

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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CENTER FOR NUTRITION POLICY AND PROMOTION

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2020 DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS
LISTENING SESSIONS

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TUESDAY,
NOVEMBER 28, 2017

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The Listening Sessions met in the United States Department of Agriculture, Whitten Building, Room 104-A, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC, at 8:30 a.m., Brandon Lipps, Acting Deputy Undersecretary of Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services and Administrator of the Food and Nutrition Service, presiding.

PRESENT:

BRANDON LIPPS, Acting Deputy Under Secretary,
Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services
(FNCS); Administrator, Food and Nutrition
Service (FNS)

JACKIE HAVEN, Facilitator; Deputy Director, CNPP
SUSAN BACKUS, North American Meat Institute

STEPHANIE BARNES, Food Marketing Institute

LIA BIONDO, U.S. Cattlemen's Association

JOHN BODE, Corn Refiners Association

CARA BRUMFIELD, 1,000 Days

MIKE GOSCINSKI, American Bakers Association

EMMA GREGORY, Foodminds, for Can Manufacturers
Institute

JOANNA GROSSMAN, The Good Food Institute
TAMAR MAGARIK HARO, American Academy of
Pediatrics
LYNN HARVEY, School Nutrition Association
CHRISTINA HECHT, Nutrition Policy Institute
COLETTE HEIMOWITZ, Atkins Nutritionals, Inc.
ERIC HENTGES, International Life Sciences
Institute
JESSICA HIXSON, SNAC International
SARAH HOSTETTER, American Frozen Food Institute
MAIA JACK, American Beverage Association
GUY JOHNSON, McCormick Science Institute
DANIEL KOVICH, National Pork Producers Council
ALEXIS LATIFI, The Sugar Association, Inc.
CLARA LAU-ROSENOW, National Cattlemen's Beef
Association
SUSAN LEVIN, Physicians Committee for Responsible
Medicine
CORY MARTIN, International Bottled Water
Association
FARIDA MOHAMEDSHAH, Institute of Food
Technologists
JILL NICHOLLS, National Dairy Council
JIM O'HARA, Center for Science in the Public
Interest
IJE OBIDEGWU, American College of Obstetricians
and Gynecologists
SARAH OHLHORST, American Society for Nutrition
BRANDON PHILLIPS, National Fisheries Institute
SYLVIA POULOS, Infant Nutrition Council of
America
KAM QUARLES, National Potato Council
TIA RAINS, American Egg Board's Egg Nutrition
Center
SARAH REINHARDT, Union of Concerned Scientists
LIZ SANDERS, International Food Information
Council
KRISTEN SCOTT, Grocery Manufacturers Association
JOANNE SLAVIN, University of Minnesota
AMY TATELBAUM, National Confectioners Association
NINA TEICHOLZ, The Nutrition Coalition
SACHA UELMEN, American Diabetes Association
DOROTHEA VAFIADIS, American Heart Association

MOLLIE VAN LIEU, United Fresh Produce Association
BRAD WEDDELMAN, Combest Sell and Associates, for
National Sorghum Producers
LINDSAY YARABEK DATLOW, Food Directions LLC, for
National Turkey Federation
SAM ZAKHARI, Distilled Spirits Council

ALSO PRESENT:

EMILY BUCKMAN, Confidential Assistant, FNCS
SUSAN COLE, Contractor, CNPP, USDA
EVE ESSERY-STOODY, Lead Nutritionist,
CNPP, USDA
STEPHENIE FU, Senior Policy Advisor, CNPP, USDA
SALLY GIFFORD, Communication Coordinator,
USDA
JAYME HOLLIDAY, Contractor, CNPP, USDA
JALIL ISA, Media Relations
Specialist/Spokesperson, USDA
GENA KOCHAN, Attorney, Office of General Counsel,
USDA
JESSICA LARSON, Nutritionist, CNPP,
USDA
MAGGIE LYONS, Chief of Staff, Senior Policy
Advisor to the Under Secretary, FNCS
RICHARD OLSON, Director, Division of Prevention
Science, Office of Disease Prevention and
Health Promotion, HHS
SAMUEL ORZECOWSKI, Contractor, CNPP, USDA
NICOLE PEPPERL, Attorney, Office of General
Counsel, USDA
ELIZABETH RAHAVI, Nutritionist, CNPP, USDA
COLETTE RIHANE, Director, Office of Nutrition
Guidance and Analysis, CNPP, USDA
CAMPBELL SHUFORD, Special Projects Coordinator,
Office of the Secretary, USDA
KAILEE TKACZ, Policy Advisor, USDA
ERIN WILSON, Confidential Assistant, FNS

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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 (8:32 a.m.)

3 MR. LIPPS: Good morning, everyone.

4 Thank you all, for coming today. We're glad to
5 have you here, as we kick-off the 2020 Dietary
6 Guidelines process. It's important that we hear
7 from you.

8 A few important reasons why we're
9 starting this today. As you know, the National
10 Academies Health and Medicine Division just put
11 out their independent study on our process and we
12 want to hear from you all about comments on each
13 of those things.

14 The 2014 Farm Bill added Birth to 24
15 to the Guidelines, which makes our process a
16 little more interesting, so for those of you
17 interested in that, we want to hear from on that,
18 as well.

19 And then, just things that you thought
20 worked well and didn't in previous processes, we
21 want to hear from you about how we can improve
22 those. We have, both, the career team from CNPP,

1 as well as a number of politicals here today,
2 which I'll introduce in just a minute. And it's
3 just important from us, to hear from you, as we
4 move forward.

5 Secretary Perdue, as many of you have
6 heard, not only about our Dietary Guidelines
7 process, but in general, says we're going to be
8 facts-based, data-driven and customer-focused.

9 We want you to hold us accountable for
10 doing all three of those things. So we want to
11 be open and transparent with you, as we move
12 forward. We want to hear from you.

13 We've met with a number of people on
14 the process. There's a lot of faces in here that
15 I haven't seen yet. We want you all to know that
16 our door is open, both for the folks at CNPP and
17 for us politicals, we're happy to meet with you
18 all on this process, as we move forward.

19 We want to make sure that we
20 understand everyone's perspective and that we
21 hear from you, as we move forward in this
22 process.

1 Today's an important step. A lot of
2 people are, are worried that we're behind in this
3 process. I'm more concerned that we get it right
4 than we're on a specific time frame.

5 Our goal is, certainly, to get the
6 2020 Guidelines out by 2020. But, I say, if we
7 miss that, it's more important that we get it
8 right. But, we, we do intend to hit that goal at
9 this time.

10 As I noted, we do want to be
11 transparent and inclusive. If you feel like you
12 don't know something that's going on, ask us
13 about that, we're not, we're not hiding anything
14 at this agency.

15 We are just moving the process along
16 and we hope that you're going to find it even
17 more transparent than it has been in the past.
18 So you all stay in touch with us and, and we're
19 going to continue to work on our science focus.

20 I want to take a minute to introduce
21 -- there's a lot of new faces in the room, and so
22 I want to introduce our team and then we,

1 certainly, want to get a chance to meet each of
2 you.

3 Starting with our politicals. I'm
4 Brandon Lipps, I'm the Administrator of the Food
5 and Nutrition Service and currently Acting Deputy
6 Under Secretary of the Food, Nutrition, and
7 Consumer Services mission area. I hope to take
8 that hat off soon, but we don't have, we don't
9 have a name yet, so yes, hold your breath.

10 Maggie Lyons is the Chief of Staff and
11 Senior Policy Advisor to the Under Secretary and
12 has been a great partner in helping hold the
13 wheels on with this stuff.

14 Kailee Tkacz is a Policy Advisor and
15 does congressional affairs for us and the
16 Secretary here in OSEC. And we have two
17 Confidential Assistants, who joined us very
18 recently, Emily Buckman, who's in the Under
19 Secretary's office and Erin Wilson, who is in the
20 Administrator's office out at FNS. So that's our
21 political team. Welcome, to all of you. Thanks
22 for coming today.

1 And then, our dear colleagues, over at
2 CNPP, you all know Jackie Haven well. Jackie is
3 still here with us with her vast knowledge of the
4 process. I know she knows all of you well.
5 Stephenie Fu is somewhere. She's hiding back over
6 there. Colette Stoody. Sorry. Colette Rihane.

7 (Laughter.)

8 MR. LIPPS: I can't read my own
9 handwriting. I do, I do know -- I'm still
10 learning last names, so forgive me. And Eve
11 Stoody. All right. I'm going to turn it over to
12 Jackie Haven to talk a little bit about the
13 process today, ground rules, as we may call them.

14 MS. HAVEN: Good morning, everyone.
15 Welcome. We're really thrilled that you're here
16 today. We look forward to hearing your insights
17 about the process of the Dietary Guidelines.

18 So as Brandon mentioned, I'm the
19 Deputy Director for the Center for Nutrition
20 Policy and Promotion have been there since the
21 beginning of CNPP and, but I'm here to tell you
22 about the ground rules today.

1 So just for your information, there
2 are three listing sessions today, this is, of
3 course, the first, and includes representation
4 from our professional health organizations,
5 consumer advocacy groups, trade organizations,
6 and others who have been engaged in the Dietary
7 Guidelines process in the process.

8 Today you have an opportunity to
9 provide up to three minutes of comments. Your
10 comments are going to be recorded. We have a
11 transcriber back there.

12 All oral comments will be transcribed
13 and posted publically on our CNPP website within
14 one month of today's session and written comments
15 submitted by those unable to join us will also be
16 posted at that time frame, as well.

17 So let's talk a couple of logistics.
18 The table, it's very historic. It's actually 35
19 years old. It's made of mahogany and leather. It
20 was built specifically for the Summit of
21 Industrial Nations hosted by President Ronald
22 Reagan. And that's why we ask you to please not

1 eat or drink here, to maintain its historic
2 integrity.

3 At the beginning of your remarks, if
4 you wouldn't mind, please stating your name and
5 organization clearly, so that the transcriber
6 knows who's speaking. And, if you're a consultant
7 representing a client, please state so as well.

8 We have two time keepers here, to help
9 keep everyone on, on time. They're going to flag
10 at 30 seconds, well, one minute, 30 seconds and
11 when the time is up, they're going to rotate so
12 that, whichever side you're on they'll be on the
13 other side, so you can easily see them.

14 And at the end of session, please stop
15 by the security desk and return your badges and
16 one breaking news, there's active shooter
17 training next door, so if you hear anything,
18 everything is fine.

19 (Laughter.)

20 MS. HAVEN: So just - right. So we
21 just didn't want anyone to be concerned that
22 there was some unusual noises coming from this

1 historic room. So I'm going to turn it over to
2 you all and we can go in alphabetical order,
3 based on association, and we'll start with Tamar
4 from America -- oh sure.

5 MR. LIPPS: I forgot one very
6 important introduction. Rick, would you stand
7 up. We have Rick Olson, from our partners over
8 at HHS. Rick is Director of the Division of
9 Prevention Science at the Office of Disease
10 Prevention and Health Promotion. Most of you
11 probably know him. But, thanks for joining us
12 today, Rick, it's important to have you all here.
13 With that, I'll give it back to Jackie and I look
14 forward to hearing from each of you. Thank you.

15 MS. HAVEN: Go ahead.

16 MS. HARO: All right. Thank you to
17 USDA for inviting me to speak at today's
18 listening session. My name is Tamar Magarik Haro
19 and I'm Senior Director of Federal and State
20 Advocacy for the American Academy of Pediatrics,
21 which is a non-profit professional organization
22 of 66,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric

1 medical sub-specialists, and pediatric surgical
2 specialists dedicated to the health safety and
3 well-being of all infants, children, adolescents
4 and young adults.

5 The Dietary Guidelines for Americans,
6 or DGAs, play a crucial role in the lives of
7 millions of children. Pediatricians routinely
8 look to the Dietary Guidelines to provide advice
9 to our patients and we do so with confidence that
10 the best scientific evidence available was used
11 to inform the recommendations.

12 The Dietary Guidelines underpin key
13 federal nutrition programs, like WIC and the
14 School Meals Program and at a time when 21
15 percent of our children live in poverty and one
16 in three children are overweight or obese, the
17 Dietary Guidelines empower families to tackle the
18 double burden of food insecurity and obesity, by
19 influencing healthier eating in school and at
20 home.

21 We applaud the outstanding work of
22 USDA and HHS on the scientific evidence-based

1 assessment on nutrition for the youngest children
2 through the Pregnancy and Birth to 24 Months, or
3 P/B to 24 Project. The results of that project
4 will be incredibly important for the 2020 Dietary
5 Guidelines Advisory Committee.

6 The time period from pregnancy through
7 early childhood, often referred to as the first
8 thousand days is one of rapid physical,
9 cognitive, emotional and social development. And
10 because of this, early nutrition sets the course
11 for preventing many diseases, even those that
12 would occur in adulthood such as obesity,
13 cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

14 Provision of adequate amounts of
15 critical nutrients, such as iron and zinc, is
16 needed for normal neurodevelopment. Failure to
17 provide such key nutrients during the critical
18 period of brain development may result in
19 lifelong deficits in brain function, despite
20 subsequent nutrient repletion.

21 The AAP looks forward to the inclusion
22 of evidence-based Dietary Guidelines for children

1 B to 24 months in the 2020 DGA's, as required by
2 the 2014 Farm Bill. They will be a crucial
3 resource for pediatricians, parents and
4 caregivers.

5 There is no substitute for national
6 guidelines for this uniquely vulnerable
7 population and, while the AAP publishes the
8 Pediatric Nutrition Handbook and other policy
9 statements related to nutrition, these are not
10 national guidelines that are developed using
11 evidence-based reviews like the DGA process.
12 Instead, they are intended for, and they are
13 resources intended to guide clinical
14 decision-making by pediatricians.

15 As USDA and other Agencies consider
16 the make up of the next DGAC, it will be
17 important that several pediatricians with
18 expertise in this unique age group, as well as
19 the needs of older children, are included in the
20 committee that is chosen.

21 Members of the various work groups
22 from the P/B to 24 Project and other leaders in

1 the AAP nutrition community would make
2 outstanding candidates to fulfill the expertise
3 needed for the 2020 DGA's.

4 And while the DGA recommendations for
5 other topic areas are based on over 20 years of
6 critical research and analysis, guidelines for
7 the B to 24 population are novel and will require
8 new resources.

9 So it is our sincere hope that the
10 development and dissemination of the 2020 DGA's
11 will be adequately resources, resourced. Thank
12 you for the opportunity to speak.

13 MS. HAVEN: American College of
14 Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

15 MS. OBIDEGWU: I was going to provide
16 my comments afterwards.

17 MS. HAVEN: Oh.

18 MS. OBIDEGWU: Yes.

19 MS. HAVEN: Just making sure.

20 MS. OBIDEGWU: Yes, thanks.

21 MS. HAVEN: Sacha.

22 MS. UELMEN: Hi. My name's Sacha

1 Uelmen. I'm the Director of Nutrition speaking
2 on behalf of the American Diabetes Association.
3 Thank you for the opportunity to present, to
4 provide comments today.

5 The ADA is a non-profit organization
6 focused on our mission to prevent and cure
7 diabetes and to improve the lives of all people
8 effected by diabetes.

9 The ADA supports the work of the
10 Dietary Guidelines Committee and utilizes the
11 work published in the Dietary Guidelines for
12 Americans as a base for developing our own
13 nutrition recommendations for people with
14 diabetes.

15 The ADA focuses on nutrition research
16 directly related to people with diabetes, but
17 also uses the Dietary Guidelines for
18 recommendations on prevention of diabetes.

19 The ADA was pleased to see the DGA
20 take a people first approach, by addressing the
21 social ecological aspects, as well as food
22 insecurity, while focusing on the shifts needed

1 in eating patterns.

2 Given the number of people with
3 diabetes, currently over 30 million, and those at
4 risk for diabetes or pre-diabetes, currently
5 around 84 million, the American Diabetes
6 Association is in full support of the recommended
7 limits on added sugar and the overall focus on
8 increasing nutrient density of food choices while
9 maintaining a focus on foods and eating patterns,
10 as opposed to individual nutrients.

11 Maintaining simple messaging while
12 encouraging individualized nutrition guidance is
13 a challenging, yet, doable goal. In response to
14 the recent HMD report outlining the plan to
15 further improve transparency and increased
16 cultural diversity, the ADA welcomes an approach
17 to nutrition guidelines that is inclusive of a
18 diverse working group and transparent process.
19 Thank you.

20 MS. HAVEN: Thank you. Dorothea.

21 MS. VAFIADIS: Thank you. My name is
22 Dorothea Vafiadis and I'm the Director of Healthy

1 Living for the American Heart Association, the
2 world's leading voluntary organization dedicated
3 to building healthier lives free of
4 cardiovascular diseases and stroke.

5 As a former USDA employee, at CNPP,
6 working on the 2005 Dietary Guidelines, I have
7 great respect and admiration for the Dietary
8 Guidelines process. I would like to thank USDA
9 for holding this listening session and gathering
10 feedback.

11 The AHA agrees with several key
12 recommendations in the NAS Reports. Some of the
13 suggestions, however, add steps that might be
14 difficult to accomplish during the five-year
15 cycle, especially given limited resources.

16 If it's unclear how all the steps will
17 enhance the integrity of the guidelines, since
18 the process used to develop the Advisory
19 Committee Report is already strong, we recommend
20 focusing on the following areas.

21 The scope of the guidelines should
22 include all Americans not just healthy Americans

1 2 years and older. It should reflect the current
2 needs of the population where heart disease,
3 stroke, diabetes, cancer, and obesity are
4 increasingly prevalent.

