

Guest Editorial

It has been a pleasure to be the guest editor for this important supplemental issue of the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*. The supplement documents the complete multiyear research process undertaken by USDA to revise the original Food Guide Pyramid and develop the MyPyramid Food Guidance System.

There is a wealth of information in the supplement. The first several articles describe the technical research that was undertaken to update USDA's food intake patterns, so that they are current with new nutrition standards. Another paper summarizes the modeling exercises that were conducted for the 2005 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee using these food patterns, and how the results of these analyses influenced both the Guidelines and the final food intake patterns. Two research articles in the supplement detail the consumer research used to develop the new consumer messages and graphic

presentation for MyPyramid. Three relevant GEMs are also included in this issue. They describe Web site and Internet-based tools that were developed to implement the MyPyramid Food Guidance System, including the formative consumer testing that was completed as part of the development process.

Having a complete description of the basis for the MyPyramid Food Guidance System in a single document provides an invaluable resource for the nutrition community. I am sure that this supplement will be a reference that nutrition educators come back to repeatedly to better understand the research foundation on which MyPyramid was built. It will certainly occupy a prominent place on my bookshelf!

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Foreword

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The USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion is pleased to sponsor this supplemental issue of the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* that describes the research underlying the development of the MyPyramid Food Guidance System. USDA has a rich history of providing science-based nutrition information and education to the public. The MyPyramid Food Guidance System is the most current version of this guidance. It translates the 2005 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* into messages that consumers can more easily understand and put into practice. MyPyramid moves from the one-size-fits-all approach to more individualized guidance, with interactive tools and more personalized dietary recommendations. It was designed to connect with individuals and facilitate their efforts to make changes in their lifestyle and behavior.

We all recognize that making wise food choices is one of the cornerstones of good health, yet it is very challenging for many to make the changes needed for a healthful diet. USDA is committed to providing the public with nutrition guidance based on the latest science and presented in a way that facilitates consumer understanding and application. We believe that small steps taken by consumers toward improving their own food and physical activity choices will translate into substantial benefits over their lifetimes. Working together, we can all help consumers take steps toward a more healthful diet and lifestyle.

I hope you will find this issue of the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* helpful and that you find the MyPyramid materials useful in your practice of nutrition education. Staff at the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion continue to work on enhancements and new tools that translate MyPyramid's messages into actionable steps for consumers.