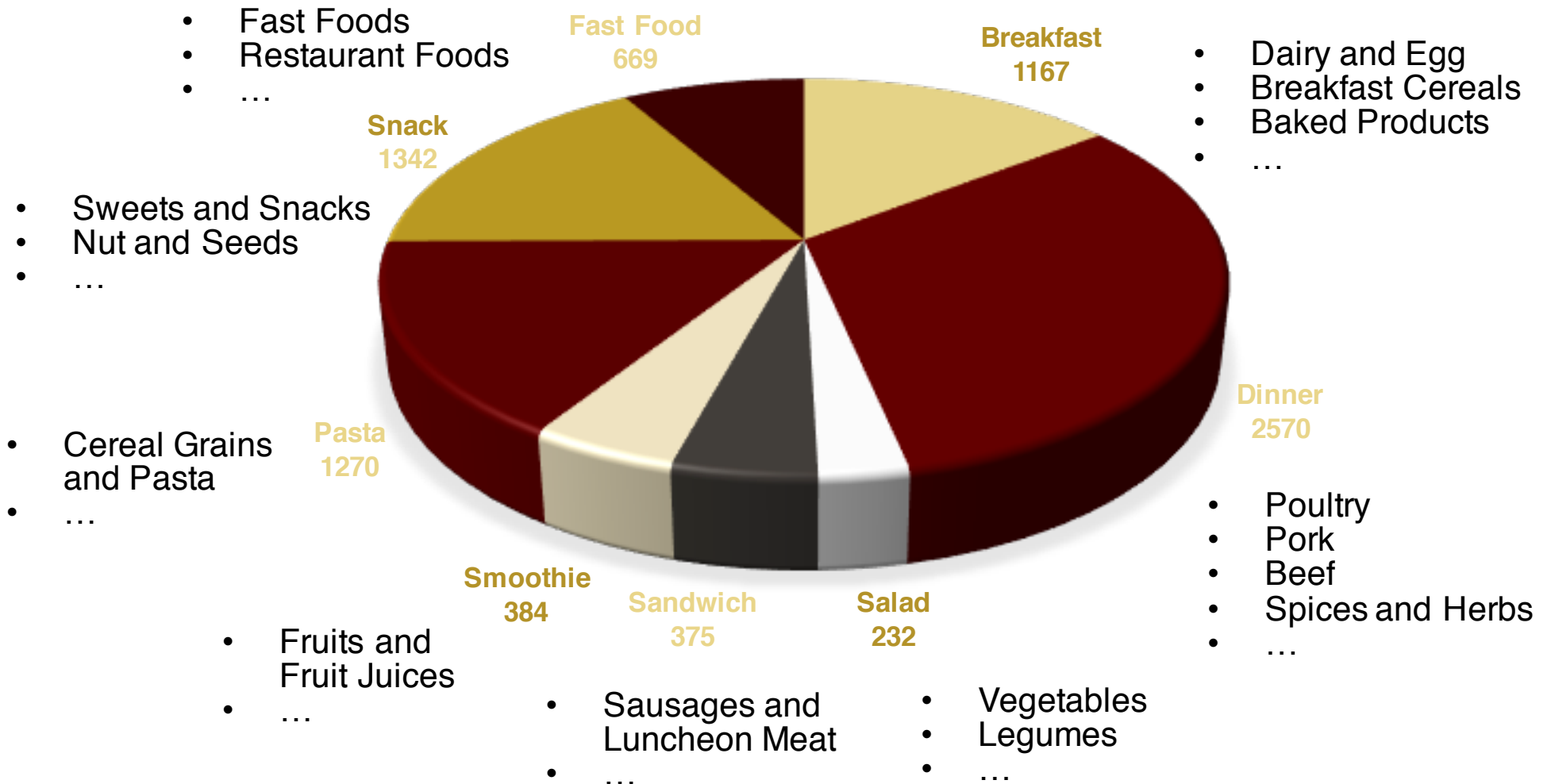
Bananas, Raw



# Step 1: Data Collection

- Collected 31,712 meal logs on Amazon Mechanical Turk.

