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USDA and HHS Announce New Dietary Guidelines to Help Americans Make Healthier Food Choices and Confront Obesity Epidemic

WASHINGTON, Jan. 31, 2011 — Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Kathleen Sebelius today announced the release of the *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, the federal government's evidence-based nutritional guidance to promote health, reduce the risk of chronic diseases, and reduce the prevalence of overweight and obesity through improved nutrition and physical activity.

Because more than one-third of children and more than two-thirds of adults in the United States are overweight or obese, the 7th edition of *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* places stronger emphasis on reducing calorie consumption and increasing physical activity.

“The *2010 Dietary Guidelines* are being released at a time when the majority of adults and one in three children is overweight or obese and this is a crisis that we can no longer ignore,” said Secretary Vilsack. “These new and improved dietary recommendations give individuals the information to make thoughtful choices of healthier foods in the right portions and to complement those choices with physical activity. The bottom line is that most Americans need to trim our waistlines to reduce the risk of developing diet-related chronic disease. Improving our eating habits is not only good for every individual and family, but also for our country.”

The new *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* focus on balancing calories with physical activity, and encourage Americans to consume more healthy foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, fat-free and low-fat dairy products, and seafood, and to consume less sodium, saturated and *trans* fats, added sugars, and refined grains.

“Helping Americans incorporate these guidelines into their everyday lives is important to improving the overall health of the American people,” said HHS Secretary Sebelius. “The new *Dietary Guidelines* provide concrete action steps to help people live healthier, more physically active and longer lives.”

The *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* include 23 Key Recommendations for the general population and six additional Key Recommendations for specific population groups, such as women who are pregnant. Key Recommendations are the most important messages within the *Guidelines* in terms of their implications for improving public health. The recommendations are

intended as an integrated set of advice to achieve an overall healthy eating pattern. To get the full benefit, all Americans should carry out the *Dietary Guidelines* recommendations in their entirety.

More consumer-friendly advice and tools, including a next generation Food Pyramid, will be released by USDA and HHS in the coming months. Below is a preview of some of the tips that will be provided to help consumers translate the *Dietary Guidelines* into their everyday lives:

- Enjoy your food, but eat less.
- Avoid oversized portions.
- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.
- Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals – and choose the foods with lower numbers.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.

This edition of the Dietary Guidelines comes at a critical juncture for America's health and prosperity. By adopting the recommendations in the *Dietary Guidelines*, Americans can live healthier lives and contribute to a lowering of health-care costs, helping to strengthen America's long-term economic competitiveness and overall productivity.

USDA and HHS have conducted this latest review of the scientific literature, and have developed and issued the 7th edition of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* in a joint effort that is mandated by Congress. The *Guidelines* form the basis of nutrition education programs, Federal nutrition assistance programs such as school meals programs and Meals on Wheels programs for seniors, and dietary advice provided by health professionals.

The *Dietary Guidelines*, based on the most sound scientific information, provide authoritative advice for people 2 years and older about how proper dietary habits can promote health and reduce risk for major chronic diseases.

The *Dietary Guidelines* aid policymakers in designing and implementing nutrition-related programs. They also provide education and health professionals, such as nutritionists, dietitians, and health educators with a compilation of the latest science-based recommendations. A table with key consumer behaviors and potential strategies for professionals to use in implementing the *Dietary Guidelines* is included in the appendix.

The 2010 *Dietary Guidelines* is available at www.dietaryguidelines.gov. For more information on dietary guidelines, see www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines and www.healthfinder.gov/prevention

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