5 To increase transparency of the
6 Advisory Committee's selection process, the
7 agencies should make public a detailed
8 description of committee member qualifications
9 and ensure a robust conflict of interest policy
10 is in place.

11 The AHA has a strong conflict of
12 interest policy that guides its work and we stand
13 ready to share this policy and support the
14 agencies in adapting an appropriate COI model.

15 This may be more effective than using
16 an external third party to narrow the nominees.
17 However, if a third party is used, it must be
18 free of bias.

19 Because the guidelines are only as
20 good as the underlying evidence, we support
21 updating the DRI's as a priority and enhancing
22 the food pattern modeling.

1 Dietary patterns in food modeling
2 exercises must be transparent and nutrition
3 profiles should be based on the evidence for
4 improving health outcomes not current
5 consumption.

6 We support a more transparent process
7 for translating the Advisory Committee's science
8 conclusions into policy. Although the Academy's
9 recommendations largely focus on the Advisory
10 Committee report, that science-based process is
11 already transparent. The meetings are public and
12 the science is in the public domain.

13 The lack of transparency occurs as the
14 science is translated and integrated into the
15 policy document, a process that occurs in a
16 vacuum behind closed doors, leaving it vulnerable
17 to political influences and agency bias.

18 Providing a clear explanation when
19 omitting or accepting only parts of the
20 conclusions from the scientific report is a good
21 solution to this challenge.

22 Finally, we recommend the 2020

1 Advisory Committee be asked to consider how
2 healthy dietary patterns are reflected in today's
3 food systems, including the dynamics between
4 agriculture and nutrition, as well as systems
5 changes needed to ensure access to affordable
6 healthy foods. Thank you, again, for the
7 opportunity to present the views of the American
8 Heart Association.

9 MS. HAVEN: Sarah.

10 MS. OHLHORST: Good morning. I'm
11 Sarah Ohlhorst, Senior Director of Advocacy and
12 Science Policy with the American Society for
13 Nutrition.

14 ASN is a global, scientific,
15 professional society of nutrition scientists and
16 researchers, and we appreciate the opportunity to
17 comment on the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for
18 Americans.

19 ASN supports the inclusion of several
20 important concepts from the recent National
21 Academies' reports, such as incorporating
22 recommendations for a strong evidence-based

1 approach to inform DGA development and to
2 increase transparency and allow for public input
3 at more stages of the process.

4 ASN agrees that the departments should
5 prioritize topics for review and seek public
6 input to do so, although, the scientific
7 evidence-base should be the final determinant to
8 guide which topics require updates.

9 ASN recognizes that several of the DGA
10 recommendations have been consistent over time
11 and are unlikely to change in the absence of a
12 new body of evidence.

13 Priorities should be given to areas to
14 be included in the DGA's for which new evidence
15 is available. ASN recommends using the term
16 Dietary Guidelines Scientific Advisory Committee
17 to be clear on the primary responsibility.

18 ASN supports the recommendation that
19 a third party be used to select a pool of
20 qualified candidates from which the HHS and USDA
21 Secretaries can appoint the DGSAC.

22 ASN is cautious of making the

1 provisional 2020 DGSAC appointments publically
2 available, if the process encourages ad hominem
3 attacks and discourages participation by
4 otherwise highly qualified experts.

5 The purpose and scope of comments on
6 the provisional committee must be clearly defined
7 to assure the intent is to validate balance and
8 expertise.

9 ASN acknowledges the careful vetting
10 of COI's that has been done in the past and would
11 support the development and use of a more
12 transparent process to disclose that and manage
13 financial and non-financial COI's as the DGSAC
14 and topic-specific focus groups are formed, as
15 well as throughout the entire process.

16 ASN supports the identification of key
17 topics to be updated by a core DGSAC followed by
18 the use of tailored, more focused expert groups
19 to conduct systematic reviews of the evidence for
20 key topics, such as nutrition guidelines for
21 Birth to 24 months of age and pregnant women.

22 ASN supports rigorous systematic

1 review and evaluation of the scientific evidence
2 by experts. ASN agrees that food pattern
3 modeling methodology needs to be improved to be
4 more effective in developing dietary patterns
5 that better reflect the heterogeneity of the U.S.
6 population and meet the population's varying
7 needs.

8 The definition of nutrients of concern
9 should also be standardized so there is
10 consistency across DGA cycles. Following the
11 2020 DGA's, it will be important to ensure
12 continuity between DGA cycles. ASN appreciates
13 the efforts of USDA and HHS and, again, we thank
14 you for the opportunity.

15 MS. HAVEN: Jim, I'll wait 'til you
16 get the mic.

17 MR. O'HARA: Thank you very much. My
18 name is Jim O'Hara. I'm the Director for Health
19 Promotion Policy for the Center of Science in the
20 Public Interest. We thank you for the
21 opportunity to testify today.

22 First, we would like to underscore

1 that the DGA had, historically, had a strong
2 science base and that the Advisory Committee,
3 Committees have exhibited expertise and
4 scientific integrity in their reviews of the
5 science.

6 Despite, sometimes, differing public
7 perceptions, the DGA recommendations have
8 remained consistent over the years, encouraging a
9 diet rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains,
10 while limiting excess sodium, saturated fat,
11 refined grains, and added sugars. The details
12 may have changed, but the basic message has
13 remained.

14 The controversy surrounding the most
15 recent guidelines was fueled by man bites dog
16 headlines, special interests, diet book authors
17 and political interference.

18 It should come as no surprise that the
19 industry has an interest in undermining the
20 acceptance of the Guidelines. Unhealthy foods
21 and beverages are available nearly everywhere we
22 go and are served to us in extreme portions.

1 The National Academy's Report makes
2 two critical points, which we strongly agree
3 with, first while the DGAs are based on solid
4 scientific methods, the process, like all
5 processes, can evolve and be strengthened.

6 Second, improvements to make the
7 process more transparent will bolster trust.
8 CSPI welcomes changes, increased transparency
9 throughout the process.

10 For example, the agencies could
11 request public comment on the list of provisional
12 Advisory Committee appointees and their known
13 conflict of interest, similar to the National
14 Academies' own process.

15 And in addition, we support the
16 National Academies' call for a clear explanation
17 of substantive changes between the Advisory
18 Committee's Scientific Report and the final
19 Dietary Guidelines.

20 However, CSPI is concerned about
21 several of the report recommendations.
22 Specifically, we strongly oppose the employment

1 of an external third party to develop the list of
2 nominees. This recommendation would introduce
3 additional biases to the process, the opposite of
4 the report's intent.

5 In addition, although, CSPI
6 appreciates the Academies' recommendation to
7 create continuity between the DGA's cycles and
8 employ specific technical experts, we are
9 concerned about staying up the proposed
10 continuity committees -- we are concerned that
11 the setting up of the proposed continuity
12 committees will be time consuming and difficult
13 to implement and will introduce new biases.

14 In conclusion, scientific evidence
15 should continue to drive the process of
16 developing the DGA's, as it has in the past, and
17 we encourage the agencies to make the process
18 more transparent.

19 MS. HAVEN: Farida.

20 MS. MOHAMEDSHAH: Good morning. I'm
21 Farida Mohamedshah, Director of Food Health and
22 Nutrition, at the Institute of Food

1 Technologists, also known as IFT.

2 Founded in 1939, IFT's a global
3 organization of more than 17,000 individual
4 members in over 100 countries committed to
5 advancing the science of food, to ensure a safe,
6 sustainable and nutritious food supply that is
7 accessible to all.

8 IFT appreciates this opportunity to
9 comment on the reports by the National Academies
10 on the Dietary Guidelines process and the 2020
11 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

12 Our comments relate to the selection
13 of Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee, or the
14 DGAC, specifically, the inclusion of food
15 scientists and technologists in the DGAC.

16 We believe it is important to consider
17 the advances in our food system made using the
18 science of food and technology. The science of
19 food and technology has and will continue to play
20 an intricate role in delivering safe, nutritious,
21 accessible, affordable, and palatable foods.

22 To enhance the integrity of the

1 selection process, the National Academies
2 identified a set of values, including promote
3 diversity of expertise and experience and
4 recommended that a broad range of expertise and
5 experience must be considered to create a
6 balanced committee.

7 Food Science and Technology experts
8 provide valuable insights into existing
9 technological capabilities and limitations
10 germane to the food supply and its impact on food
11 manufacturing and food safety, nutrition, sensory
12 attributes, cost and time constraints, consumer
13 acceptance and whether the transfer of
14 science-based recommendations into actionable
15 guidance is supported by the food system.

16 Food science and technology experts
17 provide support to a dynamic and rapidly changing
18 food environment, to product reformulation,
19 fortification and enrichment, for example, to
20 have consumers implement the dietary guidance.

21 It is through the science and food and
22 technology we can decrease sodium, saturated

1 fats, Trans fats and sugars and address many of
2 the shortfall nutrients, such as calcium, dietary
3 fiber, and magnesium in the food supply, as noted
4 in the previous guidelines.

5 Therefore, we think that, at least,
6 one food scientist and technologist should be
7 included in the 2020 DGAC. The USDA may also
8 consider including Food Scientists and
9 Technologists in the technical expert panel,
10 depending on the topic for which the TEP is being
11 convened and, if the expertise in the science of
12 food is deemed as critical, for the panel.

13 An integrated approach to improving
14 the nation's health is critical. IFT and our
15 members are committed to assisting with the
16 Dietary Guidelines process.

17 IFT strongly urges the USDA that
18 consideration be given to include broad range of
19 expertise and experience, including Food
20 Scientists and Technologists in the DGSAC. Thank
21 you for the opportunity to comment.

22 MS. HAVEN: Liz. Will you pass the

1 microphone?

2 MS. SANDERS: Hey, everyone. I'm Liz
3 Sanders. I'm Director of Research and
4 Partnerships at the International Food
5 Information Council Foundation, and we appreciate
6 the opportunity to comment. Thank you.

7 The IFIC Foundation is a 501-C-3
8 non-profit educational organization with the
9 mission to effectively communicate science-based
10 information about health, nutrition and food
11 safety for the public good.

12 In order to serve as effective
13 communicators, it is essential to understand what
14 drives American's food purchases and dietary
15 habits. The IFIC Foundation undertakes a number
16 of consumer research topics that explore
17 Americans' attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs
18 towards food safety and nutrition.

19 The Annual Food and Health Survey now
20 in its twelfth year is an online survey of over
21 1,000 Americans ages 18 to 80. The data is
22 collected by a third party research firm and is

1 weighted to ensure that the results are
2 nationally representative.

3 Consumer research efforts, such as the
4 IFIC Foundation Food and Health Survey, are key
5 to understanding current nutrition knowledge
6 behaviors and trends among Americans and
7 therefore may be useful in the development of the
8 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

9 Data from the 2017 Food and Health
10 Survey shows that the majority of Americans view
11 expert nutrition guidance, such as the DGSAC, to
12 be important for all life stages.

13 More Americans say that expert
14 guidance is important during pregnancy, infancy,
15 and early childhood than other stages of life.
16 The Food and Health Survey also shows that the
17 majority of Americans recognize educational
18 materials based on Dietary Guidelines.

19 Over two-thirds report familiarity
20 with the USDA MyPlate graphic. Americans also
21 report familiarity with some aspects of current
22 nutrition guidance.

1 For example, 80 percent of Americans
2 are making an effort to eat more fruits and
3 vegetables, while nearly as many report making
4 small changes to achieve an overall healthier
5 diet.

6 Despite familiarity with guidance and
7 acknowledgement of its importance, many Americans
8 still struggle to make healthy food choices. The
9 2017 Survey shows that nearly 80 percent of
10 Americans who report that they notice a lot of
11 conflicting information on what to eat and what
12 to avoid.

13 Of those who notice this conflicting
14 information, over half say they doubt their
15 choices as a result. This doubt is also echoed
16 by consumers' lack of ability to connect specific
17 foods with their desired health benefits.

18 Nearly everyone who responded in this
19 2017 Survey reported interest in obtaining
20 certain health benefits, like weight loss, or
21 management, or cardiovascular health from food.
22 Still, many consumers were unsure of what foods

1 to eat to achieve their health goals. Over half
2 are unable to name a food or nutrient associated
3 with their most desired health benefits.

4 The consumer insights presented today
5 highlight the importance of continuing national
6 efforts to create clear and actionable nutrition
7 guidance.

8 The 2020 DGA represents an opportunity
9 to help increase consumers' knowledge and
10 confidence in their ability to tailor their
11 dietary patterns to their health goals.

12 The IFIC Foundation believes that when
13 interpreted in the context of the scientific
14 evidence-base and other stakeholder insights,
15 these consumer insights can help USDA and HHS
16 develop effective dietary guidance. Thank you
17 again for the opportunity to provide comments.

18 MR. HENTGES: Good morning. I'm Eric
19 Hentges, from International Life Sciences
20 Institute. I applaud the initiative of USDA to
21 undertake the review process for the development
22 of the Dietary Guidelines and the work of the

1 Food and Nutrition Board in producing these
2 reports.

3 My comments today do not necessarily
4 reflect my current organization, but do reflect
5 my past experience as an Executive Director of
6 CNPP.

7 The Academies' work is divided into
8 two reports. The first focused on the selection
9 process for the DGAC, while an important
10 component of the process, as an administrator, I
11 would caution the agency to seriously consider
12 the cost benefit realities, as you seek to
13 implement aspects of this report.

14 Openness and then transparency are
15 given principles for the process. Begetting the
16 agency mired in a resource and time-intensive
17 process, where added benefit is hard to quantify,
18 serves no one.

19 The second report is on redesigning
20 the process. This report has seven
21 recommendations. I believe that Recommendations
22 3 and 4 should be of the highest priority for the

1 Agency.

2 These two recommendations focus
3 directly on the analysis of the current body of
4 scientific evidence. This is the foundation upon
5 which all other aspects of the process depend.

6 Separation of the NEL role and the
7 Advisory Committee roles can readily be
8 accomplished within the existing agencies in
9 USDA.

10 The emphasis on excellence and best
11 practice is always the goal and an obvious goal,
12 but also conserve the need to incorporate the
13 principles of openness and transparency.

14 While evidence analysis is
15 foundational, the prioritization of the topics
16 for analysis, noted in Recommendation 1, is
17 equally important in directing the resources to
18 address issues of greatest consequence to the
19 public health. I appreciate the opportunity for
20 these comments.

21 MS. HAVEN: Susan.

22 MS. LEVIN: Yes. My name is Susan

1 Levin and I'm a Registered Dietitian, who works
2 for the non-profit nutrition advocacy
3 organization, The Physicians' Committee for
4 Responsible Medicine, as well as for the
5 non-profit primary care clinic, The Barnard
6 Medical Center, both located here in Washington,
7 D.C. Thank you for the opportunity to speak
8 today.

9 Of all the recommendations made in the
10 two reports published by the National Academies,
11 I'm here to underscore the importance of
12 scientific rigor. As aptly stated by Dr.
13 Russell, the Chair of the Committee that wrote
14 those reports, the Dietary Guidelines have,
15 quote, the promise to empower Americans to make
16 informed decisions about what and how much they
17 eat, to improve health and reduce the risk of
18 chronic disease, end quote.

19 If we truly intend to empower
20 Americans to take control of their own health,
21 the Guidelines need to be, first, free of
22 industry bias. Meaning, the Advisory Committee

1 members, themselves, should be free of industry
2 ties and, in turn, the Advisory Committee
3 selection of research should be free of industry
4 funding.

5 Secondly, the Guidelines need to be
6 clear in its language about what is not
7 healthful. Although, the USDA and HHS have done
8 a much better job in selecting its committee
9 members in recent iterations, the most recent
10 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee Report
11 showed how even one bias - a member with close
12 ties to the egg industry - lead to misinformation
13 that confused the media and the public and
14 outraged healthcare advocates and scientists.

15 I'm referring to the dangerous attempt
16 to have the dietary, to have dietary cholesterol
17 declared a nutrient of no consequence, based on
18 research almost entirely funded by the egg
19 industry.

20 As to the language, the Dietary
21 Guidelines are notoriously vague in telling the
22 public what not to eat. The Guidelines safely

1 and comfortably promote the consumption of
2 fruits, vegetables and whole grains, but use
3 coded and confusing language about what not to
4 consume.

5 The Guidelines say, to be exact,
6 quote, eat as little dietary cholesterol as
7 possible. Reducing solid fats when making food
8 choices is an important way to reduce saturated
9 fats and excess calories. Intake of saturated
10 fats should be limited to less than 10 percent of
11 calories per day, end quote.

12 Most people have no clue what any of
13 those recommendations mean, unless they are
14 equipped, both, with the time and the knowledge
15 to decode the accompanying charts and graphs in
16 the Guidelines and willing to flip to the
17 glossary of terms, they will not realize that the
18 Guidelines are dancing around the advice to
19 consume fewer animal products.

20 The Guidelines have been criticized
21 for years for not being more direct in these
22 recommendations and, as a consequence, have not

1 empowered Americans to take control of their
2 health in any meaningful way.

3 I would argue they have, in fact, been
4 a road block in Americans' understanding of
5 nutrition's role in disease prevention and
6 treatment.

7 Consuming fruits, vegetables and whole
8 grains is great advice, but it's not enough to
9 overcome the damage done by a diet that is full
10 of meat, dairy and other high-fat products. With
11 the state of the health of Americans -- thank you
12 for the opportunity.

