

# The Convergence of Policy and the Consumer on Sustainable Diets



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California Dairy Sustainability Summit  
November 27, 2018

NAVIGATING THE CHANGING FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER LANDSCAPES.

# The Beginning of the Convergence

## ***SUSTAINABLE DIETS AND BIODIVERSITY***

***What is a good diet in the 21st century? Nutrition science tried throughout the 20th century to clarify what is a good diet for human health. But today it has little or nothing to say so far about how to marry human and eco-systems health. Here lies a major 21st century food policy challenge.***



**Tim Lang** Centre for Food Policy, City University, London, UK

*Proceedings of the International Scientific Symposium  
BIODIVERSITY AND SUSTAINABLE DIETS UNITED AGAINST HUNGER  
3–5 November 2010 FAO Headquarters, Rome*

# Dietary Guidance and Sustainability - Global Focus

## Sweden Dietary Guidelines

Find your way to eat greener, not too much and to be active!

### MORE

Vegetables, fruit and berries  
fish and shellfish  
nuts and seeds  
exercise



### SWITCH TO

wholegrain  
healthy fats  
low-fat dairy products



### LESS

red and processed meat  
salt  
sugar  
alcohol



## Dietary Guidelines for the Brazilian Population



Instrument of Food and Nutrition Education to support Healthy and Adequate Food Promotion to people, family members and communities.



Stop or reverse the increase of obesity and other chronic diseases, and prevent nutritional deficiencies.



Encourage continuous improvement in the Food System, as well as in the supply chains and in the consumption of healthier foods.



Support healthy practices and healthy traditional food cultures.



The Netherlands recommending just 2 servings of meat/week, setting an explicit limit on meat consumption for the first time.

**“Background Evidence-based nutrition policy is a key mechanism to promote planetary health. In the USA, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans are the foundation of nutrition policy and guide more than US\$80 billion in federal spending”.**

**“For five of the six impacts, the VEG pattern had 42–84% lower burdens than both the US and MED patterns. Reliance on plant-based protein and eggs in the VEG pattern versus emphasis on animal-based protein in the other patterns was a key driver of differences, as was a lower overall protein foods recommendation in the VEG pattern”.**

**“Given the scale of influence of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans on food systems, incorporating sustainability into their development has the potential to have great benefit in terms of long-term food security”.**



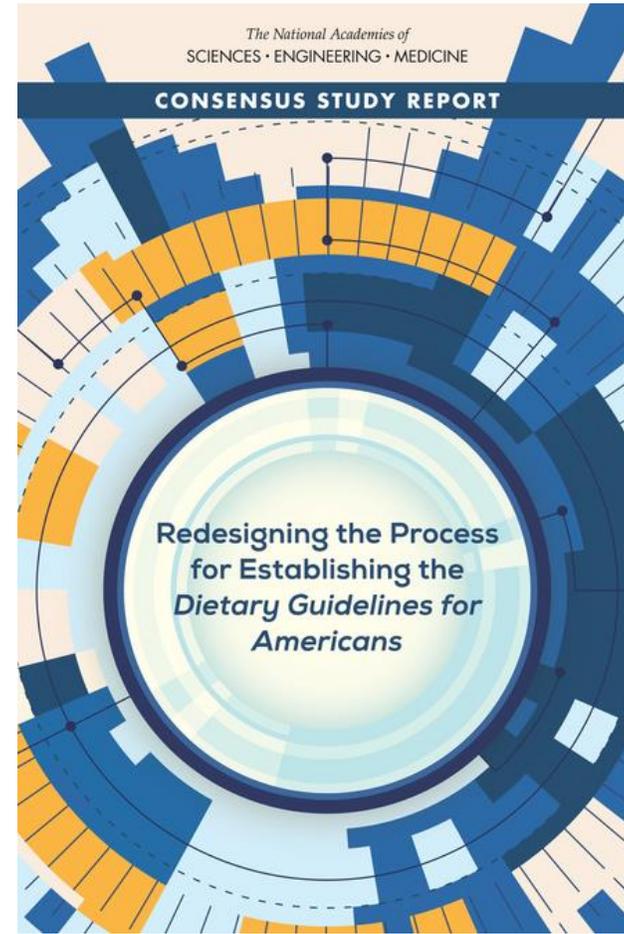


*Recommendations for healthy diets are **not complete if they ignore the indirect health impacts caused by environmental changes associated with food production and consumption.** In addition to dietary change, improvements in the sustainability of food systems require further efforts for reducing the environmental burden of agriculture and food production, decreasing food waste, and improving the adaptation capacity of food systems to environmental changes”*

