

January 21, 2020

Barbara O. Schneeman, PhD  
Chair, 2020 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee  
c/o Eve Stoodly, PhD  
Designated Federal Officer  
Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion  
Food and Nutrition Service  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1320 Braddock Place  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear 2020 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee,

The Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior (SNEB) thanks each of you for your service in reviewing the scientific evidence that underpins our nation's dietary guidelines. SNEB appreciates this opportunity to submit comments as you prepare to convene the fourth public meeting.

SNEB represents the interests of more than 1,100 nutrition educators worldwide. We are dedicated to promoting effective food and nutrition education and healthy behaviors through research, policy, and practice that promote equity and support public and planetary health. Collectively, SNEB members have unique and valuable insights for building healthy communities, food systems, and improved consumer behaviors toward healthier lifestyles. Every day, our members use the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (DGA) in multiple sectors and settings and in a variety of ways.

We have four comments for your consideration as you move forward with your analyses and preparing your report.

**1) Strengthen the process for establishing the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans***

We encourage this Committee to develop and disseminate (as appropriate) reflections on the process used for developing this edition of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee Report. This section should discuss major changes made to this edition including but not limited to: the selection of topics, the use of only United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Nutrition Evidence Systematic Review-generated literature reviews, the increased size of the Committee, and the Congressional mandate to include women who are pregnant and/or lactating and infants 0 to 24 months of age.

**2) Recommend a Federal Government nutrition research agenda to address research needs for establishing the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans***

We urge you to maximize your opportunity to prioritize future research most relevant to the glaring gaps in the science that informs the latest edition of the DGA process. These gaps include current strengths and deficiencies of our nation's nutritional status and relevant monitoring and surveillance systems, the science underlying our nation's Dietary Reference

Intakes (DRIs), the importance of the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) food security analyses, and if and how studies supported and funded by the federal government are adequately responding to the research and data needs, gaps, and priorities reported by prior Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committees.

**3) Address the important role of safe drinking water for all**

We recommend this Committee provide evidence-based recommendations, identify key research needs, and suggest implementation approaches for [relevant messages to health professionals and the public specific to drinking water](#), particularly those directed to the new, targeted populations – pregnant and/or lactating women and infants 0 to 24 month of age.

**4) Provide evidence-based recommendations on the best ways to translate the science into culturally- and contextually-relevant messages for *all* Americans**

We encourage this Committee to discuss the current rationale put forth for the *Start Simple with MyPlate* campaign that states most Americans [“lack the motivation and skills to make changes to their eating routines.”](#) We also strongly encourage the Committee to address today’s consumer-driven values and other factors, such as [sustainability](#), in recommending how best to translate your science into messages to the public that implement the recommendations of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

Thank you for considering our comments. I am happy to discuss our comments further. You can contact me at [president@sneb.org](mailto:president@sneb.org) and 317-328-4627.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Wilkins, PhD, RD  
President, Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior