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Our Commitment to Scientific Rigor and Everyone's Nutritional Health

Academy members' expertise is essential in creating *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* that help all people make informed choices about nutrition.

Every 5 years, the US Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services jointly release the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. They are based on a review of the best and most up-to-date nutrition science, and they represent opportunities for the Academy and our members to bring our unequaled expertise to the development and implementation of the cornerstone of federal food policy in the United States.

More Academy members have been involved in the 2020 process than in any previous edition of the *Dietary Guidelines*. I want to send them all our sincerest appreciation and thanks for the efforts and for representing our profession so well.

RDNs and Academy members who served on the 2020 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee:

- Regan Bailey, PhD, MPH, RD, Purdue University
- Carol Boushey, PhD, MPH, RD, University of Hawaii
- Sharon Donovan, PhD, RD, University of Illinois
- Steven Heymsfield, MD, Louisiana State University
- Richard Mattes, PhD, MPH, RD, Purdue University
- Elizabeth Mayer-Davis, PhD, RD, University of North Carolina
- Rachel Novotny, PhD, RDN, LD, University of Hawaii
- Linda Snetselaar, PhD, RD, University of Iowa
- Jamie Stang, PhD, RD, University of Minnesota
- Linda Van Horn, PhD, RDN, LD, Northwestern University

<https://www.eatrightpro.org/media/press-releases/public-policy/2020-dga-committee>

A record number of 10 Academy members and RDNs (see Box) were selected in February 2019 to serve on the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee and review the scientific evidence on specified nutrition and health topics identified by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) for Americans throughout the life cycle, from pregnancy to older adulthood.

We have been deeply involved at every step in ensuring that the *2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* process reflects our shared commitment to scientific rigor.

The Academy:

- Suggested topics and scientific questions that the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee should review
- Nominated member experts to the committee
- Recommended evidence-based refinements to research protocols
- Encouraged the USDA to avoid truncating the time allotted for the Scientific Committee to develop its report so all assigned questions could be answered
- Demanded a transparent process that would continue through the final stage when the USDA and the HHS finalize and issue the Dietary Guidelines

In 2019, we established the Academy's *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* Collaborative to focus on the different issue areas of the Scientific Report. Collaborative members also led topic-focused think tank groups of subject matter experts within our membership; they provided valuable input into

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The official site for the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*:
<https://health.gov/our-work/food-nutrition/about-dietary-guidelines>

The Academy's final comments on the Scientific Report:
www.eatrightpro.org/news-center/member-updates/2020-2025-dietary-guidelines-for-americans/academy-submits-recommendations-for-dietary-guidelines-scientific-report

the Academy's final comments.

We solicited and received outstanding feedback from the Clinical Nutrition Management; Diabetes; Hunger and

Environmental Nutrition; Pediatric Nutrition; Public Health/Community Nutrition; Sports, Cardiovascular and Wellness Nutrition; Vegetarian Nutrition; Weight Management; and Women's Health dietetic practice groups. RDNs who work at the USDA and HHS worked tremendously hard on this process as well.

All Academy members were asked to provide their input for the Academy's comments, which were then approved by the Legislative and Public Policy Committee. In August, I had the privilege of presenting a synopsis of the Academy's comprehensive set of comments to the USDA and HHS. We submitted our final written comments on August 13.

Development of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* is crucial for people's nutritional health, but our efforts cannot and do not stop there. Implementation of the *Dietary Guidelines* is just as important, and we must be active in that process as well.

One of the Academy's think tanks focused on implementation of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, with an initial focus on incorporating dissemination and implementation science into the guideline development process. Future work on implementation will be essential once the *Dietary Guidelines* are finalized, using RDNs' unique experience and talent on both systemic and individual bases.

The final guidelines are expected to be issued late this year. As *the* nutrition experts and for the health of our communities, it is essential that we continue to be involved in the process of finalizing and implementing the *2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, as well as future guidelines.

To all members who have taken part—and will continue to do so—in this vital process, thank you!

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jand.2020.10.007>