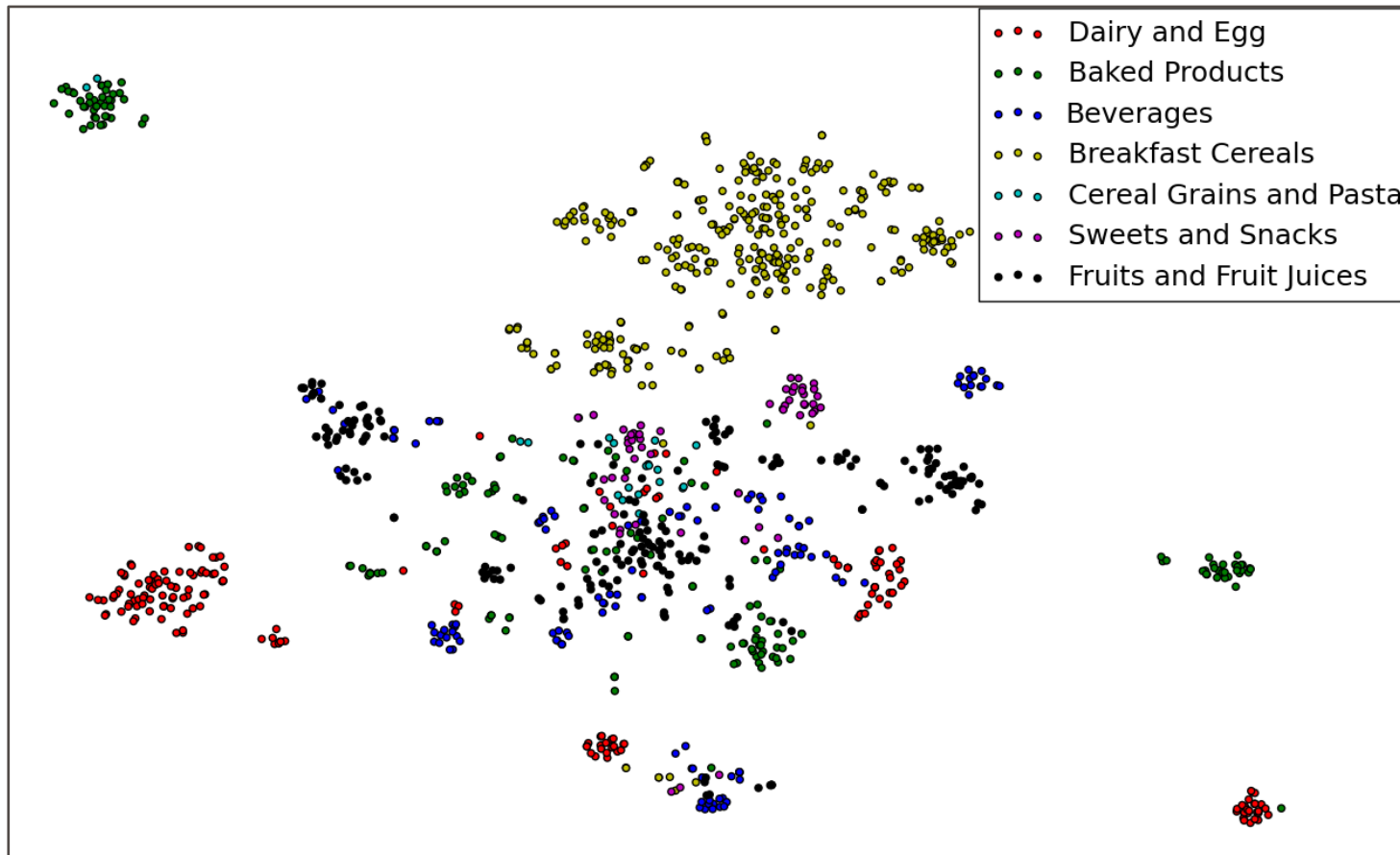
