



American Society for Nutrition
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**Testimony to USDA and DHHS Regarding 2020 Dietary Guidelines Advisory
Committee Scientific Report
Provided by Sarah Ohlhorst, MS, RD,
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The American Society for Nutrition (ASN), a professional society with more than 7,500 members who advance excellence in nutrition research and practice, appreciates the opportunity to provide input to USDA and HHS regarding the Scientific Report of the 2020 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC). ASN notes the important contributions of the many ASN members that led to this report, and applauds the efforts of the 2020 DGAC, particularly given the shortened timeframe in which they had to complete their work.

ASN appreciates the DGAC's work to highlight important areas where the research is needed or still advancing and commends the DGAC report research recommendations. Absent or insufficient scientific information must be noted, as we cannot justify dietary recommendations without evidence. Ongoing and future nutrition research is of utmost importance to the development of the 2020 Dietary *Guidelines for Americans* (DGAs), as well as future editions of the Guidelines. The strength of the scientific evidence should dictate dietary guidance, and nutrition research provides this scientific evidence. ASN encourages the government to translate key research recommendations into funding priorities and encourages researchers to use them as a guide. Additionally, ASN strongly urges the government to support a process for timely updates of the Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs) to provide current, accurate data to be used in Guideline development.

Of particular importance is the recommendation that research studies be conducted with diverse prespecified populations – diverse in age, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic backgrounds. USDA and HHS must take these diverse populations into account when developing the 2020 Guidelines, as well as considering that 6 in 10 American adults live with a chronic disease. It is important to ensure the Guidelines can be readily understood and adopted by most Americans so they successfully lead to improved public health outcomes. As suggested by the DGAC, a focus on healthful dietary patterns allows for adaptation of the Guidelines by individuals and families.

ASN also encourages the government to consider the DGAC's recommendation that the Guidelines touch on other important public health issues, including recommending low intake of *trans* fats, reducing sodium intake, preventing dental caries, and maintaining hydration, among other important topics. ASN encourages the government to continue to engage collaborators, including scientific organizations like ASN, to ensure the Guidelines are disseminated and implemented by the public, and that unresolved scientific questions continue to be a research focus.

Thank you!