

Backgrounder

2000 DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS, 5th Edition

HISTORY

Since 1980, USDA and HHS have jointly published the Dietary Guidelines for Americans every 5 years. Beginning with the 1985 edition, USDA and HHS appointed a Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee of prominent experts in nutrition and health to review the scientific and medical knowledge current at the time and recommend to the Secretaries revisions to the Guidelines. The Committees produced reports of their recommendations and rationale to the Secretaries. The Departments then reviewed, edited, and published the revised Guidelines, using essentially the same process to prepare the 2000 edition as was used to prepare previous editions.

PURPOSE

The Dietary Guidelines provide the basis for Federal nutrition policy and nutrition education activities. Specifically, the Guidelines provide advice for healthy Americans ages 2 years and over about food choices that promote health and prevent disease.

MANDATE

The National Nutrition Monitoring and Related Research Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5341) requires the Secretaries of Agriculture and Health and Human Services to publish jointly every 5 years a report entitled, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The report must (1) contain nutritional and dietary information and guidelines for the general public, (2) be based on the preponderance of scientific and medical knowledge current at the time of publication, and (3) be promoted by each Federal agency in carrying out any Federal food, nutrition, or health program. (Issued voluntarily by USDA and HHS in 1980, 1985, and 1990, the 1995 edition was the first statutorily mandated report.)

DIETARY GUIDELINES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Following established precedent, in August 1998, USDA and HHS appointed an 11-member Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee to review the 1995 edition of the Guidelines and determine if, on the basis of current scientific and medical knowledge, revisions are warranted.

C **Members:** On September 18, 1997, USDA and HHS announced their intention to establish the Committee in the *Federal Register* and invited nominations for membership. Out of about 80 nominees, USDA and HHS jointly agreed on the 11 appointed members—Cuberto Garza, M.D. Ph.D (chair), Suzanne P. Murphy, Ph.D., R.D. (vice-chair), Richard Deckelbaum, M.D., Johanna Dwyer, D.Sc., R.D., Scott M. Grundy, M.D., Ph.D., Rachel Johnson, Ph.D., M.P.H., R.D., Shiriki K. Kumanyika, Ph.D., Alice Lichtenstein, D.Sc., Meir Stampfer, M.D., Dr. P.H., Lesley Fels Tinker, Ph. D., and Roland L. Weinsier. The members are recognized experts in

their fields and collectively represented the current scientific knowledge in nutrition and health with expertise in specific specialty areas, including cardiovascular disease and cancer, pediatrics, gerontology, biochemistry, general medicine, and public health. The membership also reflected race, gender, and geographic diversity.

- C **Meetings:** The Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee held four public meetings in Washington, D.C.—on September 28-29, 1998, March 8-10, 1999, June 16-18, 1999, and September 7-9, 1999. All meetings were announced in the Federal Register and open to the public.
- C **Public Comments:** The Committee received oral comments from the public during its second meeting in March 1999. In addition, the Committee solicited written comments. The Committee received and reviewed 163 comments from the public.
- C **Literature Search:** USDA and HHS searched Medline and AGRICOLA databases for literature related to each guideline and supplied results to the Committee.
- C **Report:** On February 2, 2000, the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee submitted its report to the Secretaries.

DEPARTMENTAL PROCESS

- C **Consumer Research:** In April 1999, USDA sponsored consumer research in collaboration with HHS to assess the extent to which consumers understand concepts and messages in the Dietary Guidelines, and to test prototype sections of the Guidelines and potential design of the consumer bulletin. Information collected was summarized and made available to the Committee, and will also be used to refine the consumer bulletin, to develop new nutrition promotion projects, and to plan a nationwide campaign to promote the 2000 edition of the Dietary Guidelines.
- C **Public Comments:** On March 10, 2000 the public was invited to offer USDA and HHS oral comments on the DGAC report and proposed text for the Dietary Guidelines. Written comments were also accepted until March 15, 2000. USDA and HHS received and reviewed more than 1000 comments from the public.
- C **Review and Revisions:** Upon receipt of the Committee's report, both USDA and HHS began independently reviewing the Committee's proposed text for the consumer bulletin for technical content and policy agreement. USDA and HHS then reviewed each other's comments as well as comments from the public to finalize the 5th edition of the Guidelines. Changes in Guideline titles over time are reflected in the attached chart "Dietary Guidelines for Americans 1980 to 2000."
- C **Printing and Release:** The Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP) is responsible for publishing the 2000 edition of the Guidelines. The Departments released the Guidelines at

the National Nutrition Summit on May 30, 2000.