13 MS. BRUMFIELD: Thank you for this
14 opportunity to comment on the process to
15 establish the 2020 Dietary Guidelines and for
16 your efforts to ensure that this process is
17 transparent, data-driven, and science-based.

18 I'm the Policy and Research Manager at
19 Thousand Days, the leading organization working
20 in the U.S. and around the world to improve
21 nutrition for mothers and children, during the
22 critical thousand-day window from pregnancy

1 through a child's second birthday.

2 During this time, how well, or how
3 poorly a child is nourished has a profound impact
4 on our ability to grow, learn and thrive.
5 Thousand Days analysis of this state of early
6 nutrition in the U.S. shows that far too many
7 young children and their families are not getting
8 the nutrition they need to thrive.

9 One in five babies in the U.S. is
10 never breast-fed and one in four children ages 1
11 to 2 do not receive the recommended dietary
12 allowance for iron, one of the most important
13 brain-building nutrients.

14 Further, over half of toddlers and
15 preschoolers have one or more sugar sweetened
16 beverages a day, contributing to our nation's
17 high rates of childhood obesity.

18 This is why Dietary Guidelines that
19 include pregnant women and very young children
20 are more critical now than ever. The 2020 DGA's
21 and the recommendations for pregnant women and
22 young children will inform federal nutrition

1 programs that reach young children and their
2 families, as well as serve as an important
3 reference point for physicians, nutrition
4 counselors, and early childcare providers, among
5 others.

6 Moreover, the new guidance will also
7 provide parents and caregivers with the
8 evidence-based information they need to give
9 their children the best chance to lead healthy
10 prosperous lives free of preventable chronic
11 disease.

12 In order to best serve the needs of
13 this new population, we at Thousand Days make the
14 following recommendations. First, prioritize the
15 development of the new guidance for pregnant
16 women and young children by ensuring that at
17 least half of the members of the Dietary
18 Guidelines Advisory Committee have expertise in
19 issues related to the health and nutrition of
20 pregnant women, infants and young children.

21 This is the first time this population
22 will be included, which means that there are no

1 existing guidance, guidelines to build from.

2 This may make the process of developing the 2020
3 DGA's more difficult and time-consuming than past
4 iterations.

5 Further, pregnant women and very young
6 children have specific nutritional needs that are
7 different from those of the general population.
8 For these reasons, it will be crucial to have a
9 strong presence of relevant experts on the DGAC.

10 The DGAC should include a range of
11 expertise, including a strong focus on infants,
12 toddlers and pregnant women, however, a range of
13 expertise does not necessitate a range of
14 opinions on matters of scientific consensus.

15 To that end, we urge you the DGAC
16 selection criteria to ensure that the DGAC
17 members have an understanding of and appreciation
18 for the scientific evidence that shows the health
19 and developmental benefits of breast milk and the
20 importance of limiting added sugar intake for
21 adults and eliminating added sugar intake for
22 children under 2.

1 The overall process to establish the
2 DGAs and the DGAC selection process, in
3 particular, should prioritize transparency and
4 minimize bias and conflicts of interest.

5 In conclusion, we would like to affirm
6 that the DGAs have historically been a
7 scientifically rigorous process that have
8 produced strong, consistent recommendations.

9 Thank you for your time.

10 MS. HAVEN: Sarah.

11 MS. REINHARDT: Good morning. My name
12 is Sarah Reinhardt and I'm a Public Health
13 Dietitian at the Union of Concerned Scientists in
14 Washington, D.C. On behalf of our organization,
15 I'd like to thank the U.S. Department of
16 Agriculture for hosting this session.

17 UCS is a science-based non-profit
18 working for a healthy environment and a safer
19 world. Our organization combines independent
20 scientific research and citizen action to develop
21 innovative practical solutions and secure
22 responsible changes in government policy,

1 corporate practices, and consumer choices.

2 The Dietary Guidelines for Americans
3 play a critical role in providing the
4 science-based dietary recommendations to reduce
5 chronic disease risks in the general population
6 and to guide federal nutrition programs serving
7 some of our nation's most vulnerable populations.
8 It is essential that the process used to develop
9 these guidelines maintains a high degree of
10 integrity, autonomy and transparency to ensure
11 that the Guidelines represent the best available
12 science and are free of bias that may work
13 against the interest of public health.

14 Today I'd like to underscore the
15 importance of three key points identified in the
16 National Academies' Report Redesigning the
17 Process for Establishing the Dietary Guidelines
18 for Americans.

19 First, we commend the 2015 Dietary
20 Guidelines Advisory Committee for its rigorous
21 evaluation of current nutritional science and its
22 resulting dietary recommendations and support

1 improved methods that could further strengthen
2 future DGA's.

3 Second, we support the National
4 Academies' recommendation that the USDA and
5 Department of Health and Human Services increase
6 transparency in the DGA process, including,
7 providing the public with a clear explanation
8 when discrepancies exists between the Advisory
9 Committee Report and DGAs.

10 The 2015 DGA omitted several key
11 recommendations made by the DGAC, these include
12 recommendations to acknowledge the relationship
13 between dietary patterns and environmental
14 sustainability and advice to reduce red meat
15 intake in the general population.

16 An analysis of 29,000 public comments
17 on the 2015 Advisory Committee Report revealed
18 that 75 percent of comments expressed support for
19 recommendations linking diet with sustainability.
20 That the criteria used to omit these
21 recommendations from the final guidelines were
22 not clear and remain unclear, speaks to the

1 critical need for greater transparency and
2 accountability in the translation of the DGAC
3 Report to the final Guidelines.

4 Third, we strongly agree that managing
5 biases and conflicts of interest is one of the
6 core aims that should drive the comprehensive
7 redesign of the DGA process.

8 We support the recommendations made by
9 the National Academies to reduce and manage
10 sources of bias and encourage circumspection
11 around potential conflicts of interest,
12 financial, or otherwise that would work to the
13 detriment of public health.

14 In conclusion, UCS commends the
15 National Academies for its rigorous review of the
16 DGA process and a commitment to independent,
17 evidence-based Dietary Guidelines in a
18 transparent, unbiased process is imperative,
19 particularly, as the USDA and DHHS undertake the
20 development and new Guidelines addressing the
21 nutritional needs of pregnant women and infants.

22 We trust the Academies' findings will

1 be applied to the DGA process to strengthen
2 methodology, increase transparency, and hold
3 committee members and department secretaries
4 alike accountable for applying the best available
5 science to advance public health not private
6 gain. Thank you for the opportunity to comment
7 today.

8 MR. LIPPS: Thank you all very much.
9 I know it takes a lot out of your days to prepare
10 and come up to give us three minutes of comments,
11 but they really are important to us, to give us
12 an overview of where the issues are, where we
13 need to look at, as we plan this process going
14 forward.

15 And there's going to be a lot more
16 opportunities for comments, so you're not just
17 limited to three minutes. I know it's a short
18 time period, but we appreciate you all taking
19 time to come this morning. It's important to
20 hear from you.

21 We'll be around for a few minutes. I
22 would love to meet a few of you and then, as you

1 know, we have additional panels today, so we need
2 to get ready for those relatively quickly. But,
3 thanks again for coming.

4 As we move forward everything will be
5 posted on dietaryguidelines.gov, we will try to
6 get everything up there. Again, if you're not
7 seeing something, or you question where we are in
8 the process, please don't hesitate to reach out.

9 I've introduced you to the political
10 team and the CNPP team, I think, most of which
11 you probably know now. We want to hear from you,
12 as we go forward, probably, nobody's going to be
13 happy with everything that comes out of the
14 process, but that might mean we've done a good
15 job.

16 But we do want to make sure that we're
17 transparent as we move forward and we want you
18 all to talk to us about that as we go. So thank
19 you, again, appreciate you being here today.

20 (Whereupon, the foregoing matter went
21 off the record at 9:12 a.m. and resumed at 10:32
22 a.m.)

1 MR. LIPPS: Good morning, everyone.
2 This is a quiet group. It's Friday. Good
3 morning, everyone.

4 (Chorus of good morning.)

5 MR. LIPPS: That's better. Thank you,
6 all, for taking the time to be here this morning.
7 It's really important for us to hear from you on
8 the front end of our 2020 Dietary Guidelines
9 process, which we're officially kicking off today
10 with this listening session.

11 It's an important time to hear from
12 you on these things, I think, one, because we
13 just had the independent study come back.
14 Hopefully, you've all had a chance to review
15 those and we will hear some comments on those
16 from you today.

17 They sent it last month. We wanted to
18 give folks a little bit of time to process that.
19 We want to hear from you and then we'll
20 officially kick off moving forward on our process
21 from that.

22 We had birth to 24 added to the

1 process this time. That's an interesting factor
2 for us to balance and carrying out with our
3 limited resources, so I know some of you have
4 interests in how we should carry that out. But,
5 most of all, we just want to hear from you about
6 anything that you have with regard to the
7 process.

8 We, some of you heard Secretary Purdue
9 say, and he talks about this not just in relation
10 to the Dietary Guidelines process, but he wants
11 USDA to be a facts-based, data-driven, and
12 customer-focused agency. That is no less true at
13 CNPP than it is anywhere else and with regard to
14 this process. So we want you all to help inform
15 us how we can make each of those things true, as
16 we move forward.

17 Transparency is important at anything
18 the Government does, but particularly when we're
19 telling Americans what they should eat for a
20 healthy lifestyle, we want to make sure that
21 everybody has input in that process and hear from
22 all of you, as we go forward.

1 So this is just the beginning of the
2 process. You're going to have lots of
3 opportunities to communicate with us. There are
4 familiar faces in this room, who have come to
5 meet with us, I think, Maggie and Kailee and I
6 have been on the job around four-ish months now,
7 so we know everything that there is to know.

8 (Laughter.)

9 MR. LIPPS: But we haven't heard from
10 some of you. If you want to come meet with us,
11 we would encourage you to do that. Our door is
12 open, both, on the political side and on the
13 career staff side. We want to hear from you, as
14 we move forward. I will say that about 42 times
15 today, to make sure that everybody hears that, so
16 you all come talk to us.

17 I want to quickly introduce the team.
18 I know a lot of you know some of us on the
19 political side and a lot of you probably worked
20 with our career staff in the past, but I think
21 it's important to introduce everybody, as we move
22 forward.

1 I'm first going to introduce, lest I
2 forget, our dear partners from HHS. Rick, would
3 you stand up, momentarily? Rick Olson is the
4 Director in the Division of Prevention Science at
5 the Office of the Disease Prevention and Health
6 Promotion at HHS. Thanks for coming today, Rick.
7 We will be working closely with HHS, as we move
8 forward, and appreciate them being here today.

9 On the political team side, I failed
10 to introduce myself, hopefully, you've all read
11 my name tag. I'm Brandon Lipps, the,
12 permanently, the Administrator of the Food
13 Nutrition Service and currently the Acting Deputy
14 Under Secretary of FNCS. Someday we will have an
15 Under Secretary named and I'll get to take that
16 hat off, so I'll be excited about that to come.

17 Helping me hold the wheels on is
18 Maggie Lyons, who many of you know, who is the
19 Chief of Staff and Senior Policy Advisor in the
20 Office of the Under Secretary.

21 Kailee Tkacz is momentarily out of the
22 room. I apologize in advance, some of us are

1 going to be popping in and out. But we will be
2 sharing notes, as we go forward. But Kailee
3 Tkacz is in our Office of Congressional Relations
4 and also a Policy Advisor that's been here just
5 about as long as Maggie and I.

6 We have two Confidential Assistants
7 hiding over here on the back wall, Emily Buckman
8 and Erin Wilson, who just started with us a
9 couple of weeks ago, but they've come from the
10 Hill with a lot of policy experience.

11 And then we have Campbell Shuford,
12 from the Secretary's Office, who's also helping
13 us on Dietary Guidelines and will be a great help
14 as we move forward on this process. So thanks,
15 Campbell.

16 On CNPP side, we have Ms. Jackie
17 Haven, who I think all of you know. She has more
18 knowledge than all the rest of us put together.

19 MS. HAVEN: Why sure, yes.

20 MR. LIPPS: So she advises us well.
21 Stephenie Fu. Everybody's moved since our last
22 round so I'm not sure--

1 (Laughter.)

2 MR. LIPPS: Stephenie Fu. Colette
3 Rihane. Hello, Colette. And, last but not
4 least, is Eve Stoody. So -- and we have a few
5 others from CNPP, but I don't have the full list
6 of names, so we, you can meet them as we go
7 around.

8 With that, I'm going to turn it over
9 to Jackie, who is going to lay the ground rules
10 for today. She's a tough enforcer. We have a
11 couple of timekeepers.

12 I know three minutes is short, but it
13 really is a great opportunity for us to see you
14 narrow what's really important to you and to
15 share that with us in a forum with your peers
16 around the table, so we're excited to hear from
17 you all today.

18 MS. HAVEN: Thank you, Brandon, and
19 welcome, everybody. Thank you for participating.
20 We really appreciate hearing your insights and
21 interests in the Dietary Guidelines process.

22 There are three listening sessions

1 today, as Brandon mentioned, we've already held
2 one and they've included representation from
3 professional health organizations, consumer
4 advocacy groups, trade associations,
5 organizations and others that have engaged in the
6 Dietary Guidelines process.

7 Today you'll have the opportunity to
8 provide three minutes of oral remarks. Please
9 note, your remarks are going to be recorded.
10 We're going to pass around the mics starting
11 alphabetically over there.

12 All the oral remarks will be
13 transcribed and posed publically on the website
14 within one month of today. Written comments
15 submitted by folks that are not here will also be
16 included.

17 I just wanted to talk about this
18 table. No one's allowed to bring any food or
19 beverage. We appreciate your cooperation on
20 that.

21 It's actually a little piece of
22 history. It's a 35-year-old mahogany and leather

1 table built specifically for the Summit of
2 Industrial Nations hosted by President Ronald
3 Reagan in 1983. So we appreciate your
4 understanding of not bringing any food in here
5 today.

6 At the beginning of your remarks, we'd
7 really appreciate it if you can say your name
8 clearly and loudly so the transcriber can know
9 when someone is starting and who they are. If
10 you're a consultant representing a client, please
11 state so.

12 And we do have two timekeepers, as
13 Brandon mentioned, on either side, so when you're
14 speaking you'll be able to see and they will mark
15 the time for you, so that you'll know when you
16 have a minute left, 30 seconds, and then,
17 finally, when your time is up.

18 So we look forward to hearing your
19 perspectives and I'm going to start in
20 alphabetical order, so starting with you, Mike.
21 Thank you.

22 MR. GOSCINSKI: Great. Thank you.

1 Good morning. My name is Mike Goscinski and I'm
2 the Director of Government Relations for the
3 American Bakers Association. Thank you for the
4 opportunity to comment today on the 2020 Dietary
5 Guidelines for Americans process.

6 ABA supports the Trump
7 Administration's priority to focus on policy that
8 is transparent, data-driven, and science-based
9 and applauds its willingness to work with all
10 stakeholders.

11 ABA believes that the Dietary
12 Guidelines can further promote chronic disease
13 prevention and ensure nutritional sufficiency by
14 recognizing the critical importance of folic acid
15 enrichment and including comprehensive
16 information on health benefits of both enriched
17 and whole grains.

18 The Dietary Guidelines fundamental
19 purpose is to assist Americans in making
20 healthful food choices. Unfortunately, it may
21 not be accomplishing this purpose, since
22 diet-related chronic diseases and obesity rates

1 have increased since the process began. This may
2 be due, in part, to challenges in creating
3 recommendations that are both able to be
4 implemented, accepted by costumers and translated
5 into food free formulation.

6 It is essential that the Dietary
7 Guidelines Advisory Committee include expertise
8 not only health outcomes and chronic disease, but
9 also in understanding the practical implications
10 and implementation of its recommendations.

11 Per ABA's previous comments, the DGA
12 may be failing to achieve its purpose, in part,
13 due to a lack of variety and expertise on the
14 DGAC.

15 ABA believes that the prospective DGAC
16 members should include experts in, at least,
17 fields of Food Science and Technology, Basic and
18 Applied Nutrition Research, Health Sciences,
19 Regulatory and Study Design.

20 ABA also believes that prospective
21 committee members should be selected from a cross
22 section of relevant professionals, including, but

1 not limited to, academia, practicing healthcare
2 professionals, food industry and NGOs.

3 Finally, given the realities of
4 managing such a large committee, the Chair of the
5 DGAC should have management expertise, as well.
6 ABA supports the recommendations of both the
7 NAS's HMD Report and the five values identified
8 to improve the integrity of the purpose, process,
9 excuse me.

10 Further, ABA agrees that the approach
11 to divide tasks and responsibilities into smaller
12 working groups. This lends itself to a more
13 thoughtful and robust dialog that can produce a
14 more balanced, unbiased, and
15 scientifically-grounded set of recommendations.

16 ABA shares the NAS's HMD
17 recommendations to minimize conflict of interest
18 and bias and believes that such issues exists
19 even within academia.

20 ABA strongly believes that
21 transparency is needed the DGAC process and that
22 one option to ensure transparency is the use of

1 public notice and comment, during the committee
2 selection process.

3 To minimize conflict of interest,
4 committee members could be required to sign
5 conflict of interest agreements and follow
6 Federal Advisory Committee Act requirements.
7 These same requirements should apply to
8 subcommittee selection processes.

9 ABA believes that these two
10 recommendations that the DGAC have sufficient
11 practical expertise and that the DGAC selection
12 process be publically transparent are the most
13 important things the Committee can recommend to
14 improve the process.

15 Again, thank you for the opportunity
16 to provide these comments today. Should there be
17 any questions, please feel free to contact
18 myself, or ABA's SPV of Government Relations, Lee
19 Sanders.

20 MS. HAVEN: Thank you.

21 DR. JACK: Okay. I just want to pass
22 the written testimony to the four of you, at

1 least, to start with. Okay. Good morning, I am
2 Dr. Maia Jack, Vice President of Science and
3 Regulatory Affairs for the American Beverage
4 Association, ABA. The other ABA represents the
5 U.S. Non-Alcoholic Beverage industry.

6 We welcome the opportunity to share
7 our perspectives on the recent National
8 Academies' reports and incorporate, by reference,
9 ABA's previous oral and written comments
10 delivered at the last USDA listening session.

11 ABA supports the National Academies'
12 recommendations for increased transparency of the
13 DGA process. For increased sufficiency through a
14 formal redesign and for balance and relevant
15 expertise among members of each of the three
16 proposed DGA groups.

17 ABA fully supports the need for the DG
18 Technical Expert Panel, which may include food
19 industry experts to provide scientific support to
20 the proposed DG Committee and DG group.

21 If implemented appropriately, these
22 changes should uphold the scientific integrity of

1 the DGA process. As noted by the National
2 Academies, continuing the status quo would result
3 in an unsatisfactory response to the fundamental
4 issue and explicit policy to address bias and
5 conflicts of interest should be made publically
6 available.

7 Relevant biases and conflicts of
8 interest, including those beyond financial gain,
9 must be documented when appointing members to the
10 various groups, to ensure the highest standards
11 of integrity are not compromised.

12 As the National Academies
13 acknowledged, the DGAC selection process, itself,
14 could have implications for the rest of the
15 processes used for updating the DGA.

16 Before USDA and HHS solicit
17 nominations for the upcoming Advisory Committee,
18 draft guidelines on improvements to the DGA
19 process should be developed and opened for notice
20 and comment.

21 Per the National Academies and as
22 explained further in our written testimony, the

1 policy document, or guidelines, should encompass
2 transparency of the nominating process, best
3 practices on managing biases and conflicts of
4 interest and topic prioritization and evidence
5 grading criteria.

6 After guideline development, key
7 topics for inquiry should be selected before the
8 DGAC is empaneled. As the National Academies
9 suggested, the composition of the Advisory
10 Committee should be dictated by the content areas
11 under review, which contrasts with the 2015 DGAC
12 process that resulted in the absence of critical
13 and relevant expertise on the panel.

14 On scientific rigor, studies should
15 never be downgraded, based on funding source, but
16 should be evaluated based on quality of study
17 design, adequacy of statistical analyses and
18 measured interpretation of findings.

19 Moreover, NEL and non-NEL systematic
20 reviews should be externally peer reviewed prior
21 to being made available to the DAG Committee to
22 verify scope alignment and to ensure that the

1 totality and the quality of the evidence is
2 considered and graded consistently, fairly, and
3 objectively, regardless of source.

4 Collectively, if implemented
5 effectively, these National Academies'
6 recommendations will lead to a much greater
7 transparent, rigorous and unbiased DGA process
8 resulting in objective nutrition science-based
9 dietary guidance, to promote health for all
10 Americans, while allowing for food enjoyment.

11 Finally, the Guidelines Charter
12 purpose to provide science-based nutritional
13 advice must be its guiding principle and should
14 preempt possible scope creep, for example, into
15 areas of sustainability, ingredient safety and
16 social policy. Thank you.

17 MS. HOSTETTER: I'd also like to pass
18 down the comments. Hello, I'm Sarah Hostetter,
19 Manager of Scientific and Regulatory Affairs with
20 the American Frozen Food Institute, or AFFI.
21 AFFI thanks CNPP for the opportunity to comment
22 on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and its

1 current process, prior to the DGAC nomination
2 process.

3 AFFI is the voice of the frozen food
4 industry and is the National Trade Association
5 that advances the interest of all segments of the
6 frozen food and beverage industry, including
7 frozen food manufacturers and distributors
8 throughout the United States.

9 First, AFFI commends USDA and HHS for
10 their efforts in developing a science-based
11 Dietary Guidelines document. As the DGA has far
12 reaching implications and impacts important
13 nutrition policies, AFFI appreciates the
14 attention given to how the Dietary Guidelines are
15 researched as they are developed.

16 The scope of the Dietary Guidelines
17 has evolved, since its inception, from providing
18 general nutrition guidance to obesity-specific
19 guidance and more recently to tackling chronic
20 and metabolic disease conditions.

21 Given this evolution, we urge that the
22 process of developing Dietary Guidelines also

1 evolves. There are areas of consensus among
2 industries that AFFI supports, which includes
3 identifying research questions as the first step
4 of the process and prior to constituting the
5 Dietary Guidelines for Americans Committee.

6 That the development of these research
7 questions be transparent and available for public
8 comment. That expertise on the DGAC be broad and
9 representative of public health and nutrition
10 experts, but also food science and food
11 production.

12 That the opportunity exists for public
13 notice and comments from members of the DGAC.
14 The NAS Report recommends the inclusion of a
15 conflict of interest agreement for Committee
16 Members. We ask that USDA follow this
17 recommended protocol.

18 To recognize that the evolving areas
19 of dietary guidance represent extended and
20 long-term health outcomes that are reliant on
21 data accumulated over longer periods of time.

22 Consequently, we urge that in its

1 review, NAS, USDA, and HHS consider allowing
2 sufficient time between future recommendations to
3 enlist a full review of collected data.

4 That these recommendations be based on
5 sound science. Additionally, as AFFI has
6 expressed in previous public comments to enhance
7 the scientific rigor applied in the development
8 of the Dietary Guidelines by using only relevant
9 literature and expanding its reference to data
10 from the NEL.

11 Finally, the DGA process would be
12 well-served with identifying metrics on the
13 impact of DGA on public health initiatives. As
14 an example, promoting the intake of fruits and
15 vegetables has been a central message of the
16 current and past DGAs, yet, a 2016 Produce for a
17 Better Health Foundation Report on primary
18 shoppers attitudes and beliefs, related to fruit
19 and vegetable consumption, found that despite the
20 health benefits of eating more fruits and
21 vegetables, primary shoppers found nearly all
22 forms of fruits and vegetables to be healthier

1 than fruit.

2 Primary shoppers also reported eating
3 too few of fruits and vegetables. PBH research
4 also reveals that those who eat the most fruit
5 and vegetables report having all forms of fruits
6 and vegetables, including frozen, canned, fresh
7 and dried available in their homes.

8 Based on these statements, AFFI
9 highlights that the messages communicated by the
10 DGA can be very beneficial in directing desired
11 outcomes.

12 AFFI is committed to supporting the
13 agencies and the NAS in their review of the DGAC
14 process and we are invested in promoting
15 science-based public health-related guidance.

16 Thank you, again, for the opportunity
17 to provide this feedback. For further interest,
18 AFFI has submitted detailed comments.

19 MS. GREGORY: Passing down my written
20 testimony, as well. Hello, everyone. My name is
21 Emma Gregory. I'm a Registered Dietician at
22 Foodminds, representing the Canned Manufacturers

1 Institute, which represents the U.S. Can
2 industry.

3 CMI appreciates the opportunity to
4 provide comments today. Above all, CMI asks that
5 USDA please move forward in a transparent fashion
6 and update stakeholders, as often as possible,
7 about the timeline and what changes to expect and
8 not to expect in the 2020 DGA process.

9 CMI understands that USDA has much to
10 consider from the HMD report. CMI believes USDA
11 should prioritize these three themes from the
12 report.

13 One, enhance food pattern modeling to
14 better reflect the complex interactions involved,
15 variability and intakes and range of possible
16 healthful diets; two, implement more
17 opportunities for public comment; and three,
18 promote diversity of experience throughout the
19 DGA process.

20 Given the time constraints, during my
21 oral comments, I'm focused on the first
22 recommendation to enhance food pattern modeling

1 and lightly touch on the HMD Committee's
2 recommendation to include technical expert
3 panels.

4 First, CMI agrees that food pattern
5 modeling should be less deterministic and more
6 exploratory. CMI conducted menu modeling and
7 demonstrated that a canned food center menu meets
8 MyPlate nutrition guidance, while keeping sodium
9 and saturated fat under recommended levels.

10 CMI's menu modeling exercise is just
11 one of many ways a healthy, a healthy adult can
12 meet nutrient requirements. However, this
13 diversely and nutritiously adequate diets have
14 not been explored, or communicated, effectively
15 in previous iterations of the DGAs.

16 For example, in the 2015 Dietary
17 Guidelines continue, they continue to use
18 limiting language around fruit and vegetable
19 recommendations, such as no sugar added and no
20 salt added when, as CMI demonstrated, it is
21 entirely possible to eat canned foods of all
22 types and meet nutrient requirements.

1 As USDA is aware, all language in the
2 DGA effects important food policies and feeding
3 programs and these feeding programs are often the
4 source of nutrition and food education to those
5 who depend on them.

6 The Produce for a Better Health
7 Foundation found that government Guidelines
8 reinforcing the healthfulness of all forms of
9 fruits and vegetables positively impacts
10 consumers' perception of packaged fruits and
11 vegetables.

12 Limiting language over-emphasizes the
13 benefits of fresh fruits and vegetables distracts
14 from the perceived helpfulness of packaged fruits
15 and vegetables. And CMI urges USDA to better
16 translate the Guidelines into consumer-friendly
17 messages, without using limiting language.

18 We hope USDA considers the HMD
19 recommendation to use dietary modeling to explore
20 the possible healthy diets and re-frame and
21 re-communicate their food-based recommendations
22 accordingly.

1 Finally, CMI concurs with the HMD
2 Committee recommendation to create technical
3 expert panels that can provide new unspecific
4 guidance to the DGAC on highly technical areas.

5 Because of the cross-cutting
6 implications of the DGAC, TEPs will be necessary
7 to inform the selected academics of the DGAC how
8 their recommendations may affect food policy and
9 feeding program implementation, food product
10 reformulation and distribution, food
11 accessibility, waste, and economics.

12 Thank you for the opportunity to
13 provide comment. Please contact us with any
14 questions.

15 MR. BODE: Thank you. I'm John Bode,
16 President of the Corn Refiners Association. I
17 appreciate the opportunity to present comments.
18 Far too often recommendations, based on weak
19 science, have been included in the Dietary
20 Guidelines.

21 Because of the weak scientific
22 foundation of those recommendations, they have

1 been controversial. And because of the
2 controversy, those recommendations, based on the
3 weakest science, have become the headline
4 recommendation for that addition.

5 Inappropriate recommendations are not
6 benign. They distract from important and
7 appropriate messages, such as consume five or
8 more servings of fruits and vegetables a day.

9 Inappropriate recommendations are a
10 disservice to public health, the economy, and the
11 credibility of nutrition science. Fortunately,
12 the National Academies of Science, Engineering
13 and Medicine has recently issued two reports
14 making recommendations for how to enhance the
15 scientific integrity of this process.

16 While those reports did not question
17 the thin statutory framework established for the
18 Guidelines, they made solid recommendations for
19 improving the independence, objectivity, and
20 transparency of the process.

21 Regrettably, those recommendations
22 were developed without regard to important

1 administrative limitations, such as requirements
2 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, or
3 availability of funds for a Federal Advisory
4 Committees.

5 To the extent possible, we recommend
6 the 2020 Guidelines process incorporate
7 recommendations of the National Academies.
8 Hopefully, the other recommendations to enhance
9 the scientific integrity of the process may
10 follow.

11 So first, set the precedent of seeking
12 a balanced panel by securing third party support
13 in the selection of Advisory Committee members.
14 Discontinue political appointment of the DGAC.

15 Second, charge the Committee to rely
16 exclusively upon science that is transparent,
17 with respect to its methodology and data. There
18 should be heavy reliance upon the Nutrition
19 Evidence Library.

20 Third, limit the charge of the
21 Committee, so that its workload is reasonable and
22 its recommendations are within its competence.

1 Further to this point, the Committee should not
2 make recommendations which go beyond the weight
3 of the evidence and beyond what the Committee has
4 the means to evaluate.

5 Fourth, delineate clear requirements
6 regarding conflict of interest. I address that
7 more in my written comments. Fifth, this isn't,
8 and this is admittedly beyond the reach of the
9 2020 Guidelines process, work with Congress, to
10 secure funding for appropriate updating of the
11 DRI's, which should be the foundation of the
12 Dietary Guidelines, establish a separate process
13 and guidelines for Birth to 24 months, upgrade
14 the NEL, and more broadly enhance the scientific
15 integrity of the Dietary Guidelines process.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. LIPPS: Thank you.

18 MR. ZAKHARI: Good morning. I welcome
19 the opportunity to discuss the Dietary Guidelines
20 on beverage alcohol consumption. I am Sam
21 Zakhari, Chief Scientist for the Distilled Spirit
22 Councils. Formerly, I worked over 26 years at

1 the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and
2 Alcoholism National Institutes of Health.

3 I wish to emphasize the importance of
4 maintaining in the Guidelines, the current 2015
5 definition of moderate drinking. The 2015
6 Guidelines state that, if alcohol is consumed, it
7 should be in moderation, up to one drink per day
8 for women and up to two drinks per day for men
9 and only by adults of legal drinking age.

10 To follow these recommended limits,
11 adults need to have a clear definition of a drink
12 equivalent. The 2015 Guidelines state that one
13 alcoholic drink equivalent is described as
14 containing 14 grams, or .6 fluid ounces of pure
15 alcohol.

16 As a reference, the Guidelines
17 describe one alcohol drink equivalent as 12 fluid
18 ounces of regular beer, five percent alcohol,
19 five fluid ounces of wine, 12 percent alcohol, or
20 one-and-a-half fluid ounces of 80-proof distilled
21 spirits, 40 percent alcohol.

22 Throughout the case the Department of

1 Health and Human Service and the U.S. Department
2 of Agriculture have integrated beverage alcohol
3 consumption in the Dietary Guidelines for
4 Americans, including a definition of what
5 constitutes a drink equivalent.

6 We urge that the 2020 Guidelines
7 incorporate the potential benefits and risks of
8 alcohol consumption, as was the case in the 2010
9 Dietary Guidelines. This information provides
10 all adults of legal drinking age with a
11 stand-alone guideline about alcohol and health.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. BARNES: Good morning. I'm
14 Stephanie Barnes, with the Food Marketing
15 Institute. We're, actually, not going to be
16 submitting oral remarks today, but we look
17 forward to following up with comments in writing.

18 MR. LIPPS: Thank you.

19 MS. SCOTT: Good morning. My name is
20 Kristen Scott from the Grocery Manufacturers
21 Association. The Grocery Manufacturers
22 Association represents the majority of food

1 manufacturers. We fully support the development
2 of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans to help
3 guide and publish policies that allow consumers
4 to develop healthier eating patterns. We
5 appreciate the huge amount of work contributed by
6 the advisory groups and USDA and HHS over the
7 past 35 plus years to periodic update the DGA
8 recommendations, based upon new science. We also
9 appreciate the efforts by the departments to
10 ensure that the DGAs have a solid scientific
11 basis. It's critical that these recommendations
12 are widely viewed as credible and an
13 authoritative sources of dietary recommendations.

14 In regards to the process for
15 selecting the Advisory Committee members, it's
16 important that appropriate measures be taken to
17 provide transparency around bias, or any
18 conflicts of interest, to guaranty a balanced and
19 relevant experience and perspectives on the
20 panel.

21 In order to facilitate the selection
22 of these members, USDA and HHS should first

1 prioritize the detailed topic areas, which will
2 be reviewed. The areas of priority can be open
3 to public comment with this finalized list being
4 used to select the experts.

5 A broad range of science, specific
6 science and subject matter expertise is needed,
7 including, but not limited to dietitians, oral
8 health experts, methodologists, food
9 technologists, as well as members with industry
10 experience, to provide a practical perspective.

11 And as recommended by the NAS
12 Committee, the Department should make a list of
13 provisional appointees open for public comment,
14 for a reasonable, reasonable period of time,
15 prior to their appointment.

16 In regards to the methods used to
17 review the scientific evidence, we support the
18 recommendations from the National Academies that
19 the Secretary of USDA should ensure all NEL
20 systematic reviews in line with best practices,
21 as well as ensuring that they are clear and
22 separate roles for the USDA, NEL staff, and the

1 DGAC members.

2 Transparency in this process is
3 important. More clarification is needed on the
4 selection criteria, both inclusion and exclusion
5 for research to be included in the NEL review
6 process.

7 While looking at that criteria, a
8 funding source for scientific research should not
9 be used in assessing the quality of data, other
10 elements, such as experimental design and data
11 analysis should be used to assess that quality.

12 A consistent process and level of
13 evidence should be used to support each nutrient,
14 or food base recommendation. The use of modeling
15 should not be used to replace the NEL process for
16 establishing recommendations.

17 When examining the recommendations for
18 the new age group of birth to 24 months, it's
19 important to note the complexity and unique
20 limitations for this group involving their
21 specific areas of research. Any resulting
22 guidelines should be balanced and practical in

1 their perspective for use by any caregivers.

2 And, finally, to provide transparency
3 throughout the entire process, Secretaries of
4 USDA and HHS should provide the public with clear
5 explanation when the DGA policy document omits or
6 accepts only part of the scientific report, as
7 well as allow for public notice and comment
8 period, prior to the publication of the final
9 document.

