

2015 DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS SUMMIT

KEY TAKEAWAYS

May 21, 2015 • National Geographic Museum • Washington, D.C.

THE AMERICAN DIET: A CASE FOR CHANGE

The USDA Economic Research Service notes that the average American does not meet dietary recommendations on a regular basis. Typically there is an overconsumption of refined grains, added sugars, fats and oils and an under consumption of fruits, vegetables and whole grains. A driving concern is the significant increase of diet-related chronic disease. The Centers for Disease Control reports that 86 percent of all health care spending is related to one or more chronic conditions, with a majority of these costs related to the treatment of heart disease, diabetes and obesity-related complications. Poor health related to nutritional imbalances leads to lost productivity and premature mortality.

On May 21, 2015 some of the nation's foremost experts in food and nutrition gathered in Washington, DC to explore solutions to this challenge—how to eat for our health. Convened by The Ohio State University and National Geographic, the Summit focused on the forthcoming 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA), the foundation of federal nutrition policy, food aid and consumer education programs. More than 300 people joined the Summit—in person and via livestream—as these experts called on the leadership at the Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Agriculture to develop Dietary Guidelines that are simple, actionable and practical for everyday Americans.

The 2015 DGA Summit organized around three key themes: vulnerable populations, consumer behavior, and scaling up successful nutrition programs. Each panel of experts, led by a seasoned moderator, explored their assigned topic and provided important guidance for the development of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Following is a summary of their recommendations.

“A systemic shift is required across all sectors of the food environment to reinforce healthy dietary behaviors population wide.”

– **The Honorable Kevin Concannon**, Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services, U.S. Department of Agriculture



ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

KEY TAKEAWAY:

The Dietary Guidelines must be developed with the growing diversity of the population in mind.

Recommendations:

1. Dietary guidance is needed for 0-2 years of age to ensure healthy dietary patterns are established early in life. A developmental approach to nutrition is warranted.
2. Nutrition education is essential and must demonstrate an understanding of diverse dietary patterns practiced by a variety of ethnicities, cultures and socio-economic backgrounds.
3. Understanding that all ethnic groups have their own dietary patterns improves dietary messaging.



**Lucile Adams-Campbell,
Georgetown University**

"It is a myth that vulnerable populations aren't interested in their well-being. We can get "buy-in" if we can educate at the community level. We can make all the DGAs we want but until we can disseminate it and show that it works, it won't have any impact."



**Ginny Ehrlich, Robert
Wood Johnson Foundation**

"Strategies that address equity and disparity must be a part of every investment made... We have to create a demand for healthy foods. This involves getting community input when designing grocery stores."



**Benard Dreyer,
NYU School of Medicine**

"We need to take a developmental approach to nutrition. We need guidelines for 0-2 years of age. Dietary patterns established in early childhood move into adulthood. We can view obesity as a developmental disorder starting in childhood."

Panel: Moderator: **Cheryl Achterberg**, Dean, College of Education and Human Ecology, The Ohio State University, 2010 DGAC member; **Panelists:** **Lucile Adams-Campbell**, Professor of Oncology, Associate Director, Minority Health and Health Disparities Research, Associate Dean of Community Health Outreach, Georgetown University Medical Center, Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center, 2015 DGAC member; **Benard P. Dreyer**, President-Elect, American Academy of Pediatrics, Director of Development Behavioral Pediatrics, NYU School of Medicine, Director of Pediatrics, Bellevue Hospital Center; **Ginny Ehrlich**, Director, Childhood Obesity, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; **Anna Maria Siega-Riz**, Professor of Epidemiology and Nutrition, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Gillings School of Global Public Health, University of North Carolina, 2015 DCAC member

UNDERSTANDING CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

KEY TAKEAWAY:

The Dietary Guidelines will be successful if their implementation affects positive behavior change.

Recommendations:

1. Social connections within the community must be utilized in order to change culture. Change is more likely to occur when the message comes from a trusted source.
2. We must recognize that a growing number of meals are consumed away from home and on-the-go. Healthy food options must align with this culture shift.
3. Consumer messaging on nutrition must take a positive approach.



