



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA Launches MiPlato: A Visual Reminder to Help Spanish-Speaking Consumers Make Healthier Food Choices

WASHINGTON, Sept. 30, 2011 – Today, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and U.S. Surgeon General Regina Benjamin honored National Hispanic Heritage Month by joining with key Hispanic leaders to celebrate the federal government's new Spanish-language food icon, *MiPlato*, that serves as a reminder to help consumers make healthier food choices. *MiPlato* is a new generation icon that prompts consumers to think about their food choices before they eat, to build a healthy plate at meal time, and to seek more information by going to ChooseMyPlate.gov. *MyPlate* and *MiPlato* emphasize the five food groups: fruits, vegetables, grains, proteins and dairy and are supported by consumer messages including '*Make Half Your Plate Fruits and Vegetables.*'

"*MiPlato* is a quick, simple reminder for all of us to be more mindful of the foods that we're eating," said First Lady Michelle Obama. "As a mom, I can attest to you how much this is going to help parents all across the country, because when a mom or dad comes home from a long day of work, we're already asked to be a chef, a referee or a cleaning crew – so we rarely have time to be a nutritionist too. But we do have time to take a look at our kids' plates, and as long as they're eating proper portions, as long as half of their meal is fruits and vegetables alongside their lean proteins, whole grains and low-fat dairy, then we're good. It's as simple as that."

MiPlato will complement the *MyPlate* image as the government's primary food group symbol, an easy-to-understand visual cue to help consumers adopt healthy eating habits consistent with the *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

"USDA's new *MyPlate* food icon is a simple reminder to help Americans think about their food choices in order to lead healthier lifestyles and today we are proud to introduce its Spanish-language partner, *MiPlato*, to help Hispanic consumers at mealtime," said Vilsack. "Regardless of our primary language, it is important that we all learn about and embrace healthy eating habits because a healthy nation starts with healthy people."

"Today's unveiling of *MiPlato* is important because it's an additional tool to encourage healthy eating," said Benjamin. "If we want to become a healthy and fit nation, we need to give American people the tools to make healthy choices."

USDA's Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP) recently announced that over 4,000 organizations, known as Community Partners, have now joined the Nutrition Communicators Network doubling the July number. Community Partners are organizations actively committed to promoting healthy eating in accordance with the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans as symbolized by the *MyPlate* and *MiPlato* food icons.

These icons point consumers to ChooseMyPlate.gov, which provides practical information to individuals, health professionals, nutrition educators, and the food industry to help consumers build healthier diets with resources and tools for dietary assessment, nutrition education, and other user-friendly nutrition information. As Americans are experiencing epidemic rates of overweight and obesity, the online resources and tools can empower people to make healthier food choices for themselves, their families, and their children. Later this year, USDA will unveil an exciting "go-to" online tool that consumers can use to personalize and manage their dietary and physical activity choices.

Over the next several years, USDA will work with First Lady Michelle Obama's *Let's Move!* initiative and public and private partners to promote *MyPlate* and ChooseMyPlate.gov as well as the supporting nutrition messages and "how-to" resources.

The *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, launched in January of this year, form the basis of the federal government's nutrition education programs, federal nutrition assistance programs, and dietary advice provided by health and nutrition professionals. The *Guidelines* messages include:

Balance Calories

Enjoy your food, but eat less.
Avoid oversized portions.

Foods to Increase

Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.
Make at least half your grains whole grains

Foods to Reduce

Compare sodium (salt) in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals, and choose foods with lower numbers.
Drink water instead of sugary drinks.

Coupled with these tested, actionable messages will be the "how-tos" for consumer behavior change. A multi-year campaign calendar will focus on one action-prompting message at a time starting with "Make Half Your Plate Fruits and Vegetables." This new campaign calendar will help unify the public and private sectors to coordinate efforts and highlight one desired change for consumers at a time."

As part of this new initiative, USDA wants to see how consumers are putting *MyPlate* in to action by encouraging consumers to take a photo of their plates and share on Twitter with the hash-tag #MyPlate. USDA also wants to see where and when consumers think about healthy eating. Take the Plate and snap

a photograph with MyPlate to share with our [USDA Flickr Photo Group](#).

Both *MyPlate* and *MiPlato* may be downloaded in PDF and JPG formats by going to [ChooseMyPlate.gov](#). All Spanish-language materials are located on [ChooseMyPlate.gov/en-espanol.html](#).

Additional resources include: [www.DietaryGuidelines.gov](#) and [www.LetsMove.gov](#).

For the MyPlate and MiPlato Graphics Standards (terms of use), go to:
[www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/MyPlate/MyPlateGraphicsStandards.pdf](#)

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