



ONTARIO HOME ECONOMICS ASSOCIATION
An Association of Professionals, Registered under the Laws of Ontario

December 12, 2016

Dr. Hasan Hutchinson
Director General of the Office of Nutrition Policy and Promotion
Health Products and Food Branch
Health Canada
hasan.hutchinson@canada.ca

RE: Canada's Food Guide Consultation – Phase 1

Dear Dr. Hutchinson

“Knowing the nutritional status of a country provides direction on the priorities and programs that will update the overall health of a nation.” (L. Starkey, L. Johnson-Down, K. Gray-Donald. 2001). The OHEA encourages Health Canada to seize this opportunity to improve the health of all Canadians.

The Ontario Home Economics Association (www.ohea.on.ca), a self-regulating body of professional Home Economists, promotes high professional standards among its members so that they may assist families and individuals to achieve and maintain a desirable quality of life. Professional members of OHEA hold the designation “Professional Home Economist” or “P.H.Ec.”

OHEA has responded to Phase One of the Canada's Food Guide Consultation, a hardcopy of which is attached. Please find below some of our more salient points:

- Focus on serving sizes to address the disconnect between food label serving sizes and those endorsed in Canada's Food Guide;
- Encourage provincial ministries of education to re-introduce mandatory inclusion of Canada's Food Guide, and moreover, food literacy, in elementary and secondary school curriculums;
- Instate regular and mandatory systematic surveillance and monitoring of food consumption, through CCHS or a USA NHANES-like process;
- Ensure funding for the promotion and evaluation of robust, community-based, healthy-eating initiatives;
- Include a health-impact review when developing all federal government policies and legislation;
- Begin to envision a food guide that is a smart-phone compatible app, with incorporation of a tool which reflects and enables a balanced and healthy eating occasion, such as Health Canada's [Eat Well Plate](#).

The OHEA Committee regards this first response as one which addresses the overall objectives and aims of the new Canada's Food Guide, and to that end, we look forward to engaging with Health Canada in a more detailed and specific manner, in the near future.

Sincerely,

Cindy Hartman, P.H.Ec.
President

Carol Culhane, P.H.Ec.
OHEA Canada's Food Guide Committee Lead

First Question:

Canada's Food Guide Workbook

English ▾

18%

It's been a challenge to communicate recommendations on amounts of food. We would like to understand how much information you need on the recommended amounts of food to be useful for your or your organization's work.

To inform your organization's work - For tool and resource development - what is the most useful way to present recommendations on amounts of food?

Select all that apply.

- Measured amounts of food to eat per day or per meal (for example, grams, cups or millilitres)
- Frequency per day (for example, eat vegetables and fruit at all meals and for snacks, or eat an orange coloured vegetable every day)
- Recommendations on portion size (for example, eat smaller portions of these foods)
- Proportionality per meal (for example, make half your plate vegetables and fruit as shown in the [Eat Well Plate](#))
- Calories per day

Second Question:

Canada's Food Guide Workbook

English ▾

32%

For group education (for example, school, college or university, community), which of the following types of guidance are most useful to your organization?

Select all that apply.

- General recommendations on eating behaviours like cook at home more often
- General healthy eating tips like enjoy a variety of foods
- Recommendations on the **types** of foods or beverages to consume and to limit
- Recommendations on the **amount** of food and beverages to consume
- Nutrients to limit like sugars, sodium, saturated and trans fats

Other

Satiety, Hunger Awareness, "Do No Harm" non-judgement

Skip to the end to submit without completing the remaining questions.

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Third Question:

Canada's Food Guide Workbook

English ▾

33%

It's been a challenge to communicate recommendations on amounts of food. We would like to understand how much information you need on the recommended amounts of food to be useful for your or your organization's work.

To inform your organization's work - For group education (for example, school, college or university, community) - what is the most useful way to present recommendations on amounts of food?

Select all that apply.

- Frequency per day (for example, eat vegetables and fruit at all meals and for snacks, or eat an orange coloured vegetable every day)
- Recommendations on portion size (for example, eat smaller portions of these foods)
- Proportionality per meal (for example, make half your plate vegetables and fruit as shown in the [Eat Well Plate](#))
- Measured amounts of food to eat per day or per meal (for example, grams, cups or millilitres)
- Calories per day

Fourth Question:

Canada's Food Guide Workbook

English ▾

43%

As part of the revision of Canada’s Food Guide, Health Canada will develop a dietary guidance policy report for health professionals and policy makers. The report will translate complex science about nutrition into clear and concise healthy eating recommendations.

Proposed topics for healthy eating recommendations came out of the evidence review and from early discussions with stakeholders. The topics include consumption of vegetables and fruit, whole grains, milk products, water, legumes like pulses, nuts, seeds, fish, red meat, processed meat, juice, and sugar-sweetened beverages.

Population health considerations will help provide context to apply the recommendations.

Please rate the importance of including content on each of the following topics to support your organization’s work related to healthy eating.

| | Not at all important | Not very important | Somewhat important | Very important | Essential |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Impact of the food environment on food choices | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |

| | Not at all important | Not very important | Somewhat important | Very important | Essential |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Traditional food, food access and other factors among Indigenous populations | | | | | |
| Impact of eating habits on the environment | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Dietary patterns – such as Mediterranean, vegetarian, Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Role of food skills (for example, cooking) in supporting healthy eating | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Eating behaviours (for example, eating together, mindful eating) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Impact of ultra-processed foods on healthy eating | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Food security | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Enjoyment of eating | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Other, specify:

Impact of dietary patterns (DASH)

Somewhat important Very important Essential

Fifth Question:

Canada's Food Guide Workbook

English ▾

Health Canada is aware that there is a lot of interest in the healthy eating recommendations provided by some other countries based on the level of processing of food, like minimally processed and ultra-processed.

