THE TIME abc NEWS SUMMIT ON OBESITY

Presented by THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION®
Rebuilding the

Food Guide Pyramid

Eric J. Hentges, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Center for Nutrition Policy & Promotion
United States Department of Agriculture
Time Summit on Obesity
Topics for Today’s Discussion

- Food Guidance History
- What and How Consumers Eat
- Rebuilding the Food Guidance System
- Vision
Mission:

To improve the health and well-being of Americans – develop & promote dietary guidance linking scientific research to consumer’s nutritional needs.

Federal dietary guidance began early in the 20th century, when early symbols focused on avoiding dietary deficiency disease.
A USDA Scientist Reports…

“The evils of overeating may not be felt at once, but sooner or later they are sure to appear – perhaps in an excessive amount of fatty tissue, perhaps in general debility, perhaps in actual disease.”
“Unless care is exercised in selecting food a diet may result which is one-sided or badly balanced – that is, one in which either protein or fuel ingredients are provided in excess.”

— W.O. Atwater, 1902
(Director of USDA’s 1st Experiment Station & Pioneer in Human Nutrition Research)
Actual Consumption Pyramid
U.S. Total
Are Consumers Confused?

A person should be very cautious in serving foods with…

Percent of Respondents that Completely Agree with the Statement

Source: National Eating Trends® Nutrition Survey
Factors that Contribute to the Confusion are Complex

- Changing food habits
- New emerging science
- Increasing media coverage
- Declining physical activity in the home and in schools
- Increasing sedentary habits
- Changes in the physical environment
Food Pyramid Dilemma

What consumers want: Eat anything

Experts recommend: Intake to balance physical activity

What do we do: ???
Time to Update the Pyramid

• Pyramid is 10+ years old
• New nutritional standards
  • Dietary Reference Intakes (DRI)
  • Dietary Guidelines
  • 6th edition science report expected 8/04
• New food consumption information
• New food composition data
• New consumer research
Guiding Principles

- Evolutionary
- Flexible
- Practical
- Useful
- Realistic
- Overall Health
- Up-to-Date Research
- Total Diet
Public Comments for USDA

September 2003

See comments
Here’s What We Did

- Created a transparent process, by providing access to proposed science-based recommendations on what and how much to eat

- Asked for input on 5 specific questions

1. The level of activity on which to base recommendations
2. The standards and nutritional goals
3. The food intake patterns
4. The manner in which we represent the amounts of food (servings/cups?)
5. The appropriate calorie levels/patterns to use for consumer education
Input from Stakeholders

- Large number of comments
- Wide range of viewpoints expressed
- Areas of agreement on many topics
  - Energy levels
  - Nutritional goals
  - Emphasis on whole grains, unsaturated fats and nutrient dense choices
  - Legumes, dark green vegetables
  - Use of cups and/or ounces for daily intake

- Some areas are still being addressed
Proposed Recommendations vs. Consumption

- **Females 31-50**
  - Fruits: 127
  - Vegetables: 81
  - Grains: 8
  - Meat & Beans: -12
  - Milk: 170
  - Fats: -27
  - Added Sugars: -63

- **Males 31-50**
  - Fruits: 180
  - Vegetables: 43
  - Grains: -12
  - Meat & Beans: -11
  - Milk: 84
  - Fats: -41
  - Added Sugars: -87

(1800 calories)
Correction Factors

• Food intake patterns ask consumers for substantial changes
• This guidance imparts high expectations for Americans
• Challenging but doable
Actual Consumption Pyramid
U.S. Total
Communication Strategy

• Actionable and attainable behavior change messages
• Develop framework for nutritional guidance
• Implement a solid science foundation
• *The key = implementation*
Vision

Partnerships with other agencies and health organizations for promotional activities and curricula development.
Taking a New Shape?

- Public comments are requested
- Opportunity for input from all stakeholders
- Ultimately develop a system to motivate consumers to choose a healthy diet
How Do We Reach Our Goals?

• Connect with the individual
• Design interactive tools to personalize the food guide
Time Line

Public comments on design: Summer 2004
Consumer research complete: Fall 2004
New Dietary Guidelines: Early 2005
Release of new food guide: Shortly after DG
In Summary, USDA is...

- Committed to an open, transparent process
- Dedicated to using authoritative bodies and credible reports
- Focused on implementation and a new approach to personalize nutrition guidance
- Committed to doing its part in providing the public with guidance based on sound science
- Partnerships are vital to success – everyone must contribute in order to improve diet and health of all Americans