



Sustainable Food Policy Alliance: National Nutrition and Dietary Guidance Framework

Sustainable Food Policy Alliance (SFPA) founding member companies Danone North America, Mars, Incorporated, Nestlé USA, and Unilever United States make foods that support healthy, balanced lives. As four of the nation's largest food companies, we believe that the food industry has a responsibility to support and improve public health and environmental health, and that doing so requires leadership not only from food companies and the food industry, but across the food system. SFPA member companies embrace this call for leadership and continue to improve the nutrition and sustainability of our product portfolios because we recognize that with our scale and connection to consumers comes significant impact over what people eat.

SFPA agrees with leading public health, nutrition, and food stakeholders that the nation's dietary advice, including the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA), should:

- Be science based, transparent, and easy to understand and apply;
- Reflect the current public health environment where the average person is overweight or has obesity and is at risk of developing or has been diagnosed with chronic disease, such as diabetes or heart disease;
- Incorporate food groups and categories that reflect a wide range of possible healthful diets, rather than focusing on individual ingredients or nutrients, while continuing to emphasize nutrients to limit, such as added sugar and added salt;
- Be enhanced by national education campaigns and a range of policies and public and private systems changes focused on healthful eating patterns and portion sizes for all life-stages, from infant-feeding, to children, to adults of all ages; and
- Clearly state rationale, including appropriate scientific citations, for omitting or deviating from conclusions drawn by the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC).

SFPA believes that the DGA are a powerful tool to promote health, prevent disease, and advance sound nutrition science, but even more can and should be done to help people at all life stages and across all socio-economic statuses live healthier lives. We believe there are additional opportunities to address inherent limitations in current dietary guidance. The DGA, for example, have historically made incremental, nutrient-based recommendations based on the preponderance of scientific evidence. While generally a solid and sound tactic, this approach has not kept pace with changing dietary patterns and eating styles and has not been enough to turn the tide on food- and nutrition-related public health concerns.



SFPA suggests that while continuing to make incremental improvements on existing dietary guidance, the DGAC and food and public health stakeholders should also explore how the following areas could be incorporated into future dietary guidance that:

- **Reflects the connection between climate change, public health, and food security.** What people choose to eat has an impact on the environment. Dietary advice should account for how climate change, water scarcity, soil health, and other environmental challenges may impact the availability and nutrient density of foods and beverages.
- **Considers “Food as Medicine”** as a motivating concept, and as an approach with food as a health prescription that may assist in driving positive behavior change.
- **Recognizes culture as a key driver of the foods and beverages people buy and eat,** and as a tool to help adoption of healthy eating patterns. Culture is reflected in culinary practices, ethnic food traditions, age- and lifestyle-driven food choices, and personal beliefs.
- **Uses data to demonstrate how dietary recommendations drive progress towards nutrition and environmental sustainability goals,** for example how the DGA and dietary guidance provided through federal feeding programs can support achievement of Healthy People 2030 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals focused on nutrition and the environment.
- **Identifies priorities for research, innovation, and discovery** by specifically flagging gaps in existing nutrition and dietary science and evidence and making recommendations for how to address and prioritize those gaps.