Would healthy eating recommendations based on the level of processing of foods be helpful to you?

Why do you say that?

You would need a clear definition for the public of minimally vs ultra processed foods.

Sixth Question:

Canada's Food Guide Workbook

English ▾

67%

Consumption of sugars has become a concern for many people. Some countries and international health organizations have set limits on sugars. With more evidence on the health effect of sugar-sweetened beverages, Health Canada is considering ways to encourage Canadians to reduce their consumption of sugars.

How useful would the following approaches be to your organizations work?

| | Very useful | Somewhat useful | Not very useful | Not at all useful |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Targeting messages to the highest consumers of sugar-sweetened beverages | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| More information on food labels about sugars | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| A recommended limit on amount of sugars to eat each day | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Messages about how to reduce consumption of sugars | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| | Very useful | Somewhat useful | Not very useful | Not at all useful |
| Restricting the marketing of foods high in sugars to children | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| A Health Canada policy position on sugar-sweetened beverages | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Seventh Question:

Canada's Food Guide Workbook

English ▾

69%

Grouping foods is important to communicate healthy eating recommendations. Health Canada is exploring different options to grouping foods to help you understand and use the recommendations.

Health Canada's current healthy eating recommendations classify foods into the following groups:

- Vegetables and Fruit;
- Grain Products;
- Milk and alternatives; and,
- Meat and alternatives.

Additional recommendations are provided on:

- Limiting foods and beverages that are high in calories, fat, sugar and/or salt;
- Including a small amount – 30 to 45 mL (2 to 3 Tablespoon) of unsaturated fat each day.

To what extent are the current food groupings useful to your organization's work?

To a great extent

To some extent

Not very much

Not at all

Why do you say that?

The 4 food groups are well recognized by Canadians and are useful for measurement and measuring, as well as their nutrient underpinnings. However, there needs to be a tool to help consumers to differentiate between bonafide

Skip to the end to submit without completing the remaining questions.

Eighth Question:

Canada's Food Guide Workbook

People get healthy eating information in a number of different ways. From the following list of sources, which have you used to look for healthy eating information in the past year?

Select all that apply.

- ✓ Print materials like magazines, factsheets, newspapers, posters
- ✓ Websites like web pages, blogs, news articles
- ✓ Social media like Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest Web / Mobile based applications/ interactive tools
- ✓ Other sources : Professional Home Economists, Registered Dietitians, Evidence from Research (Nutrition, Education, Eating behaviours, etc..)

None of the above

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71%

Ninth Question:

Canada's Food Guide Workbook

English ▾

73%

How often does your organization work with the following client populations?

| | Always | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Individuals with a low literacy level | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Older adults | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Newcomers to Canada | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Indigenous peoples | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Low income earners | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Children/youth | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Tenth Question:

Canada's Food Guide Workbook

English ▾

What should Health Canada know about tailoring messages or resources for healthy eating recommendations to:

Older adults

Adjust: serving sizes; to eating with others or eating alone; to purchasing food on a fixed income; low food literacy if no experience as primary food shopper.

Eleventh Question:

Canada's Food Guide Workbook

English ▾

What should Health Canada know about tailoring messages or resources for healthy eating recommendations to:

Children/youth

Children/youth are very impressionable; seize opportunity to establish life-long eating habits; opportunity to influence other family members; advocate for return of food literacy to the elementary and secondary school curriculums; impact of role models; ability to analyze marketing messages.

Twelfth Question:

Canada's Food Guide Workbook

English ▾

What should Health Canada know about tailoring messages or resources for healthy eating recommendations to:

Indigenous peoples

Importance and access to a consistent supply of clean and safe water; continue to emphasize the Indigenous people's traditional foods and cultural preferences; effect of climate change on Indigenous people's access to traditional foods; food insecurity; cost of delivered food; encourage "grow your own"; de-glamourize processed foods.

Thirteenth Question:

Canada's Food Guide Workbook

English ▾

What should Health Canada know about tailoring messages or resources for healthy eating recommendations to:

Low income earners

Basic Income Guaranteed (BIG) - food security will be addressed only when income insecurity is addressed; effect of shift work on irregular eating and shopping patterns; implement policy which would eventually see food banks redundant

Fourteenth Question:

Canada's Food Guide Workbook

English ▾

What should Health Canada know about tailoring messages or resources for healthy eating recommendations to:

Newcomers to Canada

Orientation to the Canadian food distribution system; interpreters; encouraged not to abandon their traditional and cultural foods.

Fifteenth Question:

Canada's Food Guide Workbook

English ▾

What should Health Canada know about tailoring messages or resources for healthy eating recommendations to:

Individuals with a low literacy level

Mandatory food and nutrition courses at the elementary and secondary school curriculums; adult education and continuing education classes at the community level, or, online; funding needed to recruit qualified teachers and trainers; development of a peer-support program

Sixteenth Question:

Canada's Food Guide Workbook

English ▾

86%

This consultation workbook has asked about your use and perspectives on healthy eating recommendations and some of the challenges we aim to address with the revision of these recommendations.

What else can Health Canada do to help improve the uptake and use of its healthy eating recommendations?

Focus on serving sizes to address the disconnect between food label serving sizes and those in the food guide
Re-introduce mandatory inclusion in the elementary and secondary curriculums
Systematic surveillance and monitoring evidence, such as CCHS, similar to NHANES in the USA
Funding for community-based, robust healthy-eating initiatives, including health promotion, and their evaluation
Inclusion of the health-impact in all federal government policies
The food guide must be Smart-phone compatible