10 Thank you for the opportunity to
11 provide comments and more details can be found in
12 our written comments. Thank you.

13 MR. MARTIN: Good morning. I'm Cory
14 Martin, Vice President of Government Relations
15 for the International Bottled Water Association,
16 or IBWA.

17 IBWA represents all segments of the
18 bottled water industry, including spring,
19 artisan, mineral, sparkling, and purified bottled
20 water.

21 Founded in 1958, IBWA member companies
22 include domestic and international bottlers,

1 distributors, and suppliers. IBWA represents
2 small, medium and large companies, including many
3 family-owned businesses.

4 Water, including tap, filtered and
5 bottled plays a vital role in supporting
6 nutritional health. IBWA applauds the 2015
7 Dietary Guidelines for recognizing the importance
8 of water in a healthy diet and the U.S.
9 Department of Agriculture for promoting water in
10 the MyPlate MyWins online nutrition guide.

11 IBWA supports the National Academies'
12 recommendation to identify, select and prioritize
13 topics, prior to selecting members of the
14 Scientific Advisory Committee. With this in
15 mind, IBWA recommends that water be included as a
16 topic, for the Advisory Committee to consider
17 when preparing the 2020 Guidelines. This will
18 allow the Committee and the nation's best
19 scientists and nutrition experts to consider
20 relevant research on how water impacts healthy
21 hydration among all ages and populations.

22 As mentioned in the NAS reports, the

1 Guidelines provide important, nutritional and
2 dietary information to promote health and prevent
3 disease. There is strong evidence showing that
4 drinking water is associated with the decrease of
5 the incidents of obesity, Type 2 diabetes and
6 cardiovascular disease and it can aid in weight
7 management.

8 In addition, USDA's National Health
9 and Nutrition Examination Survey for Data show
10 that 75 percent of children ages 4 to 8 fail to
11 satisfy their daily recommended intake for water.

12 Since the 2020 Guidelines will also
13 focus on children from birth to 24 months, it is,
14 it is important to know that the development of
15 chronic disease start at an early age and so do
16 good drinking habits.

17 Since water is essential for the
18 normal healthy functioning of the human body, it
19 simply would be impossible to have a healthy diet
20 without adequate water consumption.

21 Yet, water is noticeably absent on the
22 most prominent educational tool that the

1 Government uses to promote a healthy diet, the
2 MyPlate nutritional guidance graphic, along with
3 dairy, specifically, milk, which is another vital
4 beverage choice, water should be included on
5 MyPlate, since it is critical to good health.

6 The importance of water in a healthy
7 diet is recognized by governments throughout the
8 world. Currently, 48 countries promote water
9 consumption in their nutrition guidance graphics.

10 For example, you can find water
11 promoted in the Australian Guide to Healthy
12 Eating, China's Food Pagoda, France's Food
13 Stairs, Germany's Nutrition Circle, Japan's
14 Spinning Top Food Guides, Spain's Food Pyramid,
15 and the United Kingdom's Eat Well Guide. The
16 U.S. should be a leader in promoting a healthy
17 diet, which is why water consumption needs to be
18 a topic in the 2020 Guidelines and included on
19 the MyPlate nutrition graphic.

20 IBWA hopes that USDA and HHS will
21 support a transparent process throughout the
22 formulation of the 2020 Guidelines, provide ample

1 opportunities for public input and comment and
2 recognize the importance that water plays in a
3 healthy diet.

4 Thank you for the opportunity to
5 provide comments this morning. IBWA looks
6 forward to working with the Advisory Committee
7 and the USDA and HHS staff in preparation of the
8 release of the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for
9 Americans.

10 MS. HAVEN: Thank you.

11 MS. POULOS: Sylvia Poulos, Infant
12 Nutrition Council of America. Good morning.
13 INCA members produce over 95 percent of the
14 infant formula consumed in the U.S. and take our
15 responsibility of providing optimal nutrition to
16 infants, who are not exclusively breast-fed, very
17 seriously.

18 Expanding the Dietary Guidelines for
19 Americans to include recommendations for 0 to 24
20 months presents a significant opportunity to
21 promote health, growth and development, as well
22 as enhance nutrition and feeding experiences for

1 all infants and young children.

2 INCA believes that the B-24
3 Guidelines, like all dietary guidelines, should
4 be based on sound science. That the Dietary
5 Guidelines process must be transparent and allow
6 for the submission and consideration of public
7 comments to develop recommendations that are
8 impactful and that the Guidelines should be
9 balanced and address the needs of all families
10 with safe and nutritious feeding choices,
11 including recommendations for pregnant women,
12 infants and young children, is a tremendous
13 opportunity to promote healthy development and
14 eating patterns.

15 However, since nutrition during the
16 fetal and young infant period is provided by a
17 sole source, it is critical that the DGAC include
18 scientists who, with specific expertise in
19 nutrition and development needs of this
20 vulnerable population.

21 Ideally, a subcommittee within the
22 DGAC will specifically consider the nutritional

1 needs of pregnant and breast-feeding women and
2 infants and young children.

3 A subcommittee with experts in
4 nutrition, pediatrics, epidemiology, bio
5 statistics and obstetrics that understand the
6 strengths and limitations of the nutrition
7 science, should have the knowledge to develop
8 guidelines that are balanced, comprehensive,
9 accurate and based on sound science.

10 We continue to be concerned about the
11 lack of transparency of Dietary Guidelines
12 development. The infant nutrition research is
13 complex and has unique limitations compared to
14 other areas of nutrition research.

15 The Guidelines will be strengthened if
16 experts groups participate in the consideration
17 of research framework, literature review
18 findings, before development of interim
19 recommendations.

20 INCA members have decades of
21 experience in infant feeding research and would
22 welcome the opportunity to share our knowledge in

1 pediatric nutrition and health outcomes.

2 Our final comments focus on the impact
3 of the Dietary Guidelines. The DGAs set
4 scientific standards for nutrition healthcare and
5 public health and education programs in the U.S.
6 and, possibly, globally.

7 It is critical that the new guidance
8 provided for young infants be balanced, based on
9 science, reflect cultural sensitivities and
10 address the full spectrum of infant feeding,
11 breast-feeding, dumped, donor milk, and infant
12 formula.

13 In addition, the Dietary Guidelines
14 should specifically recommend against infant
15 formula practices that are not safe and are
16 potentially harmful, such as the use of homemade
17 formula.

18 Finally, to most effectively
19 communicate guidelines developed by the DGAC,
20 INCA requests that CNPP conduct specific consumer
21 research to identify successful communications
22 techniques that help ensure clear, impactful

1 communication about the DGAs to parents and
2 caregivers.

3 INCA advocates for infant health and
4 nutrition, supports mothers and families in their
5 infant feeding decisions and provides education
6 on appropriate infant feeding options.

7 INCA appreciates the opportunity to
8 provide comments.

9 MR. JOHNSON: Hi, everybody. I'm Guy
10 Johnson, at the McCormick Science Institute we
11 have two favorite words, flavor and taste. And
12 in our previous comments to this Committee and
13 during part of the process, we've focused on two
14 broad areas.

15 One is that flavor can be an enabler
16 of healthier eating, which is really important,
17 because perceived lack of taste is the biggest
18 barrier for people to eat healthier diets. And
19 guess what, if you make healthier foods taste
20 better, people like them more.

21 Also, the second is that the Committee
22 should be broadened to include more expertise in

1 the area of food science and consumer behavior.
2 Because these are also ways to identify
3 opportunities to enable healthier eating. And
4 I'm here to tell you, we are even more committed
5 to these goals now, because of two reasons.

6 One, the science has continued to
7 evolve. We have new data to show that you can
8 compensate for the lack of flavor in lower added
9 sugar foods with spices and herbs, in certain
10 cases.

11 And also, we have data to show that
12 you can increase the consumption of vegetables in
13 a high school cafeteria, and this is a tough
14 audience, simply by making them more flavorful
15 with spices and herbs.

16 The second reason that we're
17 enthusiastic about these approaches is the NAS
18 reports really condone such an approach. The
19 first report promotes diversity in the DGAC.
20 Sounds to me like they're advocating for a food
21 scientist and a consumer behavior person.

22 And the second report recommends in

1 Recommendation 7 that a systems approach for
2 broader understanding of diet-related effects to
3 inform translation of Dietary Guidelines across
4 stakeholders be encouraged. And so that, to me,
5 says more consideration about taste and flavor
6 and consumer behavior.

7 So in summary, I would like to say
8 that we are encouraging the departments to
9 acknowledge that taste is an important
10 determinant of food selection, during the
11 development process of the Dietary Guidelines.
12 It's such an important factor, it ought to be
13 part of the, part of the thought process.

14 And the idea isn't to change the
15 science, or dramatically alter the
16 recommendations, but to look for solutions on how
17 taste and flavor can be appropriately used to
18 foster healthier eating and provide solutions.
19 Thank you so much.

20 DR. LAU-ROSENOW: Hi, I'm Dr. --
21 sorry. I'm Dr. Clara Lau-Rosenow and I'm
22 Director of Nutrition Research at National

1 Cattleman's Beef Association. Thank you for this
2 opportunity to provide input.

3 NCBA has a long-standing commitment to
4 supporting nutrition research to better
5 understand how people can enjoy beef, as part of
6 a healthy, balanced lifestyle.

7 NCBA supports the recommendations of
8 the National Academies' Health and Medicine
9 Division Report. Specifically, we support their
10 efforts that call for greater scientific rigor,
11 using validated standardized processes and
12 methods informed by an open peer review process
13 and best available scientific evidence and
14 improved transparency, especially, to ensure that
15 the Advisory Committee's conclusions are
16 accurately applied to the consumer facing
17 messages of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

18 We appreciate that applying these
19 recommendations to the 2020 process is no small
20 task and, as such, we encourage you to consider
21 focusing on key areas to address the need for
22 greater scientific rigor and transparency.

1 First, USDA should allow public
2 comments on a systematic literature review
3 conducted through the Nutrition Evidence Library,
4 to consider evidence-based comment on the
5 protocol, research questions, and inclusion and
6 exclusion criteria.

7 For example, the evidence review
8 supporting the B to 24 Project has not yet
9 provided sufficient opportunity for public
10 comment. Without the ability to provide
11 peer-reviewed evidence, or review the research
12 questions, it's unclear if the recommendations
13 will be based on the full body of the available
14 data.

15 Second, NCBA supports an independent
16 peer review of the systematic literature review
17 process and results, which would enhance
18 transparency and integrity of the process.

19 While systematic literature reviews
20 can be effective for assessing evidence, the
21 reliability of the results can be compromised, if
22 the inclusion and exclusion criteria are not

1 consistently applied.

2 It's imperative that the review
3 process accounts for both observational and
4 randomized controlled data, to ensure the
5 Committee can address its research questions.

6 In 2015 the Committee appeared to rely
7 heavily on observational evidence where lean meat
8 was not consistently defined and ignored
9 scientific process. Oh, sorry. Ignored
10 scientific evidence for more than 20 randomized
11 controlled trials that showed four to
12 five-and-a-half ounces of lean red meat can be
13 eaten daily, as part of a dietary pattern that
14 promotes good health.

15 Because numerous high quality RCTs are
16 excluded, despite meeting the NEL inclusion
17 criteria, lean red meat recommendations were not
18 based on the totality of the evidence.

19 NCBA applauds the commitment by USDA
20 to carry out the recommendations by the National
21 Academies and we look forward to submitting
22 scientific evidence for the 2020 Advisory

1 Committee's consideration to help ensure a
2 transparent, evidence-based and technically
3 rigorous process. Thank you.

4 MS. TATELBAUM: Good morning. I'm Amy
5 Tatelbaum with the National Confectioners
6 Association. NCA is the trade association that
7 advances, protects and promotes chocolate candy
8 gum and mints and the companies that make these
9 special treats.

10 We educate the public to help ensure
11 that it understands and appreciates the unique
12 role that chocolate and candy can play in a happy
13 balanced lifestyle.

14 America's leading chocolate and candy
15 companies recently announced a major initiative
16 with the Partnership for a Healthier America to
17 provide consumers with more information, options
18 and support, as they seek to manage their sugar
19 intake and gain a better understanding of the
20 ingredients in their favorite treats.

21 By 2022 half of our individually
22 wrapped products will be 200 calories or less per

1 pack and 90 percent of our best-selling treats
2 will have calorie information on the front of the
3 pack.

4 As a result of this voluntary
5 commitment to PHA, consumers will soon see more
6 options in smaller pack sizes and innovative new
7 products, as we continue our journey to help them
8 and their families make informed choices.

9 We appreciate the opportunity to
10 participate in this listening session today. We
11 agree with many of the conclusions in the
12 National Academy of Sciences Reports and applaud
13 USDA for considering the implementation of NAS's
14 recommendations.

15 First, it is essential that the
16 Dietary Guidelines be rooted in the strongest
17 scientific standards, since these Guidelines form
18 the foundation for all federal nutrition policy.

19 Specifically, the process would
20 benefit from developing a standardized evidence
21 review process, based on validated methods.
22 Additionally, as noted in the NAS Reports, as one

1 of the five identified values to improve the
2 integrity of the Guidelines, we would appreciate
3 greater transparency throughout the process.

4 Furthermore, it would be beneficial
5 for the Committee to be comprised of experts from
6 a broad array of disciplines, to ensure that the
7 Committee is balanced and represents diverse
8 perspectives.

9 For instance, we would support
10 including oral health professionals on the 2020
11 Guideline Committee, in order to review the
12 evidence on the role of sugar-free gum and
13 addressing dental issues.

14 Throughout this process, we support
15 the efforts by USDA and HHS to offer consumers
16 realistic nutritional guidance on their favorite
17 treats, like chocolate, candy, gum and mints.
18 Nearly all Americans enjoy chocolate and candy
19 throughout the year, but an average consumption
20 of these treats is moderate. Most people in the
21 U.S. enjoy chocolate and candy about two to three
22 times per week averaging just 40 calories per day

1 and about one teaspoon of added sugar per day
2 from confectionary items.

3 Chocolate and candy are beloved treats
4 that often play a role in holiday celebrations
5 and family traditions. Given this cultural
6 association, recognizing that the body of
7 evidence supports education more than
8 restriction, it is practical to acknowledge to
9 the world that treats can play in a happy
10 balanced lifestyle in the Dietary Guidelines.
11 Thank you.

12 MS. NICHOLLS: Good morning. I'm Jill
13 Nicholls, Senior VP Scientific and Regulatory
14 Affairs at National Dairy Council. NDC is a
15 non-profit organization founded by U.S. Dairy
16 Farmers and we're committed to nutrition,
17 research and education about dairy's role in the
18 diet. Thank you for this opportunity.

19 NDC commends the National Academies'
20 two 2017 reports on the DGA process. The
21 February report about committee selection
22 addressed enhanced transparency, increased

1 objectivity and systematic management of biases
2 and conflicts of interest.

3 In addition, the value of a broader
4 range of expertise and experience among experts
5 to review the science was recognized. For 2020,
6 choosing experts on the B to 24 nutrition will be
7 an important priority.

8 Other relevant disciplines may include
9 food science and behavioral science. The
10 September report outlined a comprehensive
11 redesign to improve objectivity and scientific
12 rigor of the development of the DGA.

13 While it will be the Agency's
14 decision, whether implementing all of the
15 report's recommendations, as possible, for 2020,
16 the reports contain science-based recommendations
17 that would permit the agencies to make choices
18 now, to directly build trust and confidence in
19 both the scientific review and translation of
20 that science to produce the final DGA.

21 This involves establishing a
22 consistent process using accepted practices and

1 standards of evidence to determine what
2 constitutes a healthy eating pattern.

3 Three examples in the September Report
4 that would help meet this goal and that are
5 consistent with good scientific practice include,
6 dividing responsibility for the scientific review
7 process between two main committees, one that
8 would collect and assess the evidence and another
9 that would interpret evidence and make
10 recommendations.

11 Peer review of the Nutrition Evidence
12 Library Reports and increased access to the NEL
13 to the public and increased transparency during
14 the development of the final DGA policy document.

15 The addition of pregnant women and
16 young children to the DGA population will likely
17 identify gaps in our knowledge, such as, the
18 impact of maternal nutrition and long-term health
19 of their children. Understanding this may
20 require new approaches to research.

21 For example, researchers at the
22 University of Illinois conducting this STRONG

1 Kids studies are taking a Trans disciplinary
2 cells to society approach to nutrition collecting
3 comprehensive data from mother child pairs up to
4 5 years of age on nutrition, behavior, and
5 learning and cognition.

6 While food groups, including dairy
7 foods, are established parts of dietary guidance
8 for mothers and their young children, we have
9 more to learn about building healthy dietary
10 habits across the life span.

11 In conclusion, establishing a
12 transparent and objective process, from beginning
13 to end, will enhance the DGA's trust and
14 credibility. Thank you, again, for inviting NDC
15 to this important session.

16 MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you for having
17 us. I'm Brandon Phillips with the National
18 Fisheries Institute, NFI, here on behalf of our
19 Registered Dietitians, who could not be here
20 today.

21 NFI would like to applaud USDA and HHS
22 on your continued commitment to ensuring the DGAs

1 are transparent, data-driven, and science-based.
2 NFI is a science-based non-profit dedicated to
3 education about seafood nutrition at all stages
4 of life, including pregnancy and early childhood.

5 So we're particularly supportive of
6 the 2020 DGA inclusion of pregnant women and
7 children from Birth to 24 months.

8 We know that moms to be and parents of
9 young children are particularly open to behavior
10 change, so they can have the healthiest baby
11 possible.