*Hanna L Tuomisto, University of Helsinki, Ruralia institute, Mikkeli 50100, Finland*

# Sustainability and the Dietary Guidelines

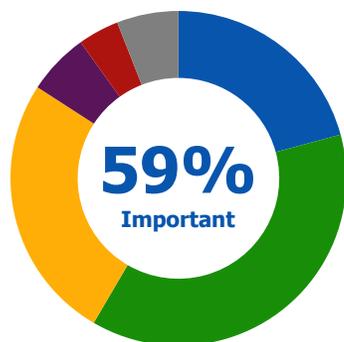
- How can sustainability be integrated into the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA)*?
- Approach
  - Use of the NASEM report, *Redesigning the Process for Establishing the Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, published in 2017.
  - The recommendations in the report identified three essential functions currently conducted by the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC).
  - Examination of those functions illustrates points for integration.



# Majority Say Sustainability of Food is Important

Sustainability for consumers means reducing pesticides, an affordable food supply and conserving natural habitats

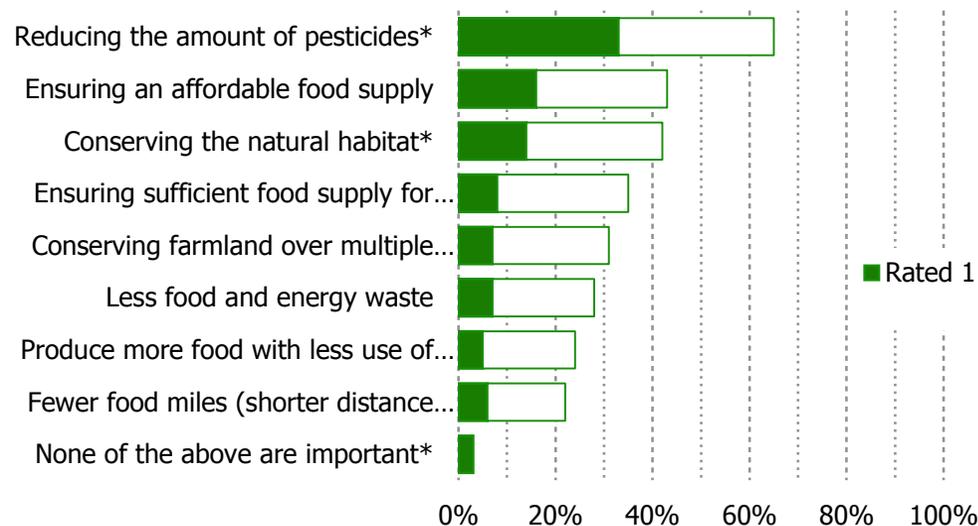
## Importance of Sustainability in Food Products Purchased



- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Not very important
- Not at all important

## Ranked Important Aspects of Sustainable Food Production

(Of those who say it's important their food be produced sustainably)



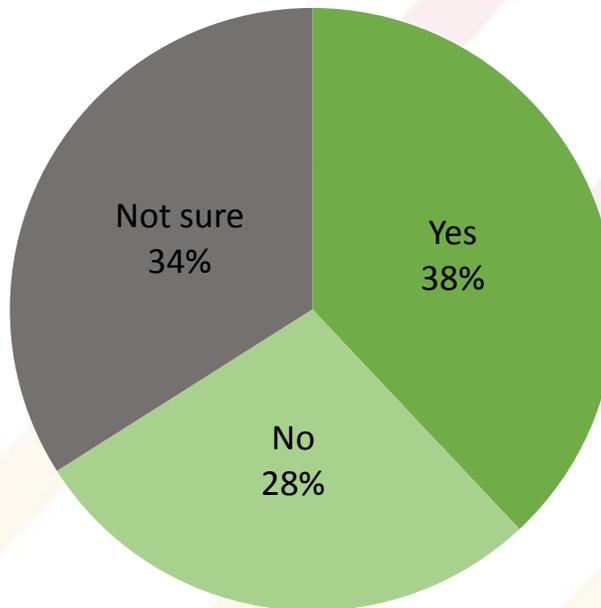
Q45: How important is it to you that the food products you purchase or consume are produced in a sustainable way? (n=1,009)

Q46: What 3 aspects of producing food in a sustainable way are most important to you? (Select top answer.) (Of those who say it's important their food be produced sustainably, n=583)

