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Oral Testimony on the Process of Developing Future Editions of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans

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The Institute of Food Technologists appreciates the opportunity to comment on the “Review of the Process to Update the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.” Founded in 1939, the Institute of Food Technologists, also known as IFT, is committed to advancing the science of food. Our non-profit scientific society with more than 17,000 members from more than 95 countries brings together food scientists, technologists and related professionals from academia, government, and industry.

IFT believes that food science and technology play an integral role both in the development and implementation of the Guidelines. We were disappointed that food scientists and technologists were not among members of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee, or DGAC.

Through food science and technology, we have decreased sodium, saturated fat, trans fat and sugars, and addressed many of the “shortfall” nutrients, such as calcium, dietary fiber, and magnesium in the food supply as noted in the Guidelines. Food scientists and technologists provide support to a dynamic and rapidly changing food environment, through product reformulation, fortification, and enrichment, for example.

During the development of future Dietary Guidelines, we believe discussions related to changes in the food system and supply are best addressed in collaboration with food scientists and technologists. More specifically, food science and technology professionals can provide valuable insights into existing technological capabilities and limitations germane to the food supply and its impact on food manufacturing and food safety; sensory attributes; cost and time constraints; and consumer acceptance.

An integrated approach to improving the nation’s health is critical. IFT strongly urges the agencies that as they plan the process for selecting individuals for the DGAC for future editions of the Dietary Guidelines, consideration be given to mandating representation from various disciplines including food science and technology. The Dietary Guidelines is the foundation for many federal, state, and local food and nutrition programs, public health interventions, and new product formulations and reformulations. Therefore, IFT also recommends that the agencies continue to ensure that the future DGAC recommendations are supported by the best scientific evidence available at the time.

IFT and our members are committed to assisting with the Dietary Guidelines process. IFT respectfully requests that the Review Committee recommend to the Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services that food scientists and technologists be included in the future DGAC. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.