

The Shocking Truth Behind the Original Food Guide Pyramid

Can the government be relied on to provide objective, health-promoting food and nutrition advice, via the new Food Guide Pyramid? According to nutritionist Luise Light, a former U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) insider and contributing architect of the original version of the Food Guide Pyramid, most certainly not.



With no holds barred, Dr. Light highlights the shocking reality of a government bowing to industry interests and playing a key role in the obesity epidemic that now plagues the United States.

A Blast From the Past

In the early '80s, Dr. Light served as a leader of a group of top-level nutritionists with the USDA; the team constructed the original Food Guide Pyramid and based their eating guide on nutrient recommendations, disease prevention, documented dietary shortfalls and major health problems of the population.

They submitted their final version of the Food Guide to the Secretary of Agriculture only to be hit with a load of shocking revisions, some of which included:

- Baked goods made with white flour were moved from the peak of the pyramid -- signifying to eat them sparingly -- to part of the pyramid's significantly larger base.
- The wording "eat less" was changed to "avoid too much," giving a nod to the processed-food industry's interests by not limiting highly profitable junk foods.
- Lean meats were downplayed, as lobbyists feared consumers would stay away from high-fat products.
- The meat lobby changed the color of the saturated fat/cholesterol guideline chart from red to purple, as producers believed consumers would associate red with bad fat and red meat.

In a ditch attempt to save the pyramid, Dr. Light protested the changes and explained the revised guidelines could lead to an epidemic of obesity and diabetes. Her lone cries were unheard.

Later, Dr. Light discovered the wholesale changes made to the guide were

calculated simply to win the approval of the food industry.

Is There any Hope for the New Food Guide Pyramid?

Not likely. That's because the food industry molds the nutrition agenda served to the public by dictating the government's food advice. What's more, in the eyes of the food industry, the sole purpose of food guides is to convince consumers that all foods (especially those being sold by the industry) fit into a healthy diet, explains Dr. Light.

And in closing, the former USDA nutritionist states that, to the government, nutrition has very little to do with our health and instead is primarily a marketing tool used to fuel consumer spending on food, and increase demand for major food commodities like meat, dairy, eggs and wheat.

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Dr. Mercola's Comment:

It's taken 20 years to change the fraudulent and seriously conflicted recommendations of the first food pyramid; recommendations that may have made a strong contribution to America's current poor state of health.

Of course, if you consider that the USDA also gives \$15 million to farmers who grow more corn and soybeans (two of the processed food industry's most important commodities) and nothing to farmers who focus on healthier foods like fruits and vegetables, none of this should come as a surprise.

Thankfully, the newest food pyramid does show some improvement over the first one, though not nearly enough.

Considering the influence that the food industry has had in the past, it's a wonder there were any improvements made at all.

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