

MyPlate Background

What are the benefits of the new USDA's new communication initiative, MyPlate?

- *MyPlate* is a new generation icon with the intent to prompt consumers to think about building a healthy plate at meal times and to seek more information to help them do that by going to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov. The new *MyPlate* icon emphasizes the fruit, vegetable, grains, protein and dairy food groups.
- In an effort to create cohesion among federal agencies and promote positive nutrition behaviors to consumers, the *MyPlate* communications initiative will support the *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* with consumer relevant themes and easy-to-understand, action-oriented messages.
- As comprehensive federal policy, the Dietary Guidelines informs nutrition information delivered by industry, public health programs, community initiatives, schools and consumers.
- The goal of the initiative will be to support Americans in building healthy diets.

What is USDA trying to accomplish?

- Provide an easy-to-understand icon that will help deliver a series of healthy eating messages that highlight key consumer actions based on the *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- Empower people with information they need to make healthy food choices.

Who are we trying reach?

- Individuals and families who are struggling to maintain a healthy lifestyle among numerous other challenges.
- Federal agencies that develop materials containing nutrition guidance and/or oversee nutrition programs.
- Organizations and industry involved in promoting positive nutrition behaviors and/or giving nutrition advice to the general public.

How will this initiative better inform consumers?

- The *MyPyramid* food image, while useful as a teaching tool, was perceived by many as outdated and too complicated. *MyPyramid* will remain available to interested health professionals and nutrition educators in a special section of the new website.
- Qualitative research over the years indicates frustration among consumers over what they report as hearing contradictory nutrition information.
- The communications initiative will build on a familiar image – a plate - and actionable messages to encourage consumers to make healthy choices.

How will this approach support the policy document?

- All the messages are based on the content of the Dietary Guidelines policy document.
- A comprehensive messaging approach will bring the policy document to life.
- Action oriented messages will help professionals and the media to understand and deliver relevant nutrition information to help people in their daily lives.

What resources are available to help professionals implement USDA's new initiative?

- USDA has set up a new website, ChooseMyPlate.gov, with tools and resources to help consumers put the Dietary Guidelines into action by building healthy eating patterns for meal times. Additional resources will be available in the fall.