“People really need less of the ‘what and why to eat’ and more of the ‘how to eat healthy.’ People need skill-based information: how to prepare foods and how to use the info on a nutrition label. Pamphlets aren’t the answer. It’s really got to be through one’s peers. Dietary advice also needs to be translated into specific communities. We need to figure out how to use social connections within the community to make these translations. The social norms piece is where we really start changing culture. Modeling and helping is better coming from someone you know and trust.”

— **Leslie Lytle**, UNC Chapel Hill

Panel: Moderator: **Dennis Dimick**, Executive Editor, National Geographic Magazine; Panelists: **Gnel Gabrielyan**, Postdoctoral Researcher, Cornell University Food and Brand Lab; **Leslie Lytle**, Professor and Chair, Department of Health Behavior Gillings School of Global Public Health University of North Carolina; **Robert Murray**, Professor of Human Nutrition, College of Education and Human Ecology, The Ohio State University

BUILDING PROGRAMS TO SCALE

“Today, a growing group of consumers say they’ll buy it if it tastes good, if it’s healthy, if I know where it came from, if it’s available locally. There are some positive things happening that we never really saw before.”

– **Dan Glickman**, Bipartisan Policy Center

“Better for you products actually have a lower failure rate so it’s in business’ best interest to introduce more of these products. It’s good for business but also good for the public health agenda.”

– **Hank Cardello**, Hudson Institute

KEY TAKEAWAY:

The Dietary Guidelines should be scalable across the individual, community and institutional level and must be supported by both the public and private sector.

Recommendations:

1. We must create demand for healthier options. The food industry will make products that consumers want.
2. This demand can be created through effective public/private partnerships throughout the food environment where trackable and measurable commitments are made.
3. Technology can be an important tool when delivering nutrition programs and consistent messages about nutrition.



Panel: Moderator: **Neal Hooker**, Professor of Food Policy, John Glenn College of Public Affairs, The Ohio State University; Panelists: **Hank Cardello**, Director, Obesity Solutions Initiative, Hudson Institute; **Debra Eschmeyer**, Executive Director of Let’s Move!, Senior Policy Advisor for Nutrition Policy, The White House; **The Honorable Dan Glickman**, Former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Senior Fellow, Bipartisan Policy Center; **Jeff Lenard**, Vice President, Strategic Industry Initiatives, National Association of Convenience Stores

NEXT STEPS

Throughout each panel, our experts were able to identify successful interventions and programs that are already in place but acknowledge **research gaps** still exist. The topics below merit additional study and funding support if we are to make meaningful change in the American diet.

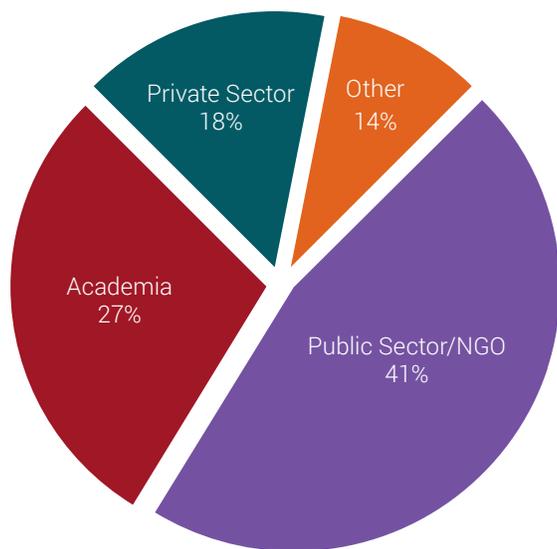
1. Translational research on dietary patterns prevalent in the first 6 years of life and how they impact lifelong health.
2. How to spread and scale programs that support good nutrition and health.
3. How to incorporate culture, community and new technology to support healthy dietary patterns in vulnerable populations with a focus on socio-economic, ethnic, and life stage groups.

In his closing keynote address, Dr. Roger Clemens identified additional recommendations based on each panel discussion. These recommendations include:

1. Recognition that the cumulative diet is what matters most – not just a few isolated nutrients.
2. Tools to help the consumer advance small yet consistent improvements in food habits that, over time, achieve a healthy diet.
3. An understanding that “one-size fits all” messaging must be a thing of the past.

BY THE NUMBERS

DGA Summit Participation by Sector



850+

tweets using the #DGAsummit hashtag



1,371

views of the DGA Summit livestream



70%

of survey respondents said they were interested in future conversation around the Dietary Guidelines for Americans

