

Translating DGA into Action for USDA Feeding Programs Within FNS

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DGA process at a glance

- ✓ Science (DGAC – scientific experts outside of government)
- ✓ Policy (USDA and HHS)
- ✓ Implementation and Dissemination (ALL)



✓ **STEP 1 >> Science**



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2020 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee Timeline*



2020-2025 Scientific Process

1. Topic identification ✓
2. DGAC selection and appointment ✓
3. DGAC deliberation ✓
4. DGAC report submitted to USDA and HHS ✓

2020-2025 process included new steps to improve transparency, participation, rigor

- Greater transparency in process and schedule
- Identification of topics and questions up front, based on criteria, with input from public
- Process-wide open comment period with more opportunities to provide oral public comment
- Expansion of documents available on DietaryGuidelines.gov, with regular updates
- Peer-review of systematic reviews by ARS

Criteria used to develop topic areas and scientific questions for 2020-2025

- ➔ **Relevance** – topic is within the scope of the DGA and its focus on food-based recommendations, not clinical guidelines for medical treatment;
- ➔ **Importance** – topic has new, relevant data and represents an area of substantial public health concern, uncertainty, and/or knowledge gap;
- ➔ **Potential federal impact** – there is a probability that guidance on the topic would inform federal food and nutrition policies and programs; and
- ➔ **Avoiding duplication** – the topic is not currently addressed through existing evidence-based federal guidance (other than the *Dietary Guidelines*).

Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC) roles and responsibilities

Federal Staff

- Generate surveillance and food pattern modeling data from Federal databases
- Perform systematic reviews based on protocols developed by Committee

Committee Members

- Guide reviews, based on questions.
- Make decisions *jointly* on what to include in the DGAC scientific report
- Write and review report chapters



✓ STEP 2 >> Policy Development



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USDA-HHS Development of the Dietary Guidelines

Each edition of the *Dietary Guidelines* builds upon the preceding edition, with the scientific justification for revisions informed by the Advisory Committee's report and consideration of public and Federal agency comments. The Committee's report provides the review of the current state of nutrition science and includes independent, evidence-based advice for USDA and HHS to consider as the Departments develop the next edition of the *Dietary Guidelines*.

Writing Process

Review Process

DGA Release

Key tenets of the writing process

1. Represent the totality of the evidence
 - ▶ Incorporating revisions that have significant scientific justification (vs. single findings or opinions)
2. Address the needs of Federal programs
 - ▶ *Dietary Guidelines* includes technical information to support implementation through policy and programs (e.g., quantitative recommendations for food groups and other components)
3. Include Federal experts (scientists and communication specialists) who remain confidential during the process

Key tenets of the writing process

4. Mitigate unintended consequences
5. Follow best practices for developing guidelines
 - ▶ Support transparency, manage conflicts of interest, organize an effective guidelines development group, involve key stakeholders, write clear and concise guidelines, include external review, use evidence to inform recommendation
6. Incorporate plain language strategies
 - ▶ Minimize jargon and utilize graphic elements to improve readability

The DGA writing process

1. Writing team discusses previous DGA edition, scientific report, and public/Agency comments
2. Writing team members draft and cross-review chapters
3. Drafts reviewed by science editor and communication specialists for clarity and completeness
4. Federal SMEs consulted, as needed
5. Several rounds of review and revisions are necessary and includes Agency representatives to ensure that program needs are met to the extent possible
6. The policy document is designed



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Writing Process

Review Process

DGA Release

Dietary Guidelines for Americans' rigorous review process

1. Federal expert technical review

- ▶ It is estimated that the review and revision phase includes more than 100 Federal experts
- ▶ Ultimately, the document is reviewed by all Agencies with nutrition policies and programs across USDA and HHS, such as NIH, FDA, CDC, FNS, and FSIS

2. External peer review

- ▶ Includes members from previous Advisory Committees
- ▶ Additional review by Federal scientists and policy advisors occurs on all or portions of the draft after comments have been addressed

Dietary Guidelines for Americans' rigorous review process

3. Departmental clearance

- ▶ Agency review - draft is sent to each Agency within USDA and HHS that performs nutrition functions
- ▶ Administration review - varies across Departments and over time; generally includes:
 - Office of USDA Under Secretary of Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services (FNCS)
 - Office of USDA Under Secretary of Research, Education, and Economics (REE)
 - Office of HHS Assistant Secretary for Health
 - Staff from the Offices of the Secretary of Agriculture and Secretary of Health and Human Services, as well as communication and government relations staff
 - As the final step, a decision memorandum is routed through each Department to the Secretary, who either approves or disapproves the *Dietary Guidelines*. Once approved, the *Dietary Guidelines* is released.



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Writing Process

Review Process

DGA Release

DGA Release



- Policy document likely to be released at the very end of 2020
- Extensive promotion will commence after New Years 2021 with MyPlate and technology as a centerpiece



✓ **STEP 3 >>**
Implementation & Ongoing Dissemination



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Policy will feature *recommendations* to guide FNS feeding programs and others

2015-2020 DGA Recommendations (excerpted)

- A healthy eating pattern includes...a variety of protein foods, including seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, legumes (beans and peas), and nuts, seeds, and soy products
- A healthy eating pattern limits...saturated fats (<10%/d), sodium (<2,300 mg/d)...

Policy will feature *food patterns* to guide FNS feeding programs and others

Dairy	3 c-eq/day
Protein Foods	5½ oz-eq/day
Seafood	8 oz-eq/wk
Meats, Poultry, Eggs	26 oz-eq/wk
Nuts, Seeds, Soy Products	5 oz-eq/wk



Food Group ^a	Amount ^(b) in the 2,000-Calorie-Level Pattern
Vegetables	2½ c-eq/day
Dark Green	1½ c-eq/wk
Red & Orange	5½ c-eq/wk
Legumes (Beans & Peas)	1½ c-eq/wk
Starchy	5 c-eq/wk
Other	4 c-eq/wk
Fruits	2 c-eq/day
Grains	6 oz-eq/day
Whole Grains	≥ 3 oz-eq/day
Refined Grains	≤ 3 oz-eq/day
Dairy	3 c-eq/day
Protein Foods	5½ oz-eq/day
Seafood	8 oz-eq/wk
Meats, Poultry, Eggs	26 oz-eq/wk
Nuts, Seeds, Soy Products	5 oz-eq/wk
Oils	27 g/day
Limit on Calories for Other Uses (% of Calories)^c	270 kcal/day (14%)

DGAs impact foundational program policy & communications supporting program audiences

Program Policy

- SNAP
- WIC
- School and out-of-school feeding programs
- Adult feeding programs
- Indian reservations

Program Implementation

- MyPlate/MiPlato for health professionals and consumers
- Education, dissemination, resources for:
 - ▣ SNAP participants
 - ▣ WIC participants
 - ▣ School foodservice directors
 - ▣ Daycare/eldercare providers

DGAs in action



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