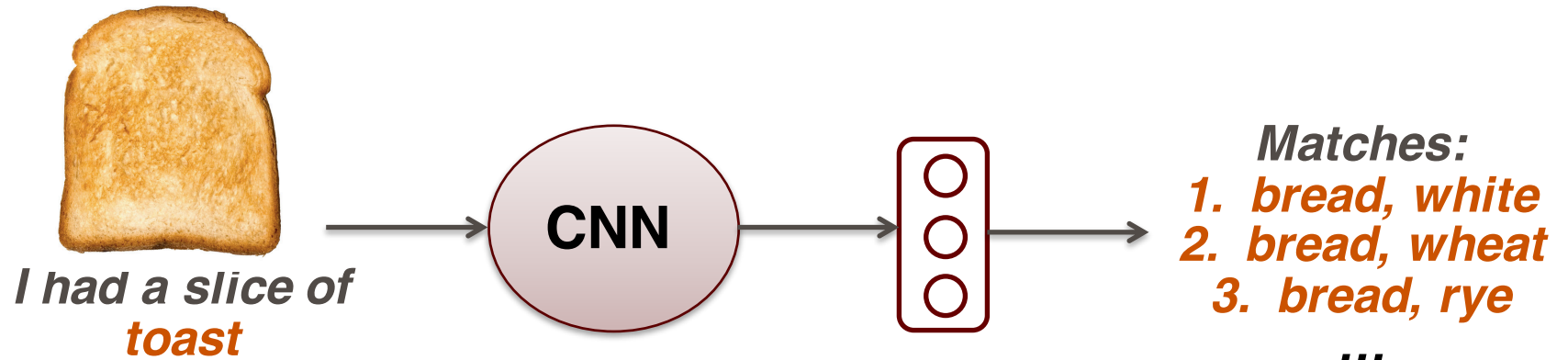
NUMBER OF FOODS PER MEAL