\*Response text has been abridged

***People are split on whether they would pay more for food and beverage products that are produced sustainably.***

**Are you willing to pay more for food and beverage products that are produced sustainably?**



**Who is more likely to pay?**

- College grads
- Higher income
- Lower BMI
- In better health

2016 n=1,003

# 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines For Americans

## Dietary Patterns are Plant-Based and Incorporate Animal Foods



**Healthy  
US-style  
Pattern**

3 servings LF/FF  
dairy foods per  
day

**Healthy  
Vegetarian  
Pattern**

3 servings LF/FF  
dairy foods per  
day

**Healthy  
Mediterranean-  
style Pattern**

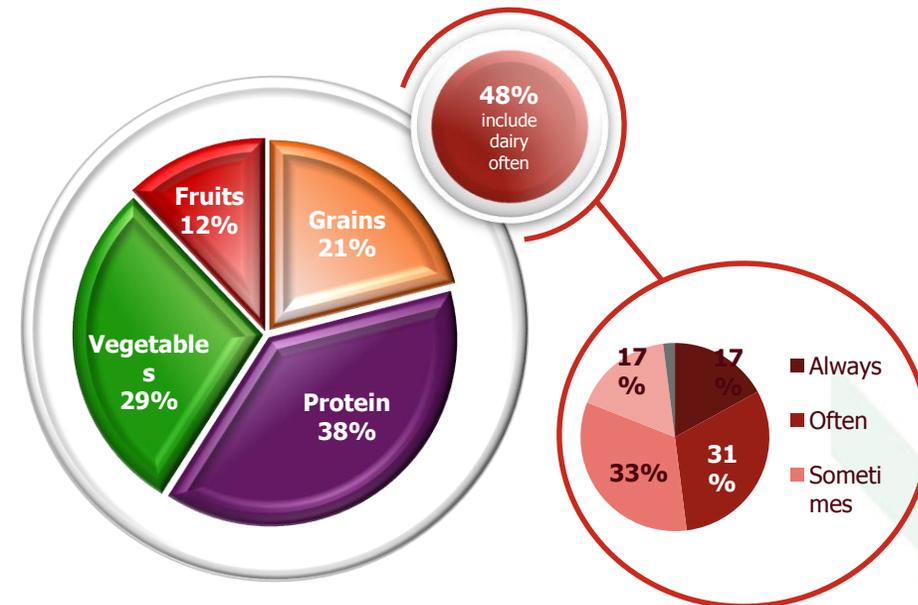
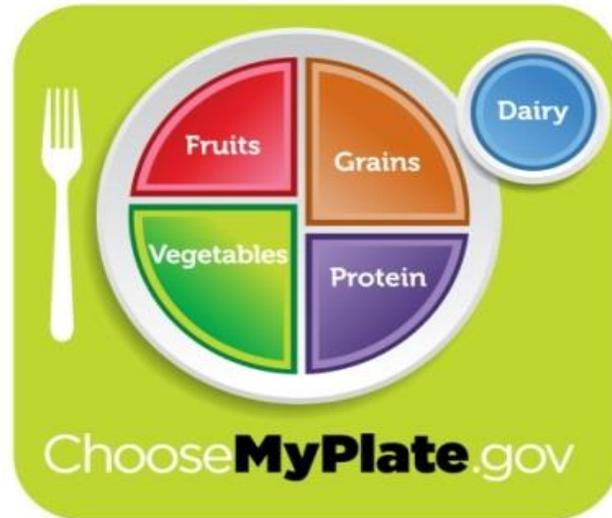
2 servings LF/FF  
dairy foods per  
day

Dairy 3 → 2 cup eq/day  
Seafood 8 → 16 oz eq/wk

# Eating Behaviors Diverge from MyPlate Recommendations

Americans report getting less fruits and vegetables, and more protein, than is recommended by MyPlate