12 On the other hand, we know that
13 pregnant women and parents of young children are
14 especially risk adverse and receive far too many
15 confusing and conflicting message about
16 nutrition. A simple Google search illustrates
17 this.

18 For this reason, the DGAs, the 2020
19 DGAs offer a unique opportunity to empower
20 pregnant women and parents of young children with
21 clear, consistent, actionable and nutritionally
22 sound advice that can greatly improve public

1 health. Not just at birth, or when introducing
2 table foods, but food habits can improve health
3 over the child's entire life.

4 Nutrition science shows that pregnant
5 women, who eat eight to 12 ounces of a variety of
6 seafood each week have babies with improved brain
7 development outcomes. But the average pregnant
8 woman in the U.S., currently consumes less than
9 one-sixth the minimum recommendation. This
10 intake gap and resulting Omega 3 deficiency
11 amongst pregnant women in the U.S. is just one
12 example of an important nutrition education
13 opportunity.

14 Additionally, a mere ten percent of
15 U.S. children meet the 2015 DGA recommendations
16 for seafood. Low seafood intake amongst U.S.
17 children is unfortunate, from a nutrition
18 perspective, but also because early childhood is
19 when habits are being formed. Both WHO and AAP
20 support early introduction of seafood.

21 The need for nutrients in fish is
22 especially high during pregnancy. During the last

1 trimester a fetus' brain and nervous system
2 rapidly develops requiring about 65 mg, per day,
3 of DHA. The heightened demand for DHA continues
4 to the age of 2.

5 It is imperative that DGAC members
6 include real world OBs, pediatricians, and
7 dieticians, who intimately understand both the
8 needs and the fears of pregnant women and birth
9 to 24 populations, as well as how to effectively
10 communicate with them.

11 We look forward to the next round of
12 DGA's clear, consistent and encouraging advice
13 about seafood consumption, as well as how to
14 include more seafood in the diet.

15 Again, thank you for your time today
16 and thank you for all the hard work that you do
17 to encourage all Americans to live more
18 healthfully.

19 MR. KOVICH: Good morning. I'm Dan
20 Kovich, with the National Pork Producers Council.
21 NPPC will not be submitting written comments, at
22 this time.

1 However, we do want to note our strong
2 support for incorporating the NAS recommendations
3 into a more practicable mission-focused,
4 transparent and scientifically rigorous DGA
5 process. Thank you.

6 MS. YARABECH DATLOW: Hi. My name is
7 Lindsay Yarabech Datlow, with Food Directions and
8 I'm commenting on behalf of the National Turkey
9 Federation. NTF would like to thank the USDA for
10 inviting comments on this important process.

11 In general, NTF is supportive of the
12 recent recommendation on committee selection and
13 process redesign released by the National
14 Academies. Most importantly, we strongly support
15 more transparency in the process.

16 We were delighted to be invited to
17 these listening sessions and feel that allowing
18 for comment at the beginning of this process is
19 already showing a commitment to transparency.

20 In regards to specific recommendations
21 from the NAS Report, we strongly encourage USDA
22 to better inform the public about what research

1 will be considered early in the process, so that
2 groups like NTF do not waste limited research
3 dollars on data that will not be considered.

4 The NASEM Committee specifically
5 recommended six times throughout the process
6 where the public should be updated on the
7 development underway and where public input
8 should be obtained and properly considered and we
9 strongly support this recommendation.

10 We also concur that systematic reviews
11 should be done with complete transparency,
12 performed by individuals who are adequately
13 trained and completed separate and apart from
14 individuals providing input on the DGA
15 recommendations. We feel that these are key
16 pieces in providing more transparency and gaining
17 the public's trust in the process, as a whole.

18 Something that has been less than
19 transparent is the work on the Guidelines for
20 infants, pregnant and lactating women. Though
21 many questions have been asked of the Agency over
22 the last three years, we have yet to gain clear

1 understanding on how solid the data is on this
2 population, what data is being considered already
3 and what research still needs to be done, in
4 order to feel confident that the recommendations
5 are scientifically sound.

6 We have concerns that there is a
7 dearth of research on this population,
8 especially, when it comes to maternal intake
9 impacts on the child and we feel that moving
10 forward without substantial data will be against
11 the Agency's mission to develop recommendations
12 that are based on strong science.

13 In the spirit of transparency, we
14 would welcome more information from the Agency on
15 the development of these Guidelines, including
16 what research exists and what research gaps are
17 found, so that we can provide useful information.
18 Without an understanding of what the Agency is
19 looking for, in regards to research, we have been
20 unable to help with this process thus far.

21 As the Agency works to begin this next
22 DGA process, we encourage the Agency to follow

1 the recommendations of the NASEM Report and
2 establish areas of review upon which it will
3 focus. These priorities should be made public.

4 This information will assist groups
5 like NTF in providing nominations for experts and
6 appropriate research to best address the key
7 issues identified.

8 From our perspective, we would
9 recommend looking at certain eating patterns,
10 such as including protein at breakfast, which
11 recent research has shown provides key health
12 benefits and which could better inform the
13 federal feeding programs.

14 Additionally, like others who are
15 closely watching the sodium potassium National
16 Academies' Dietary Reference Intake Review, we
17 recommend the Agency wait until their review is
18 complete before undertaking a separate and
19 independent review of the emerging science.

20 In closing, we would like to reiterate
21 support for the DGA process to move forward in a
22 transparent and scientifically rigorous manner,

1 in order to provide the most scientifically sound
2 recommendations to the American public. Thank
3 you.

4 MS. BACKUS: Good morning. I'm Susan
5 Backus, with the North American Meat Institute.
6 Consumer health and safety are the driving forces
7 in the production of meat and poultry products.

8 The meat and poultry industry is
9 committed to offering nutrient dense protein food
10 products, while working continuously to produce
11 safe and wholesome food. The Meat Institute
12 appreciates the opportunity to provide input on
13 this important issue.

14 The Dietary Guidelines serve as the
15 foundation for nutritional policies and are
16 intended to improve the health of Americans. The
17 Meat Institute supports dietary guidance that's
18 practical, achievable, and affordable and that
19 helps Americans achieve a more healthful diet.

20 The Meat Institute appreciates USDA's
21 priorities for the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for
22 Americans to be transparent, data-driven, and

1 science-based.

2 There are two key areas from the
3 National Academies' report on the Dietary
4 Guidelines Advisory Committee selection process
5 that are relevant for the 2020 Advisory
6 Committee, promoting diversity of expertise and
7 experience among the committee members and
8 managing conflicts of interest and biases.

9 The Advisory Committee must include
10 representatives from a cross section of
11 disciplines and professions to ensure a balance
12 of experiences and perspectives are considered.

13 Broad representation would minimize
14 bias and make sure all perspectives are
15 considered based on scientific merit. In order
16 to minimize conflicts of interest and bias and
17 preserve a wide range of viewpoints, it is
18 important the Advisory Committee is selected
19 through a transparent process.

20 The second National Academies' report
21 has several recommendations that can improve the
22 development of future guidelines. These include

1 USDA and HHS prioritizing topics to be reviewed
2 in each Dietary Guidelines cycle, a clear
3 separation between USDA's Nutrition Evidence
4 Library staff and the Advisory Committee and
5 ensuring all Nutrition Evidence Library
6 systematic reviews align with best practices.

7 USDA and HHS identifying and
8 prioritizing topics allows for thorough
9 evaluation on issues where there are data gaps,
10 or where new scientific evidence may be used to
11 determine if there is support to change dietary
12 advice.

13 A more narrowed focus aids time and
14 resource management, while ensuring the breadth
15 and scope of the evidence supports the scientific
16 recommendations. The Nutrition Evidence Library
17 should also function in a transparent,
18 independent fashion, using established evidence
19 evaluation procedures and with formal oversight
20 to ensure that the Library serves its function as
21 a repository of high quality evidence and to
22 confirm its use of evidence-based methodology to

1 evaluate this evidence.

2 Ensuring the systematic reviews adhere
3 to best practices provides another layer of
4 transparency and demonstrates the evidentiary
5 standards supporting dietary recommendations.

6 In addition to the National Academies'
7 report, the Meat Institute believes it is
8 important to make systematic review study design
9 criteria publically available to ensure
10 appropriate research can be submitted for
11 inclusion of the review, or design for future
12 reviews.

13 The 2020 Dietary Guidelines will
14 include recommendations for pregnant and Birth to
15 24 months populations. Given its new
16 responsibility, it is imperative for the Advisory
17 Committee and departments to development
18 recommendations transparently and supported by
19 strong scientific evidence.

20 However, the evidence is limited in
21 these populations and in the absence of strong
22 evidence, recommendations should not be made.

1 The Meat Institute looks forward to participating
2 in the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
3 process. Thank you.

4 DR. HARVEY: Good morning. I'm Dr.
5 Lynn Harvey, President of the School Nutrition
6 Association. And thank you for the opportunity
7 to speak on behalf of the 57,000 members of our
8 association, who plan, prepare and serve
9 nutritious, affordable, appealing meals to
10 students every day, as an important component of
11 their instructional day.

12 Each year, American schools serve more
13 than five billion lunches and nearly
14 two-and-a-half billion breakfasts to fuel
15 students' success. Federal Regulations mandate
16 all these meals be prepared in accordance with
17 the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

18 Schools and economically disadvantaged
19 communities increasingly operate as nutrition
20 hubs, thus ensuring that students have access to
21 nutritious foods not only during the school day,
22 but also beyond the school day.

1 The DGA's influence the nutritional
2 requirements for after school snacks and suppers,
3 as well as meals, provided during the summer
4 months when school is not in session.

5 School nutrition professionals are the
6 living cornerstones for all these programs, which
7 serve more than 30 million students each school
8 day, with the potential to reach more than 50
9 million students nationwide.

10 We work on the front lines to
11 transform the recommendations from the DGAs into
12 the meals the students will eat and enjoy, while
13 simultaneously teaching them lifelong healthful
14 eating habits that will positively impact their
15 future dietary practices.

16 Given this tremendous influence on
17 children's long-term health and well-being, we
18 strongly recommend the Dietary Guidelines
19 Advisory Committee permanently include a school
20 nutrition practitioner.

21 We offer a unique and critical
22 perspective on both the opportunities for

1 continued achievement and advancement of the
2 Guidelines in shaping children's food preferences
3 and ultimately, their adult food habits.

4 Unfortunately, as we all know, the
5 DGAs do not mirror the current dietary practices
6 of many American families, as a result, school
7 nutrition professionals are tasked with the job
8 of enticing students to make healthful food
9 choices at school, when those choices are seldom
10 reinforced in other settings.

11 We've accepted this opportunity to
12 help shape students' current and future food
13 choices and we've made tremendous progress in
14 this area by utilizing creative menu strategies,
15 taste tests, farm to school programs, and other
16 nutrition education initiatives intended to
17 promote the adoption of lifelong healthful eating
18 habits.

19 However, school nutrition
20 professionals face challenges, given the
21 prescriptive manner in which the Guidelines have
22 been applied to the programs.

1 While the Guidelines are intended to
2 serve as recommendations to guide Americans
3 towards healthier food choices, the school
4 nutrition programs have implemented them as
5 inflexible mandates.

6 Our members are grateful for USDA
7 providing flexibility under the recent rules to
8 make meals more appealing to students. The rapid
9 implementation of meal standards have contributed
10 to a decline in student meals participation in
11 both the national school lunch and breakfast
12 programs, with research showing school meals are
13 more nutritious than ever and more nutritious
14 than other alternatives, the drop in the number
15 of students eating healthy school meals is a
16 missed opportunity that undermines the goals of
17 the DGAs.

18 The members of the School Nutrition
19 Association are proud to be partners in the
20 national effort to promote a stronger, healthier
21 America. We stand with you on the front lines to
22 help promote the formation of healthful food

1 advocates among all children.

2 We're uniquely positioned to partner
3 with parents, teachers, and communities to
4 influence the food habits of children beginning
5 at preschool programs and extending through high
6 schools.

7 We hope that by sharing the expertise
8 of school nutrition practitioners, as part of the
9 Dietary Guidelines Committee, we can work
10 together to make these important guidelines a way
11 of life in our nation. Thank you.

12 MR. LIPPS: Thanks.

13 MS. HIXSON: Good morning. My name is
14 Jessica Hixson and I am the Director of
15 Government Affairs at SNAC International. SNAC
16 International is the international trade
17 association of the snack industry representing
18 snack manufacturers, marketers, and suppliers.

19 As USDA initiates the Dietary
20 Guidelines process, SNAC recommends the Agency
21 start by outlining its 2020 priorities,
22 specifically clarifying the scope and priorities

1 at onset would help avoid concerns that the
2 Committee has ventured outside of nutrition
3 recommendations and ensure appropriate, qualified
4 committee members are chosen. This will also
5 help SNAC recommend the appropriate Advisory
6 Committee experts and will provide us the
7 opportunity to submit the most helpful research
8 to aid the Committee during their review.

9 SNAC was pleased to review the NASEM's
10 thoughtful evaluation of the current Dietary
11 Guidelines process and its specific
12 recommendations for areas of improvement.

13 Particularly, we would be, we were
14 pleased to see they noted the importance of
15 increased transparency and enhanced scientific
16 rigor throughout their two reports.

17 SNAC had had concerns, as it relates
18 to transparency in the past. Loss of trust when
19 recommendations are made and then changed or
20 removed, because seemingly definitive guidance
21 was provided before ensuring adequate and
22 rigorous scientific data was available to make

1 such a decisive conclusion.

2 In particular, SNAC recommends the
3 Agency consider prioritizing review of the
4 benefits of meal and snack time and refrain from
5 making any recommendations around sodium and
6 potassium intake, until the National Academies'
7 dietary reference intake review is complete.

8 In regard to increased transparency,
9 SNAC supports the Academies' recommendations,
10 which suggest, one, increased agencies -- excuse
11 me.

12 Increased agency updates to the public
13 throughout the multi-year process and more in
14 person meetings, better management and
15 notification throughout the Advisory Committee
16 selection process, in regards to conflicts of
17 interest, including conflicts of interest in
18 advocacy organizations, increase NEL transparency
19 and public availability so that stakeholders know
20 and understand what will be included or excluded
21 prior to conducting research.

22 More opportunities for the public and

1 organizations like SNAC to share feedback through
2 public and written comments. In regards to
3 enhanced scientific rigor, SNAC supports the
4 Academies' recommendations, which suggest all
5 science need to be peer reviewed and NEL process
6 needs to be strengthened, according to Cochrane
7 and AHRQ standards.

8 Clear separation of the NEL staff and
9 those that draft the scientific recommendations
10 document. Provide additional technical training
11 for the NEL staff. And, lastly, improve the
12 advances science -- excuse me, advance systematic
13 review protocols. Thank you for the opportunity
14 to be with you today. SNAC International looks
15 forward to participating in the 2020 Dietary
16 Guidelines process.

17 MS. BIONDO: Good morning. My name is
18 Lia Bondo and I'm here today on behalf of the
19 United States Cattlemen's Association and its
20 nationwide membership of cow calf producers,
21 feedlot operators, backgrounders and livestock
22 callers.

1 Historically, the Guidelines have been
2 used as a means to adopt new scientific findings
3 into the diets of American citizens.

4 Unfortunately, as we witnessed in the process of
5 writing the 2015 Guidelines, these nutrition
6 guides can stray from the sound science they are
7 built on, if we do not make it a clear priority
8 to only support guidelines that are based on
9 current and best available nutrition and diet
10 research.

11 Our citizens benefit from the most
12 bountiful and safest food supply in the world and
13 the Dietary Guidelines ensure that Americans seek
14 out and take advantage of those foods that
15 provide the best nutrition.

16 It's important that we provide
17 multiple opportunities for Americans to get it
18 right when it comes to consuming the correct
19 amount of macro and micronutrients.

20 Of the three macronutrients, protein
21 serves as a building block of life and used in
22 every single cell in the human body. In fact,

1 the only material, which is more common in the
2 body than protein is water.

3 At its most basic structure, protein
4 is made up of long strings of amino acids, but
5 not all foods provide these amino acids in the
6 same way. Animal products provide a more
7 complete amino acid profile giving the body
8 greater opportunities to utilize these protein
9 chains.

10 In particular, beef provides 22 grams
11 of protein per three ounce serving and is an
12 excellent source of many micronutrients, such as
13 iron, zinc and B vitamins that cannot be found in
14 plant-based foods. These nutrients are essential
15 for the cognitive health and brain function of
16 the U.S. population.

17 Despite this, we were disappointed to
18 see the only mention of red meat in the 2015
19 Dietary Guidelines was contained within a
20 footnote and not within the actual text of the
21 document.

22 The 2020 Dietary Guidelines need to

1 expand on this mention by acknowledging in the
2 text that meat is a protein source.

3 Additionally, the importance of whole foods
4 animal products should be included in the next
5 set of Guidelines, as opposed to laboratory grown
6 meat that is mechanically made and whose effects
7 on the human body have not yet been studied
8 extensively.

9 USCA looks forward to participating in
10 the discussions that will shape the 2020 Dietary
11 Guidelines and we remain in support of guidelines
12 that are committed to following sound science and
13 best available research, not political ideals and
14 philosophies.

15 The next addition to the Dietary
16 Guidelines should remain within the scope of
17 nutrition and diet and reflect that red meat is
18 an essential part of a whole foods diet. A
19 conclusion that is supported by peer reviewed
20 publically available research.

21 Thank you again for the opportunity to
22 comment today. You can find additional

1 information on our written remarks.