## Step 2: Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN)

- Yan Lecun et al: **Very deep CNNs for text classification**
- Yoon Kim et al: **CNNs for sentence classification**
- Sentence matching
  - Liang Pang et al: **Text matching as image recognition**
  - Baotian Hu et al: **CNN architectures for matching natural language sentences**
  - Wenpeng Yin et al: **ABCNN: Attention-Based CNN for Modeling Sentence Pairs**

# Step 2: Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN)

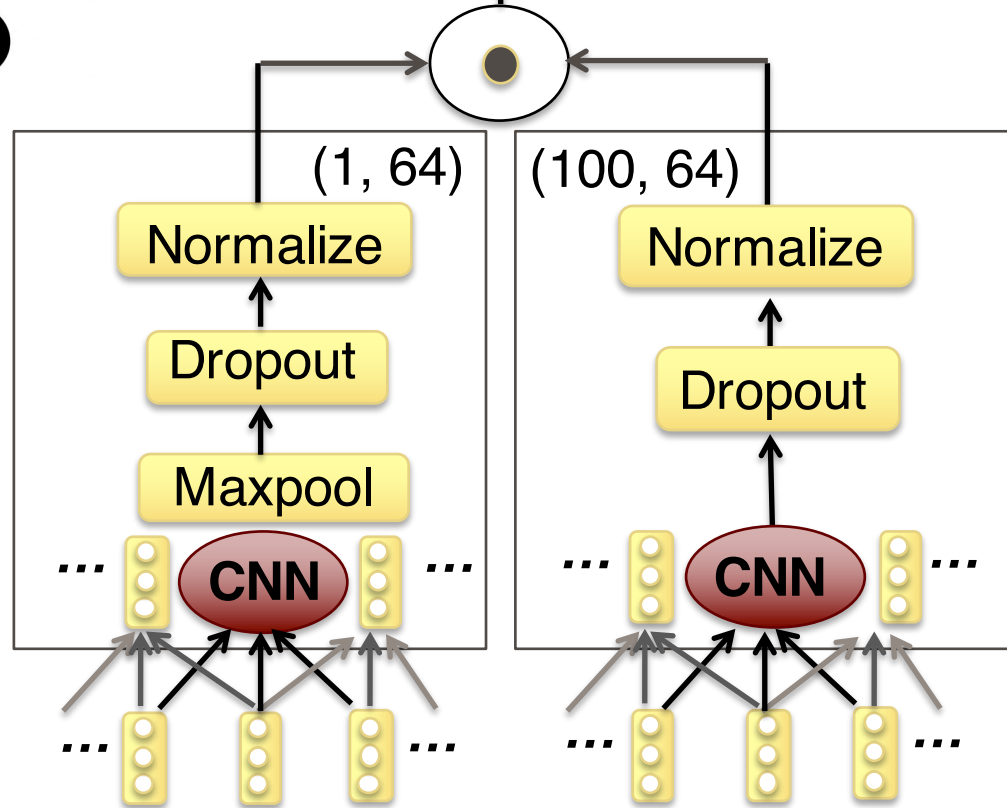


# Step 2: Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN)



**Predict: 1 (Match)  
or 0 (Not Match)**

Sigmoid  
Meanpool  
100 Dot Products



CNN (64 filters,  
w=3 tokens)

Embedding (50d)

Padded Input 0 0 0 ... **chili with beans**

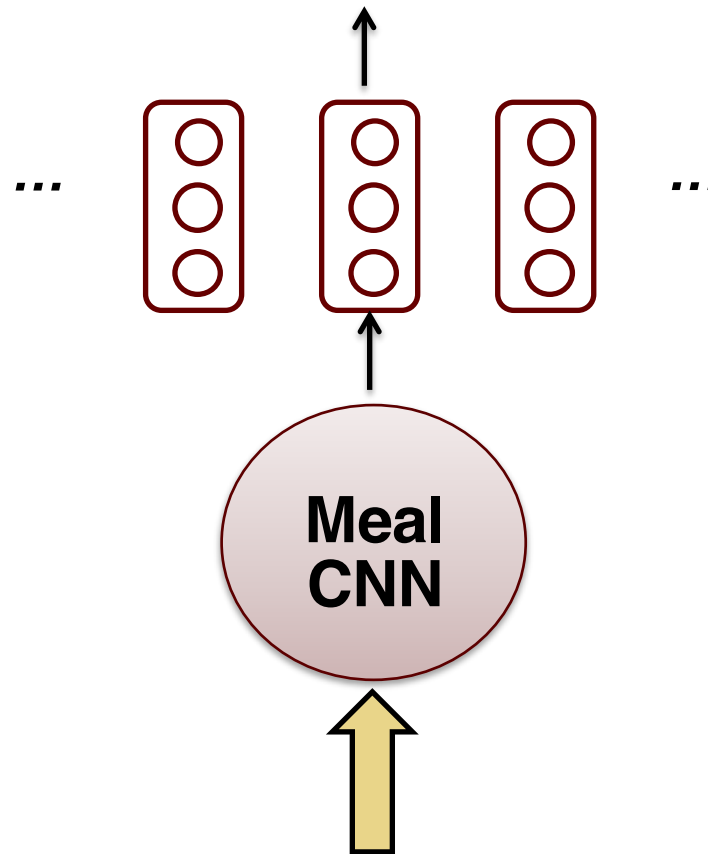
0 0 0 ... for dinner i had a bowl  
of **chili** over rice and an apple

