

The 2010 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee Calls for a Coordinated Strategic Plan and Evidence-Based Actions to Help All Americans Adopt Health-Promoting Behaviors and Bring an End to the Obesity Crisis

June 18, 2010

On June 15, 2010, the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee issued the “Report of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010” (“Advisory Report” or “Report”). The Advisory Report is intended to provide the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) “with a strong foundation for preparing the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans,” which will be released at the end of 2010. The Dietary Guidelines, which are jointly issued by USDA and HHS and updated every five years, provide diet-related recommendations for promoting public health, guide Federal food and nutrition policies governing foods served in schools, food assistance and nutrition education programs, and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulation of food and dietary supplement products.

The overall theme of the Report focuses on addressing an overweight and obese American population. The Advisory Committee noted “that this report is unprecedented in addressing the obesity epidemic, and stated that the obesity epidemic is the single greatest threat to public health in this century. Every section of the report was developed in a way that addresses the challenges of obesity. [The Committee] noted that this was especially true for children, whose prevalence of obesity has tripled in the past 30 years.”

The 2010 Report includes new chapters focused on a “total diet” approach and integrating the Report’s recommendations and a second chapter translating the scientific findings into practical advice. The “total diet” approach focuses on helping Americans achieve “good health and optimal functionality across their life span,” through a diet that is energy balanced and nutrient-dense. The Report also makes several key recommendations aimed at improving the nutritional quality of the overall “food environment,” particularly for vulnerable populations, including by enabling lower income Americans to gain better access to fresh fruits and vegetables and limiting the access children have to foods that are higher in fat and added sugars. Additionally the report makes several recommendations concerning specific nutrients and food components, including recommendations to decrease intake of solid fat and added sugars, fatty acids and cholesterol, and refined grains. In addition, the report recommends that sodium limits be reduced from 2,300 to 1,500 milligrams/day for U.S. adults, and endorses the recent IOM report recommending that FDA modify the GRAS status

of salt to limit sodium in the U.S. food supply.

The Report's recommendations and anticipated changes to the 2010 Dietary Guidelines are expected to have an impact on food labeling and advertising regulation, especially in light of the Obama Administration's emphasis on combating obesity and encouraging healthier lifestyles (see our blog post regarding the [Obama Administration's Task Force to combat childhood obesity](#) here). Click here for [more information regarding the Advisory Report](#).