2 MR. LIPPS: Thank you. Once we
3 officially get the website revamped and the
4 process officially kicked off, you'll be able to
5 find all of our information on
6 dietaryguidelines.gov. Hopefully, you all are
7 familiar with that. We're working on getting a
8 more transparent website.

9 We, folks who have been around a while
10 genuinely believe a lot of our transparency
11 issues were simply in people being able to find
12 stuff. So we're updating that.

13 I do realize there's some issues with
14 the process in the past that some of you all have
15 raised today and we'll be looking at those. So I
16 appreciate all of you taking the time to come and
17 sit through this today.

18 It's extremely beneficial, I think,
19 especially to those of us who were new to being
20 inside the process instead of outside of the
21 process, and so thanks for your time in that.

22 Our door is always open, please, don't

1 hesitate to call, email, send us a letter, any
2 form of communication is fine. And if you feel
3 that we're not being transparent, or
4 science-based, we want to hear from you on the
5 front-end not on the back end, so please do come
6 talk to us often. Thanks, again. Have a good
7 day.

8 (Whereupon, the foregoing matter went
9 off the record at 11:35 a.m. and resumed at 2:01
10 p.m.)

11 MR. LIPPS: How are you all? It's a
12 quiet bunch. Good afternoon. We've got to stay
13 on time, everybody only has three minutes. Thank
14 you all for coming today. This is officially the
15 beginning of the beginning of our 2020 Dietary
16 Guidelines process. We are committed to being
17 transparent. We will talk about that a lot and,
18 hopefully, you will see us follow through on
19 that. And part of that is making sure that we
20 hear from you. We want to hear from you early on
21 in this part of the process and we want to hear
22 from you as we go throughout the process.

1 A little bit about the timing of this
2 listening session, as you know, the last National
3 Academies' report came out about a month ago. We
4 wanted to give everybody a little time to process
5 that and then hear from you on your thoughts on
6 that.

7 In addition to that, we obviously have
8 additions to the Dietary Guidelines process this
9 year, the birth to 24 that was added in the 2014
10 Farm Bill.

11 So we want to hear from you on those
12 things and anything else that you want to share
13 with us today. I know we've only given you three
14 minutes and that's a short amount of time, but we
15 do find that when you ask people to boil it down
16 to three minutes that you find the things that
17 are most important to them. So it's very
18 interesting to us to listen to that. And we've
19 got an important group here for that today.

20 I want to introduce, first, our
21 political team. There are some familiar faces in
22 here, some of you we haven't met yet. I am the

1 Administrator of the Food and Nutrition Service
2 and currently Acting Deputy Under Secretary of
3 Food and Consumer and Nutrition Services at USDA.

4 Maggie Lyons is Chief of Staff and
5 Senior Policy Advisor in the Office of the Under
6 Secretary. Kailee Tkacz started about the same
7 time as us and she's in the Office of
8 Congressional Relations and also a policy
9 advisor. Campbell is not in here with us now.

10 We have two Confidential Assistants,
11 who are seasoned folks, who've been around for
12 almost two weeks now, Emily Buckman over here and
13 Erin Wilson, over on this side. They both come
14 from the Hill and do have experience in this
15 area. Some of you probably know them well.

16 And then, our great team, at the
17 Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, our
18 career folks, who give us good guidance on this
19 and is as committed to the open and transparent
20 process as we are. You all know Jackie Haven,
21 who has seen how many of these processes?

22 MS. HAVEN: A bunch.

1 MR. LIPPS: Okay, a, a few.

2 (Laughter.)

3 MS. HAVEN: Bunches.

4 MR. LIPPS: We won't ask her --

5 MS. HAVEN: Yes, don't ask --

6 MR. LIPPS: -- to count.

7 MS. HAVEN: Don't ask a lady how many
8 times they've done the guidelines.

9 (Laughter.)

10 MR. LIPPS: Yes, ma'am. We have
11 Stephenie Fu. Over against the wall is Colette
12 Rihane and Eve Stody. Did I get those rights?

13 Yes. All right. If you all have
14 heard Secretary Purdue talk, not just about the
15 Dietary Guidelines, but about USDA in general, he
16 says, we want to be a facts-based, data-driven
17 and customer-focused agency.

18 And, hopefully, you will find each of
19 those things to be true, as we move through the
20 Dietary Guidelines process and we want to make
21 sure that you all are holding us accountable for
22 that and staying in contact with us on that, as

1 we move forward.

2 As our dear friend, I think the HHS
3 folks had to run back over to HHS, so he may pop
4 in a, in a minute. Earlier today we had Rick
5 Olson, who's the Director of the Division of
6 Prevention Science in the Office of Disease
7 Prevention and Health Promotion from HHS. As you
8 know, they're our partners on this process and we
9 were thankful to have him here, have them here
10 this morning.

11 With that intro, I will turn it over
12 to Jackie, who will set your ground rules on
13 everything on how to treat the table to stay
14 within your time limit.

15 MS. HAVEN: Exactly. You got a nice
16 heads up on what I'm going to be talking about.
17 So again, I'm Jackie Haven. I'm the Deputy
18 Director of the Center for Nutrition Policy and
19 Promotion.

20 I just want to thank you for taking
21 time to come out today and share your thoughts
22 with us on the Dietary Guidelines process. We've

1 had two other listening sessions, so there's
2 three altogether.

3 We've had lots of folks, like
4 yourselves in. We've had health professionals,
5 professional health organizations, consumer
6 advocacy groups, trade associations and others,
7 who've had interest in the Dietary Guidelines.

8 So today, we look forward to hearing
9 your three minutes of oral remarks. Your remarks
10 are going to be recorded and they'll be on our
11 website within a month from today. We will also,
12 of course, put the written comments of those that
13 were not able to come today.

14 As Brandon hinted, I want to tell you
15 about this amazing mahogany and leather table
16 that was actually -- it's 35 years old. It was
17 built specifically for the Summit of Industrial
18 Nations and President Reagan officiated that, so
19 there's not food and beverage allowed in here and
20 I appreciate your understanding of that.

21 And back to the logistics, please,
22 when you have your turn speak clearly and loudly

1 and state your name first, so the transcription
2 person can mark that down efficiently.

3 And we do have two timekeepers, Jayme
4 and Sam and they will be timekeeping so you can
5 look straight ahead and see, so it'll be on the
6 opposite side of you, but they'll mark when
7 there's a minute, 30 seconds, and then time is
8 up. So we appreciate you staying on time.

9 So now I look forward to hearing what
10 you want to share with us and we'll start with
11 Tia. Oh, and we need a microphone to travel
12 along. Is there one? Oh there it is. Great.
13 Thank you.

14 MS. RAINES: It's good to be first.
15 Tia Raines, Executive Director of the Egg
16 Nutrition Center. On behalf of my organization,
17 thank you for this opportunity.

18 ENC is a team of food and nutrition
19 experts. Our primary function is to fund and
20 monitor nutrition research on eggs and
21 egg-related nutrients and interpret new research
22 findings.

1 We translate this information to
2 health practitioners and consumers and educate on
3 how eggs fit within the healthy dietary patterns
4 recommended in the Dietary Guidelines for
5 Americans. So my comments today are primarily
6 focused on transparency and the rigor of the
7 scientific review process.

8 The recent National Academies' report
9 on the Guidelines process places strong emphasis
10 on the need to apply an objective and consistent
11 set of standards and to create separation between
12 the identification of topics for review and
13 subsequent interpretation of the evidence.

14 It's important to understand how
15 research is identified and considered for review,
16 including a relevant selection criteria, such
17 that researchers might bring forward other
18 studies that meet this criteria, or conduct new
19 research that adheres to such principles.

20 Users of the Guidelines and the
21 Advisory Report will benefit from a clear
22 understanding of the approach for evaluating

1 scientific evidence and the relative rigor of the
2 evidence-based and how such evidence is applied
3 to the strength grades.

4 This includes describing the standards
5 by which the grades of strong, moderate, or weak
6 are assigned, so that the reader can have
7 confidence that recommendations generally
8 represent how compelling the science is behind a
9 particular topic.

10 Due to the nature of nutrition
11 science, it will sometimes be necessary to rely
12 on observational studies in circumstances where
13 randomized controlled trials, the gold standard,
14 are not practical or possible.

15 Understanding how observational data
16 is translated into evidentiary grades compared to
17 topics with randomized controlled trial evidence
18 is important in a transparent process.

19 The National Academies recommended
20 that the Government disclose the rationale when
21 the final guidelines differ from an Advisory
22 Committee recommendation.

1 Transparency around the principles
2 that are applied in such instances ensures the
3 scientific rigor of the entire guidelines
4 process.

5 For the 2020 Committee, there will
6 clearly be a need for a diverse set of experts,
7 including those with an understanding of infants,
8 toddlers, and pregnant women. Concepts unique to
9 these populations, such as the introduction of
10 food allergens, during early feeding will require
11 additional expertise.

12 A committee that is diverse, not only
13 in expertise, but also in geography,
14 institutional affiliation, and life experience
15 may provide a richer mix of scientific discussion
16 and deliberation.

17 In addition, a history of changing
18 one's mind when the scientific evidence evolves
19 is a valuable quality in an Advisory Committee
20 member.

21 Finally, the report recommended that
22 the Government utilize a third party to initially

1 vet nominations received from the public. Should
2 the Government choose to follow this
3 recommendation, it will become relevant to
4 consider the composition of that third party and
5 how individuals will be identified for that
6 committee, in addition to ensuring the committee
7 operates in a transparent manner and is free from
8 bias, or conflicts of interest.

9 Thank you for the opportunity to speak
10 with you and thank you for your important work on
11 the Guidelines.

12 MS. HAVEN: Perfect timing.

13 MS. HEIMOWITZ: Good afternoon. I'm
14 Colette Heimowitz, Vice President of Nutrition
15 and Education at Atkins Nutritionals. I want to
16 start my comments today by commending the
17 National Academies of Sciences on the consensus
18 study report redesigning the process of
19 establishing the Dietary Guidelines for
20 Americans.

21 The Report is a step in the right
22 direction, as it recognizes the areas that need

1 improvement in the current U.S. Dietary
2 Guidelines and recommends the process to be
3 amended to represent all Americans.

4 The Report did an excellent job of
5 acknowledging the need for adaptation given the
6 changing landscape in America, providing counsel
7 for all Americans and recognizing that the
8 nutrition recommendations must allow for the
9 prevention of chronic disease.

10 We also appreciate the recommendations
11 around modifying the Dietary Guidelines to
12 enhance transparency, promote diversity and
13 expertise, better manage conflict of interest and
14 address disease-related issues.

15 The Report reflects the need for a new
16 food modeling methodology, as well as the methods
17 for including scientific studies with the best
18 available evidence and analyses that are
19 continuously evolving.

20 We firmly believe that people can
21 benefit from alternative dietary patterns, such
22 as a carbohydrate-managed approach. With the

1 changing landscape in America, it's critical to
2 provide counsel for all Americans and recognize
3 that the nutrition recommendations must allow for
4 the prevention of certain diseases.

5 Currently, 52 percent of the
6 population has been diagnosed with pre-diabetes
7 and diabetes. Just last week, the gal up at
8 Share Care Well-being Index reported that
9 diabetes costs the United States approximately
10 \$245 billion dollars in healthcare cost this year
11 alone.

12 In addition, the group reported that
13 the obesity rate in the United States reached
14 28.4 percent nationally in 2016, an increase of
15 nearly three percentage points since 2008.
16 Obesity is the significant respect for the
17 development of Type 2 diabetes.

18 When you look at the current United
19 States Dietary Guidelines recommendation, with
20 the one size fits all approach, and approximately
21 50 percent of the calories in the form of
22 carbohydrates, while the quality of carbohydrates

1 are in the right place, the quantity may be too
2 much for this particular of segmented population
3 and the incidents of diabetes will continue to
4 increase, if we continue this counsel.

5 Modifying the United States Dietary
6 Guidelines to accommodate the unhealthy portion
7 of these individuals will help Americans make
8 better food choices, based on their personalized
9 needs.

10 To ensure the best guidelines are
11 developed to reflect this need, Advisory
12 Committee members -- okay. Thank you for your
13 time.

14 MR. QUARLES: I am, I'm Kam Quarles.
15 I'm the Vice President of Public Policy for the
16 National Potato Council. We, we represent the
17 U.S. potato industry on, on national issues.
18 Thanks very much for, for holding this, this
19 listening session today.

20 We'd like to highlight three key ways
21 that the National Academies' report can be used
22 to improve the 2020 DGAs. One is to enhance

1 transparency, second is through prioritization of
2 topics, and third is through increased scientific
3 rigor.

4 We strongly support more transparency
5 in this process. The fact that that these
6 listening sessions are occurring today is
7 evidence that, that you're, you're taking that to
8 heart.

9 As the Agency works to begin the new
10 DGA process, we encourage the, the determination
11 of clear priorities and that those priorities are
12 made public.

13 By taking that action it would allow
14 us to help you in targeting experts and a variety
15 of different resources that the industry has to,
16 to try to answer some of the questions that
17 you're, you're looking at.

18 Specifically, it would be valuable for
19 the Agency to recommend priorities that would
20 better inform the policies in the federal feeding
21 programs, such as WIC and school meals.

22 Lastly, when it comes to making

1 recommendations that can be relied upon for
2 future policy decisions, we feel it's imperative
3 that the Agency let the science lead the policy
4 development.

5 The DGA process should use the best
6 available science to identify the nutrients of
7 concern and the relationship of those nutrients
8 to the needs of eligible program participants.

9 In that regard, the National Academies
10 recently reviewed the WIC package and looked at
11 the nutrient availability of white potatoes to
12 WIC participants. Based on that review, the
13 Committee recommended including white potatoes in
14 the WIC program.

15 Looking forward, we understand that
16 work is being done on the development of
17 guidelines for Birth to 24 months and pregnant
18 and lactating mothers.

19 However, we have not been informed on
20 where this process stands and are somewhat
21 concerned that adequate research may be too
22 limited for the Government to publish

1 scientifically sound and definitive
2 recommendations for such a vulnerable group.

3 Given potatoes' role in the WIC
4 program, we would enjoy any opportunity to assist
5 the Agency with filling research gaps that likely
6 exist among this very special population.

7 We feel solid research is the only
8 basis for which strong recommendations can be
9 made and encourage the Agency to consider
10 providing an update on the research gaps. Final
11 recommendations should not be published until
12 those gaps are filled.

13 The dietary reference intake on sodium
14 and potassium is about to be underway. We urge
15 the Agency to wait to make recommendations on
16 those two nutrients until that review is
17 complete.

18 In closing we'd like to reiterate
19 support for the DGA process moving forward in a
20 transparent manner, to provide the most
21 scientifically sound recommendations to the
22 American public. Thank you, again, for offering

1 us this opportunity.

2 MS. HECHT: Christina Hecht. On
3 behalf of the University of California's
4 Nutrition Policy Institute, I would like to offer
5 feedback on the NASEM Reports reviewing the
6 process to update the Dietary Guidelines and make
7 two recommendations.

8 Nutrition Policy Institute is known
9 for conducting rigorous research to inform and
10 strengthen nutrition policy, with an emphasis on
11 the Federal Nutrition Assistance Programs, young
12 children and families, we also coordinate the
13 National Drinking Water Alliance, a network
14 dedicated to enabling children to drink water
15 instead of sugar sweetened beverages.

16 We agree with the Report's
17 recommendation to increase transparency. While
18 continuing to utilize the strong evidence-based
19 approach of past DGA committees, we urge complete
20 transparency in the translation process from the
21 committee recommendations to the final
22 guidelines.

1 The translation process should be just
2 as transparent as the DGAC process to help ensure
3 trust in the final DGAs. We urge consideration
4 of emerging issues, asking, should there be a
5 mechanism for input from the public, or
6 scientists not on the DGA Committee, and can the
7 DGAC be tasked with making recommendations to
8 fill the gaps in evidence.

9 We recommend that the B/24 project
10 examine existing and soon to be released findings
11 from USDA's WIC infant toddler feeding practices
12 study II, as well as the Robert Wood Johnson
13 Foundation Report Feeding Guidelines for infants
14 and young toddlers, developed recently by a group
15 of national child nutrition experts,
16 evidence-based recommendations on not only the
17 what, but also the how, to feed young children
18 should be incorporated into the DGAs.

19 We recommend also that the 2020
20 process include a focus on beverages and
21 specifically on drinking water instead of sugar
22 sweetened beverages, or SSBs.

1 SSBs are the single largest source of
2 added sugars and among the largest single sources
3 of calories in the American diet. Further, these
4 calories don't fully trigger satiety mechanisms.
5 Replaced with the inclusion of Birth to 24
6 months, in part, because it provides an
7 opportunity to prevent the introduction of sugar
8 sweetened beverages and to help form healthful
9 beverage preferences and habits.

10 Recent research finds that, while
11 Americans are starting to substitute water for
12 SSBs, there remain strong disparities in SSB
13 consumption by race and ethnicity.

14 National Drinking Water Alliance
15 Researchers, health professionals, educators, and
16 industry members urge addition of a symbol for
17 water on the MyPlate graphic, the primary
18 translation of the DGAs out to the public. Thank
19 you very much for this opportunity.

20 MS. GROSSMAN: Joanna Grossman, Senior
21 Policy Specialist for the Good Food Institute.
22 Sorry, I'm getting over laryngitis, apologies, if

1 I lose my, lose my voice.

2 We're all here because the Dietary
3 Guidelines has such a critical role to play in
4 shaping healthy habits. Many thanks to USDA for
5 engaging stakeholders and starting a dialog well
6 in advance to the finalized guidelines and for
7 asking for comments on the recent NAS Reports.