USDA Food  $\longleftrightarrow$  Meal Description  
**Match?**

# Step 3: Predicting USDA Matches

## *Predicted Matches:*

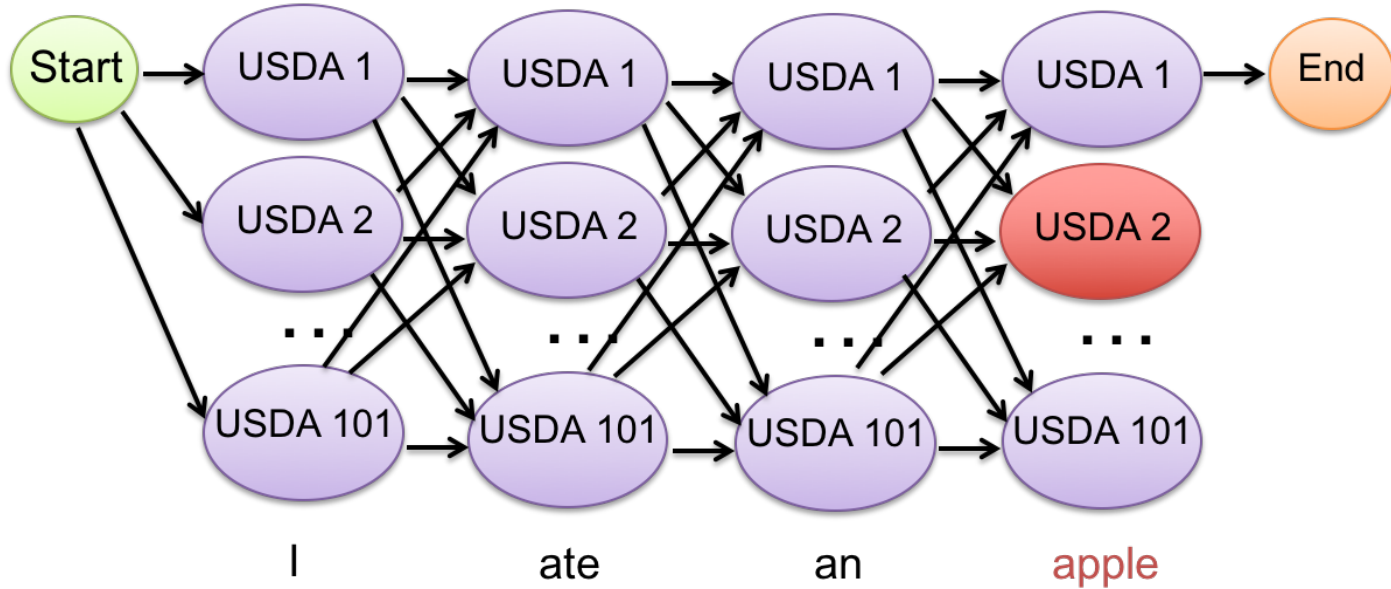
- 1. chili with beans canned*
- 2. rice white short – grain cooked*
- 3. apples raw with skin*



