

Dietary
Guidelines
Advisory
Committee

Report of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2000

Prepared for the
Committee by the
Agricultural
Research
Service

To the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the
Secretary of Agriculture

United States
Department of
Agriculture

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2 February, 2000

Dr. Donna Shalala, Secretary
U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW, Rm. 639G
Washington, DC 20201

Dr. Dan Glickman, Secretary
U.S. Dept. of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Whitten Bldg., Rm. 200A
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretaries Shalala and Glickman:

Enclosed is the report of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee, "Report of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2000"

I wish to take this opportunity to thank you on the committee's behalf. We recognize that our appointment represented a rare privilege to contribute meaningfully to the improvement of the health of all Americans and to the reduction of health disparities among our population. We are grateful for the trust reflected by your appointment of us to this important task.

The process of developing the report has been of enormous value to us individually and as a group. We learned much from reviewing the pertinent literature, listening carefully to input from a wide spectrum of stakeholders, and challenging each other's reasoning and conclusions. We hope that the outcome of these deliberations is similarly rewarding to the public whom they were intended to serve.

I also wish to recognize the staff assigned to the committee. We truly could not have completed our task without the dedicated staff that you made available to us. Special recognition must go to Dr. Carol Suitor. Her assistance was particularly valuable to us as we struggled to develop the very best report possible. We also would like to acknowledge the staff's work in preparing the material that appears in both appendices of this report.

As with other efforts of this type, this one was characterized by what I have come to call the four "C's:" Challenge, Complexity, Change, and Controversy. The scope and depth of the material that we were required to review presented the challenge. I am pleased to assure you that the committee addressed the challenge very ably. Meeting the challenge revealed the complexity of the task and the need for change. Complexity and change inevitably lead to some level of controversy. Although I am pleased that the scientific information on which our recommendations are based is the best that has ever been available to the Dietary Guidelines process, meeting our charge still required a significant amount of scientific judgement.

2 February, 2000

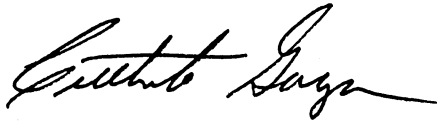
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Although the committee reviewed the evidence objectively, no doubt some voices will question our collective and individual objectivity. Recognizing this inevitability, I hope that the rationally based controversy will stimulate scientific research. I urge your departments to support research to enhance the information base for use by future Dietary Guideline Advisory Committees.

A "C" that we hope to avoid completely is confusion. I realize that complexity, change, and controversy are among the best ingredients for its creation. The committee worked extremely hard and, in my view, succeeded in minimizing the possibility of this outcome. However, the dissemination of this material and the adjunct educational activities undertaken to support it will be crucial to avoiding confusion. I stress this point because it is particularly difficult to avoid confusion in the area of nutrition. Much of this difficulty stems from what I euphemistically refer to as information de jour, i.e., the daily barrage of food and nutrition information directed to consumers that is taken out of context or possibly even misrepresented. To help overcome this problem, the committee stresses the need for your commitment to these ancillary efforts.

I look forward to the dialog our report will engender. Please feel free to call on my colleagues or me should any questions arise in your review of this document.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Cutberto Garza".

Cutberto Garza M.D., Ph.D.

Chair

Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee

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Charge to the Committee and Committee Activities

Public Law 101-445, Section 301 (7 U.S.C. 5341), directs the Secretaries of the U.S. Departments of Agriculture (USDA) and Health and Human Services (HHS) to issue jointly at least every 5 years a report entitled *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. The law instructs that this publication shall contain nutritional and dietary information and guidelines for the general public, shall be based on the preponderance of scientific and medical knowledge current at the time of publication, and shall be promoted by each Federal agency in carrying out any Federal food, nutrition, or health program. The 1980, 1985, and 1990 editions were issued voluntarily by USDA and HHS. The 1995 edition was the first statutorily mandated report.

The Secretaries of USDA and HHS appointed jointly the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee to review the 1995 edition of the *Dietary Guidelines* and to determine if, on the basis of current scientific and medical knowledge, revisions were warranted. If so, the committee was to develop recommendations for revisions in a report to the Secretaries that would contain proposed text for the bulletins's fifth edition and rationale for the suggested modifications to the fourth edition.

The mandate to the committee is to advise the Secretaries of USDA and HHS; thus, the two Departments reserve the right to review and amend the text recommended by the committee prior to publication.

The committee served without pay under the regulations for Federal advisory committees. Its meetings, announced in the *Federal Register*, were open to the public and were held in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Four public meetings were held by the committee in Washington, DC. (September, 1998; March, June, and September, 1999). Meeting transcripts and the final report of the committee are posted on the Internet at <http://www.ars.usda.gov/dgac>. Written comments from the public were received throughout the process. Oral comments were solicited during the second meeting of the committee held in March, 1999. About forty organizations provided oral testimony. A copy of the comments received were placed at the National Agricultural Library, Beltsville, Maryland.