8 The Good Food Institute is a
9 Washington, D.C.-based non-profit that advocates
10 for healthy, humane and sustainable food supply.
11 To that end, I'd like to focus my comments on the
12 importance of setting Dietary Guidelines that
13 encourage the intake of plant-based foods and
14 minimize animal products.

15 A lot of Americans understandably view
16 meat as a healthy diet, but medical knowledge
17 about long-term impacts is rapidly changing. The
18 World Health Organization classified processed
19 meats as carcinogenic in the same group as
20 tobacco and asbestos.

21 Red meat was categorized as a likely
22 carcinogen with the WHO noting the strong

1 evidence of the link between consumption and
2 various cancers.

3 A recent past president of the
4 American College of Cardiology advocated for a
5 plant-based diet, given the substantial
6 cardiovascular benefits, stating that plant-based
7 diets, in particular, deserve more emphasis in
8 dietary recommendations.

9 Just this past summer, the American
10 Medical Association passed resolutions calling on
11 hospitals to provide more plant-based meals and
12 eliminate processed meats from their offerings.

13 A list of these examples of this
14 nature could go on and on, but suffice it to say,
15 with obesity, Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular
16 disease reaching alarming levels, the agencies
17 charged with designing the guidelines have a
18 moral imperative to act in the best interest of
19 all Americans. That means more than saying that
20 fruits, vegetables, grains, and legumes are part
21 of a balanced diet, rather, they should form the
22 basis.

1 And with the proliferation of
2 plant-based options hitting the market, foregoing
3 cheese and meat in favor of versions that are
4 cholesterol free and lower in saturated fat is
5 easier now than ever before.

6 We recognize individuals are motivated
7 in large part by taste and not everyone is going
8 to want to pick a salad for every meal. The
9 Guidelines would be wise to note that plant-based
10 meat alternatives are becoming more and more
11 prevalent, ones that have the texture, mouth feel
12 and taste of meat, but with no cholesterol, more
13 fiber, and a much healthier nutrient profile.

14 In particular, we applaud the
15 Guideline's recommendation of following a healthy
16 vegetarian eating pattern and hope the DGA will
17 expand on that.

18 The other I wanted to turn to briefly
19 is committee selection. From our perspective,
20 arguably, the most important factor is to avoid
21 any semblance of industry capture in the process.
22 And to the most degree, the Guidelines should be

1 shaped in an unbiased and transparent manner, but
2 what that looks like in practice, might be
3 subject to dispute.

4 It's worth emphasizing the selection
5 of reports finding that biases and conflicts of
6 interest may unduly influence the deliberations
7 and outcomes of the Advisory Committee. In view
8 of this risk, USDA should ensure that committee
9 members do not have any conflicts of interest,
10 not an insignificant amount of controversy
11 surrounding the previous process, not just the
12 highly publicized congressional attacks on the
13 environmental and sustainability concerns that
14 drew considerable media attention, but questions
15 surrounding the committee's cholesterol
16 recommendations and a reliance on ag industry
17 funded research.

18 Ultimately, the real stakeholders in
19 this process are, of course, the American people,
20 not the food industry, or certain segments of it.
21 We look forward to this next cycle and thanks,
22 again, to USDA for soliciting stakeholder input.

1 MS. TEICHOLZ: My name is Nina
2 Teicholz. I'm the founder of the Nutrition
3 Coalition. And thank you very much for the
4 opportunity to provide this testimony.

5 I'm speaking on behalf of our group,
6 which is comprised of researchers, doctors,
7 journalists, and members of the public, who share
8 a belief the Dietary Guidelines for Americans are
9 not currently based on rigorous science and need
10 to be, in order to reverse the obesity and Type 2
11 diabetes epidemics that we suffer from today.

12 The Nutrition Coalition receives no
13 funds from any interested industry. We stand for
14 science alone, solely in the interest of the
15 public health. We believe that the Guidelines
16 have long been based on weak and inconclusive
17 science causing them to err in a number of ways.

18 And the Academy report that recently
19 came out agrees with that assessment, which
20 stating that the Guidelines, quote, lack
21 scientific rigor, unquote, the science falls
22 short of meeting the, quote, best practices for

1 systematic reviews, unquote, and, quote,
2 methodological approaches and scientific rigor
3 for evaluating the scientific evidence need to be
4 strengthened, unquote, it said.

5 There are a number of ways in which
6 this can be seen in the Guidelines causing them
7 to err in their recommendations. For example,
8 from the start, the Guidelines told Americans to
9 limit their consumption of dietary cholesterol
10 and Americans complied, reducing their
11 consumption of eggs, for instance, by 13 percent
12 in recent decades.

13 And this, undoubtedly, harmed American
14 health, since egg yolks, but not the whites,
15 contain many crucial nutrients, including choline
16 and lutein, which are essential for healthy brain
17 and eye development.

18 In 2015 the Guidelines eliminated
19 those caps on cholesterol, but the health of many
20 millions of Americans suffered from inadequate
21 nutrition, due to erroneous advice in those
22 intervening decades.

1 The Guidelines have also, also long
2 recommended a low fat diet. However, for the
3 last decade, at least, the Guidelines dropped any
4 low fat language, because clinical trials funded
5 by the National Institutes of Health on tens of
6 thousands of people found that this diet did
7 nothing to prevent obesity, Type 2 diabetes,
8 heart disease, or any kind of cancer.

9 These are but two examples of how the
10 Guidelines have made serious errors, ultimately
11 damaging American health. Why these mistakes
12 came to pass, is a complex issue, but one simple
13 fact stands out, namely that the Guidelines have
14 long been based on weak, insufficient evidence.

15 Many experts make the argument that we
16 must leap ahead with recommendations based even
17 on this insufficient evidence, due to the urgency
18 of the public health problems we face, but this
19 logic can lead to tragic mistakes. Indeed, it
20 has led to tragic mistakes.

21 Our current Guidelines still contain
22 numerous recommendations based on little to no

1 rigorous science. These include the caps on
2 saturated fats, which were also based on weak
3 epidemiological data that has since been
4 contradicted by large rigorous NIH-funded
5 clinical trials looking at conclusive, hard and
6 point data.

7 Number two, the lower is better
8 recommendation on salt. Number three, the
9 vegetarian diet. The recent systematic review of
10 the literature about the USDA's Nutrition
11 Evidence Library concluded that the evidence for
12 this disease fighting powers is only, quote
13 unquote, limited, which is the lowest rank
14 available for data, moreover that NEL review
15 conducted eight reviews on fruits and vegetables
16 and found no strong Grade 1 evidence to support
17 that the assertion of, that these foods can
18 provide health benefits of any kind. Okay.
19 Sorry. Thanks.

20 MS. LATIFI: Hi. I'm Alexis Latifi,
21 on behalf of the Sugar Association, thank you for
22 the opportunity to provide comment today on the

1 process to develop the 2020 Dietary Guidelines
2 for Americans. The Sugar Association represents
3 the sugar beet and sugar cane farmers and
4 processors to make up the U.S. Sugar Industry.

5 The Association commends USDA's
6 commitment to updating the Dietary Guidelines, as
7 the Guidelines have expanded and evolved to
8 address public health concerns and nutrition
9 needs. As special populations, it is now more
10 important than ever to ensure Americans are
11 provided with evidence-based nutrition guidance
12 to help them make healthful choices.

13 The detailed review of the Dietary
14 Guidelines, conducted by the National Academies,
15 provides a timely opportunity to consider ways by
16 which to reform and modernize the Dietary
17 Guidelines process and rebuild the credibility of
18 federal dietary standards in the general public's
19 eyes.

20 The Association strongly supports the
21 recommendations set forth in the National
22 Academies' reports. For the 2020 DGA process,

1 the Sugar Association endorses, including the
2 following National Academies recommendations.

3 For the selection and composition of
4 the Advisory Committee an external third party
5 should be employed to screen and review nominees,
6 while ensuring the Committee represents a
7 balanced panel of professional experts with a
8 wide range of expertise and viewpoints.

9 Potential conflicts of interest and
10 bias should be publically disclosed and policies
11 to manage conflicts of interest, without
12 disqualifying a well-publicized scientist need to
13 be developed.

14 Selecting a high quality committee
15 with proper expertise is paramount to achieving
16 the goal that the DGAs to provide dietary
17 guidance to the general public.

18 The Association supports a redesign
19 process to allow for the prioritization of topics
20 that will be reviewed during each DGA cycle. The
21 current functions of the DGAC should be
22 redistributed into three groups to allow for more

1 target expertise and opportunities to engage
2 stakeholders.

3 Questions should be developed with
4 quality in mind and released for public comment
5 to further enhance transparency in the process.
6 The development of questions is vital to output.

7 Attention should be paid to ensure the
8 right questions are being asked, in order to find
9 high quality conclusions and science-based
10 recommendations.

11 The Association has serious concerns
12 regarding the National Academies' recommendation
13 to enhance food pattern modeling. Modeling is a
14 great tool to show how recommended food and
15 nutrient intakes can be achieved, can be achieved
16 a variety of ways within certain caloric
17 requirements.

18 However, modeling is not imperial
19 evidence suggesting positive health outcomes and
20 should not be used to set recommendations for
21 food, or nutrients.

22 There was an over-reliance on modeling

1 in the 2015 edition and the influence that USDA
2 food pattern modeling now has over the DGAs is
3 far too great, given the fact that these patterns
4 remain untested.

5 Until trials are conducted to test
6 USDA food patterns versus other patterns, food
7 patterns should be de-emphasized. Food pattern
8 modeling is a method, but is not a means to
9 recommendation.

10 With regards to the inclusion of
11 nutrition guidance for infants and toddlers Birth
12 to 24 months, we would be remiss if we did not
13 express concern over the lack of quality evidence
14 to support the development of comprehensive
15 guidelines.

16 To address current state of knowledge
17 and identify areas of research, a separate
18 committee of experts should be assembled. Thank
19 you for the opportunity to speak.

20 MS. VAN LIEU: Hi. I'm Mollie van
21 Lieu and I'm the Senior Director of Nutrition
22 Policy at United Fresh Produce Association.

1 United Fresh is the National Trade Association
2 representing the entire distribution chain of
3 fresh fruits and vegetables, including growers,
4 shippers, wholesale distributors, processors, and
5 retailers.

6 We appreciate the opportunity to
7 provide input, as you can consider the 2020
8 Dietary Guidelines. We value the feedback
9 provided by the National Academies on the DGA
10 process through the two reports released earlier
11 this year.

12 As stated in the second report, the
13 DGA's the primary federal source of consistent
14 evidence-based nutrition and dietary information
15 for promoting health and preventing chronic
16 disease.

17 Improving transparency can only serve
18 to strengthen the integrity of the Guidelines.
19 Specifically, recommendations in the report,
20 including posting potential conflict of interest
21 by committee members, whether they be financial
22 or general affiliations and disclosing any

1 omissions, or deviations from the scientific
2 evidence in the final version of the DGA will
3 prove important to public trust and the quality
4 of the Guidelines.

5 Ultimately, we believe DGA is
6 critically important to public health, policy
7 making and industry innovation. As the process
8 is reviewed and any additional steps are put into
9 place, we encourage the consideration of the
10 additional time that will be needed to make
11 adjustments and recommend putting benchmarks in
12 place to ensure the DGA is released on time.

13 If you're aiming to increase
14 transparency and public trust in the process, you
15 must ensure the DGA's consistent and reliable and
16 that includes timeliness.

17 One of the most frequently sited
18 critiques is the lack of rapid improvement of
19 public health outcomes, related to dietary
20 behavior that contribute to chronic disease.

21 It's important to recognize that
22 federal nutrition programs have really only begun

1 to align with the Dietary Guidelines within the
2 last decade.

3 The DGA can only improve public health
4 if they're adopted and adoption takes time and
5 requires multiple levers, individual change,
6 policy change, societal change and more. We
7 encourage all federal programs to align with the
8 Dietary Guidelines.

9 As it relates to fruits and
10 vegetables, multiple cycles of the DGA have
11 addressed the importance of eating more produce
12 linking their consumption to decreased risk, to a
13 decreased risk of dietary-related chronic
14 disease.

15 While recommendations have changed
16 little over time what has evolved is the general
17 messaging. For example, first it was eat more,
18 then it was five to nine servings and now it
19 reflects composing half the plate with fruits and
20 vegetables.

21 United Fresh views this as a positive
22 message and one that is attainable to a broad

1 range of Americans, including those of differing
2 generations, cultures and geography. We
3 encourage the continued use of the
4 consumer-friendly MyPlate messaging.

5 Everything possible should be done in
6 future DGA's to communicate the critical
7 importance of changing diets to meet half a plate
8 goal for both personal health and controlling
9 healthcare costs.

10 Increasing fruit and vegetable
11 consumption is the most scientifically valid
12 dietary advice for both chronic disease and
13 obesity prevention, and the most under-met of all
14 dietary recommendations.

15 Just this month, the CDC released data
16 that only one in ten Americans are eating
17 recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables.
18 Americans and policymakers need an evidence-based
19 and transparent and consistent foundation of
20 information for improving public health.

21 We thank you for your work and ensure,
22 in ensuring the DGA process is stronger and

1 appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback.

2 MS. SLAVIN: Thanks for the
3 opportunity to testify today. My name is Joanne
4 Slavin. I'm a Professor in the Department of
5 Food Science and Nutrition at the University of
6 Minnesota. I'm also a dietician and own a farm.

7 I thank the Government, commodity
8 groups, food companies and non-profits for
9 supporting my diverse research portfolio. I also
10 had the honor of serving on the 2010 Dietary
11 Guidelines Advisory Committee, so I'm well-versed
12 on the challenges of dietary guidance.

13 Just like a Minnesota hockey game,
14 dietary guidance is full contact sport. Despite
15 all the hoopla, I believe the DGA process works
16 amazingly well and is admired around the world,
17 especially, in countries without access to strong
18 scientists and food science departments.

19 The system that was followed by the
20 2010 USDA was transparent, data-driven,
21 science-based, and included stakeholders. The
22 Committee Members were encouraged to stick to the

1 script and update the scientific findings on diet
2 and disease relationships.

3 Topics of politics, taxation and
4 public policy were considered outside the scope
5 of the DGAC. But today's challenges are bigger.
6 The 2020 DGAs will include recommendations from
7 Birth to 24 months, not just to ages 2 and above.

8 Nutrition is never more important than
9 during infancy, so it's imperative that this be
10 done with scientific rigor and thought.

11 Additionally, the voices of social scientists,
12 like Ellen Satter, who support feeding with love
13 and good sense will be needed to agree on dietary
14 guidance for a groups in this critical group.

15 I would also support including strong
16 scientists on your committee with expertise in
17 food production, food processing, food economics,
18 food safety, and food security.

19 Many nutrition scientists have narrow
20 expertise that does not well, work well on a
21 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee.
22 Backgrounds and extension, dietetics and feeding

1 programs are particularly helpful to guide the
2 work of the committee.

3 In my remaining time I would like to
4 list a few topics of highest need and ask that
5 you ensure that these topics are updated by the
6 Advisory Committee.

7 Carbohydrates. Obviously, my baby.
8 For sustainability, we need to consume at least
9 50 percent of our calories as carbohydrates and
10 we agree that whole grains, pulses, vegetables,
11 and fruits are recommended food groups.

12 Although our health links for these
13 components are quite strong, the relationship
14 between 10 percent intake of added sugars and
15 disease outcome is weak.

16 Public health approaches that fixate
17 on a single nutrient can have profound effects,
18 both, intended and unintended, across multiple
19 sectors, including policy, industry, and health
20 professionals and consumers.

21 A single nutrient approach has failed
22 to yield meaningful units in health, while

1 creating consumer confusion and problematic
2 changes in the food environment.

3 Proteins were not included, so I
4 wanted to talk about those. I only have 30
5 seconds. Sodium, also incredibly important. I
6 think I want to put that in, and then, just food
7 processing and enrichment.

8 In conclusion, public health
9 strategies that focus on overall diet patterns,
10 emphasizing diet quality and moderation are much
11 more effective at improving health outcomes, as
12 the DGAs effect all nutrition policy in the
13 United States, recommended dietary patterns must
14 be evaluated for cost, practicality, and access
15 for all. Thank you.

16 MR. LIPPS: Thank you. As we said at
17 the beginning, this is just the beginning of this
18 process. It's the first formal opportunity for
19 you all to provide us input.

20 If you want to come meet with us, our
21 door is always open, both, at CNPP and over on
22 the political side. We want to continue to hear

1 from you. We're going to have other formal
2 opportunities for you to provide input. We heard
3 a lot about that today and you'll see that
4 throughout the process.

5 So please continue to stay engaged.
6 Make sure your colleagues are engaged. We want
7 everybody to participate all along in the
8 process.

9 So we appreciate you taking time to
10 come here today to give three minutes' worth of
11 comments, but I assure you, it was informative
12 for us and will inform the process, as we go
13 forward. Soon, the dietaryguidelines.gov website
14 will be revamped and, hopefully, more
15 user-friendly for everyone.

16 If you find that you're not able to
17 find stuff there, let us know and we will work on
18 that, there's no intent to make that difficult
19 for anyone. We are working on a better website
20 on that. So thank you, all, for coming today.

21 (Whereupon, the meeting in the above-
22 entitled matter was concluded at 2:36 p.m.)

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