for dinner I had a bowl of **chili** over **rice** and an **apple**

# Step 3: Finite-State Transducer (FST)

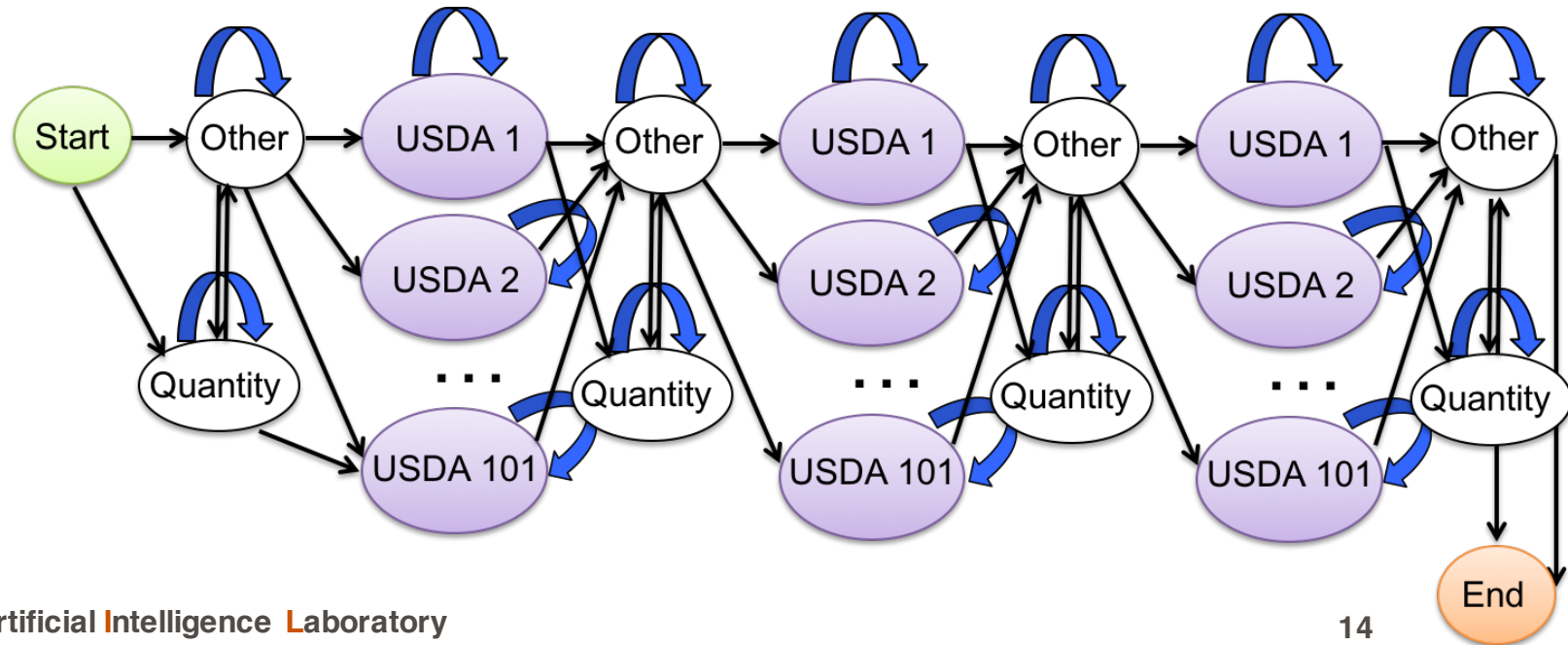
**Meal FST**



Compose



**Food FST**



## Step 3: Finite State Transducer (FST)

- **FST decoder generates predicted USDA food matches.**

Meal: *I had a bowl of **cereal** , one **egg white** , and a glass of **juice** .*

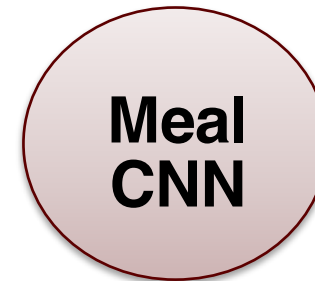
Alignment: *Other Other Other Other Other **ID8243** Other Other  
**ID1124** **ID1124** Other Other Other Other Other **ID9233** Other*

USDA Items:

