



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **EAT BETTER THE USDA WAY MyPyramid Menu Planner Hailed as Best in Class**

WASHINGTON, April 4, 2008 -- The *MyPyramid Menu Planner* is the best meal and menu planner on the Web today says the American Dietetic Association (ADA), the nation's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. ADA President, Connie Diekman said, "There are a variety of on-line nutrition-related tools, but the *MyPyramid Menu Planner* is one of best over-all. Other planners may focus on calorie counting or other nutrients in the diet, but the *Menu Planner* places its focus on the food groups, helping consumers learn to develop a well-rounded eating plan. Additionally, the site provides the user with immediate feedback as each food entry is made. Because of its ease of use, the ADA recommends it for the individual who is trying to lose weight, the homemaker who is concerned about the diet of the family, elementary school to college age students, as well as Registered Dietitians and other nutrition professionals."

Dr. Brian Wansink, Executive Director of the USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion said, "We are extraordinarily proud of the *Menu Planner* after almost two and a half years of development and testing, and we appreciate the endorsement of ADA."

"The problem is this," Wansink continued. "We all believe we know what constitutes a healthy diet. But do we really? For instance, we know that an apple provides more nutrition than a doughnut. So, making a single comparison between foods is easy. The difficulty comes when we try to conceive of an overall healthy diet day after day. That's where the *MyPyramid Menu Planner* can be so helpful. Traditionally, those who were truly interested in monitoring their food intake kept a food diary writing down every thing that they ate. The *Menu Planner* makes this type of journaling much easier, more accurate, and does the calculation automatically. We encourage everyone who is interested in achieving a healthful, balanced diet for themselves or their families to log on to the *Menu Planner*."

Nutrition professionals and the public can access the *Menu Planner* at: [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov) and click on the new *MyPyramid Menu Planner* in the upper right corner.

To see a short video of Dr. Wansink discussing the *Menu Planner*, go to [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov) and click on MyPyramid PodCasts under Spotlights. There are three ways to use the *Planner*. First, you can determine whether you are eating a balanced diet. Second, you can use it to determine what small dietary changes you have to make for you and your family. And third, you can use it as a shopping guide to determine what foods you need to buy the next time you go shopping.

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Note to Writers and Editors: If you wish to interview Dr. Wansink or a USDA nutritionist, contact John Webster, Director, Public Affairs, USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion at (703) 305-7600.