## My Plate Vs. What Consumers Say Is On Their Plate



# Way too Much Food is Wasted

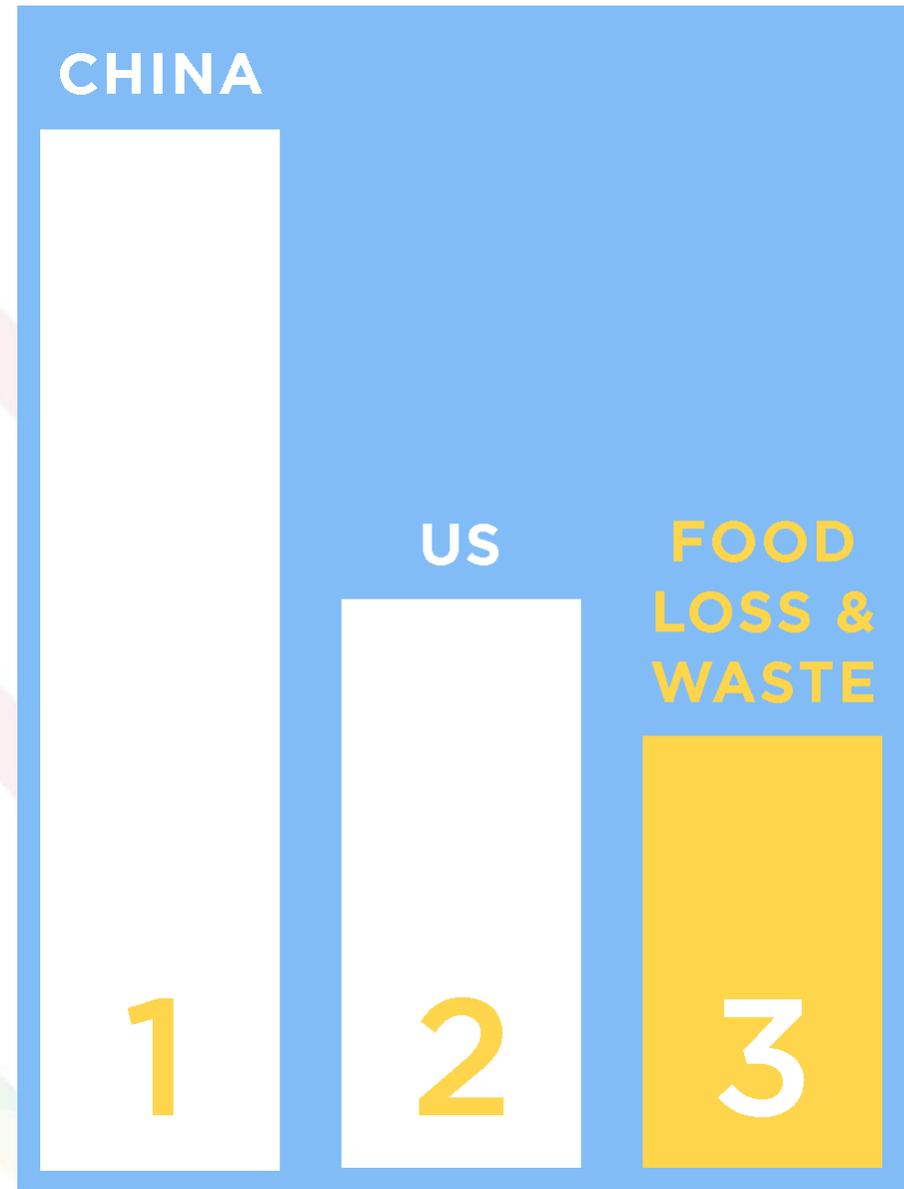
30-40%  
Of Food Produced Goes Uneaten

1,250 Calories/Person/Day  
Are Thrown Away

3<sup>rd</sup> Largest Global GHG  
Emitter

While 1 of 6 people go hungry.

CAIT. 2015; FAO.2015. Food wastage footprint & climate change. Rome: FAO.  
<http://www.wri.org/blog/2015/12/whats-food-loss-and-waste-got-do-climate-change-lot-actually>  
<https://www.usda.gov/oce/foodwaste/faqs.htm>



# Connecting the Dots . . .

*“Today most of us see the role we play...in safeguarding the environment. We recycle....make consumer decisions based on energy efficiency and carbon footprint.....we understand the collective impact of those choices on our swiftly warming planet. But we do that while letting our leftovers grow fur in our fridge before tossing them”. ....Flipping scraps into a garbage pile designated for a landfill, without connecting the dots..”*

*Tom Colicchio, co founder Gramercy Tavern, NYC*



## **. . . Food Waste**



# ***Lifestyle Assessment for Sustainable Eating (LSA) Guidelines***

**The Dietary Guidelines for Americans' eating patterns – a starting point for achieving “sustainable eating habits”**

- ✓ ***Emphasis on balance of portion and protein***
- ✓ ***Limits consumption of nutrient-poor foods***
- ✓ ***Reduce food waste***
- ✓ ***Within a food group: emphasize products with better environmental performance***

***How do our food consumption habits impact environmental concerns?***

# Food Waste and Sustainability Resources

[Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations](#)

[Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition](#)

[World Food Programme](#)

[Scaling Up Nutrition](#)

[CGIAR](#)

[Feed the Future](#)

[ReFED](#)

[Menus of Change](#)

[Love Food Hate Waste](#)

[USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion's Let's Talk Trash](#)

[Oxfam America](#)



Sustainable eating resources from  
[www.eatrightpro.org/practice/practice-resources/sustainable-food-systems.org](http://www.eatrightpro.org/practice/practice-resources/sustainable-food-systems.org)

THANK YOU



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