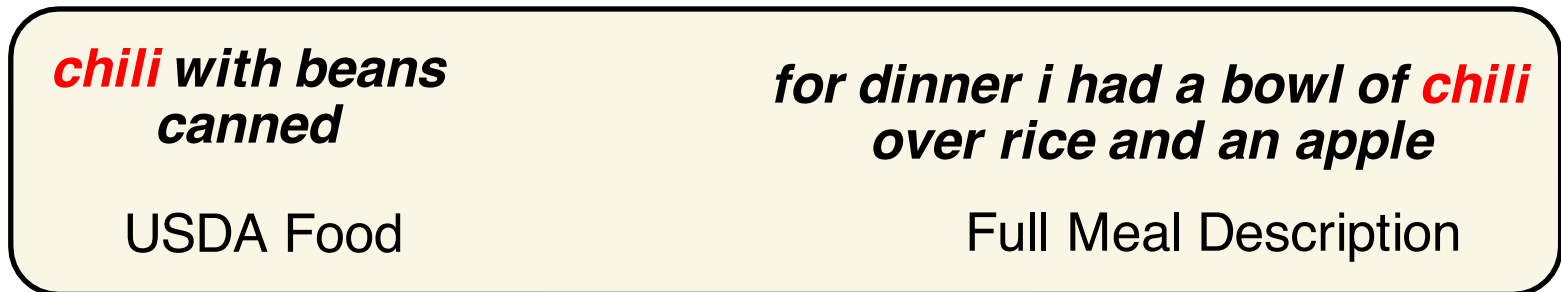
- **ID8243: Cereals ready-to-eat, GENERAL MILLS, HONEY NUT CLUSTERS**
- **ID1124: Egg, white, raw, fresh**
- **ID9233: Passion-fruit juice, yellow, raw**

# Re-training CNN with Augmented Data

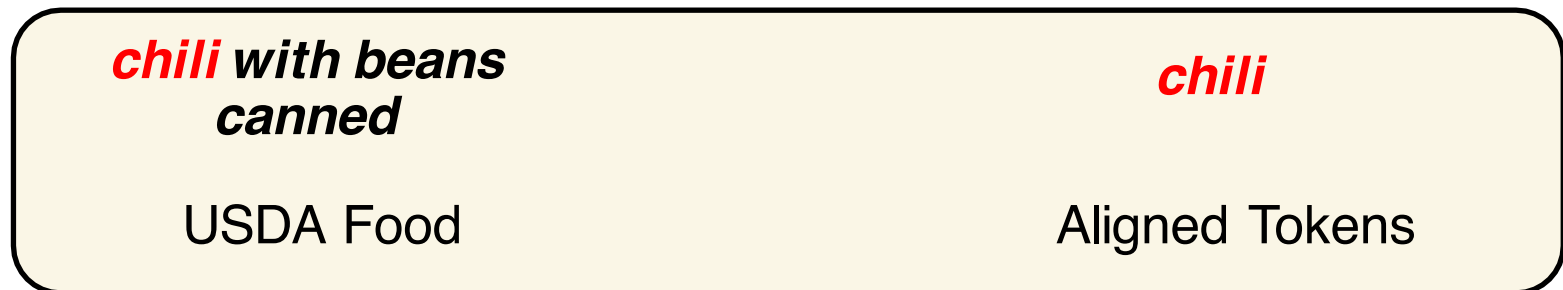
- Augment data with FST-predicted aligned tokens



Training  
Sample 1



Training  
Sample 2



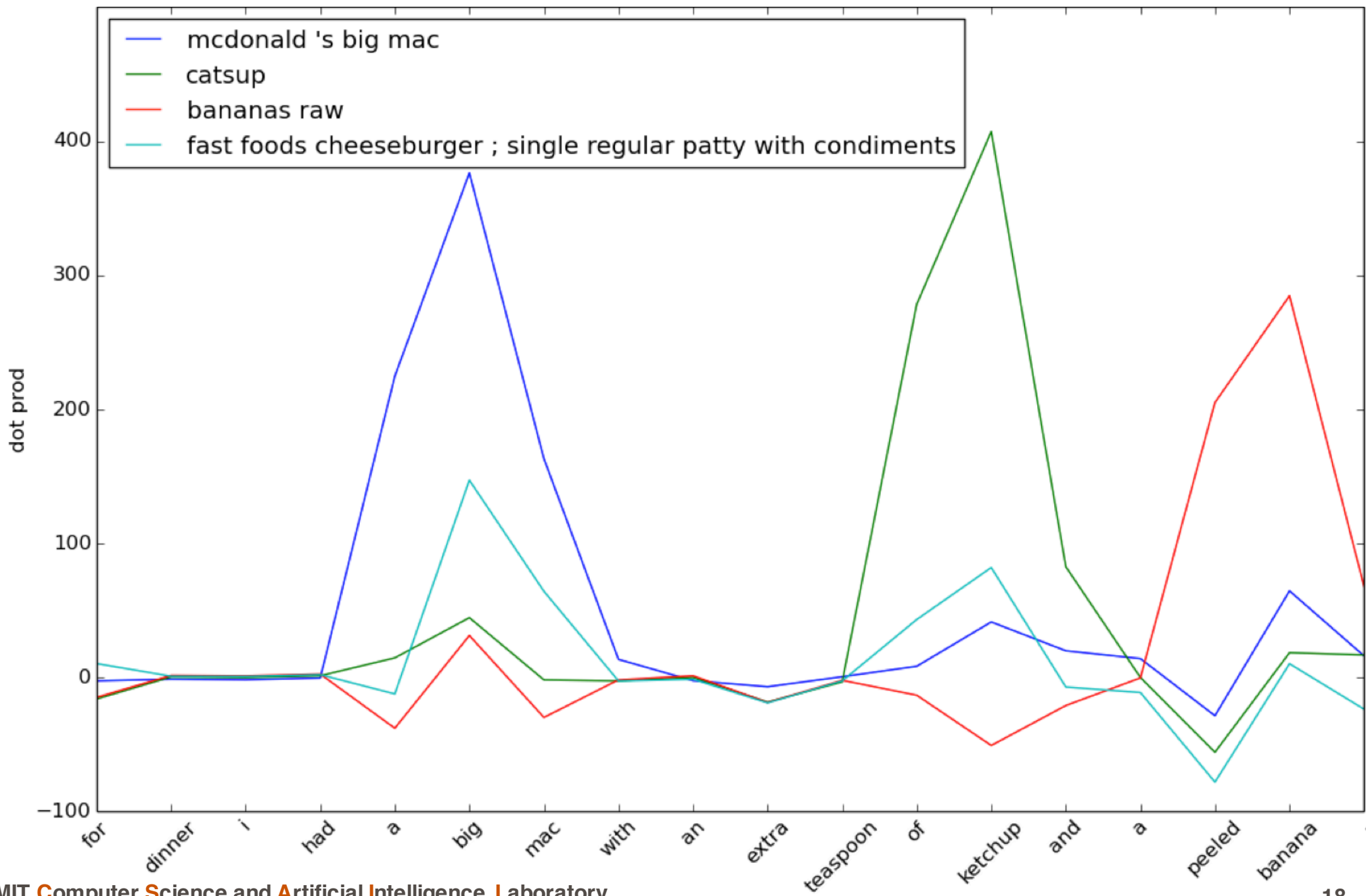


# New Model Performs Better (101 Foods)

- **Recall: % of correctly predicted USDA foods**

Model	Recall
Old: CRF tagger + USDA Lookup	78.9%
New: CNN + FST Top-1	89.2%
New: CNN + FST Top-5	<b>90.6%</b>

# Analysis: Spike Profile



# Analysis: Nearest Neighbors

## **Chicken broiler or fryers breast skinless boneless meat only raw**

1. Chicken broilers or fryers drumstick meat and skin cooked fried flour
2. KFC fried chicken original recipe breast meat only skin and breading removed

## **Cookies chocolate chip refrigerated dough baked**

1. Cookies brownies commercially prepared
2. Snacks granola bars soft uncoated chocolate chip

# Ongoing and Future Research

- **Extend to full USDA database, as well as larger Minnesota database**
- **Character-based models**
- **User testing**
- **Personalized nutrition advice**
- **Follow-up questions**

