


Dietary Guidelines Communications Message Calendar 2013-2015

Background

The USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP) released the MyPlate food icon in June 2011 as a powerful reminder to make healthful choices from all food groups to build a healthy plate at meal time. The icon is the centerpiece supported by a robust, multicomponent communications initiative. One component that accompanied the release is a communications calendar to provide consistent messaging in the marketplace to help consumers realize and apply healthful dietary and activity behaviors. This calendar included timed releases of consumer messages addressing key behaviors in the *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* theme areas: foods to increase, foods to reduce, and balancing calories.


The 2013-2015 calendar below represents an evolution of the original. It provides a single campaign tag line to unify messaging, which should encourage collaboration of partners in all sectors. Six-month message intervals, each with a call-to-action theme and supporting messages, allow communicators to plan ahead and incorporate the themes and messages into programs, products, materials, and resources. Strong implementation strategies are critical. Therefore, sample implementation strategies, as well as specific mechanisms to work with and support the efforts of CNPP, are provided below.

Promotion Period	Call-to-Action	Behavior-Specific Messages
 <p>January to June</p>	<p>Campaign Tagline Build a Healthy Plate</p> <p>How Can You Build a Healthier Plate?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make half your plate fruits and vegetables. • Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk (dairy). • Make at least half your grains whole. • Compare sodium, sugars, and saturated fats in foods and choose the foods with lower numbers.
<p>July to December</p>	<p>What's the Right Amount of Calories For You?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy your food, but eat less. • Avoid oversized portions. • Be active your way. • Drink water instead of sugary drinks.

Sample Implementation Strategies

- Promote incentives (e.g., retailers offer coupons) for healthier food products (e.g., fruits and vegetables).
- Develop traditional or social media plans to help consumers choose foods with less saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars.
- Provide videos and visual tools that demonstrate how to build a healthy plate, prepare MyPlate-inspired makeovers of traditional recipes, preparation techniques for healthier foods, or make healthier choices when faced with limited choices.
- Highlight healthier options for kids on restaurant menus.
- Engage nutrition advocates in promoting messages to relevant audiences.
- Promote products or menu options with fewer calories.
- Provide nutrition education materials to support healthier eating.
- Develop tools or apps to support food decisions made on-the-go.
- Deliver worksite wellness campaigns and initiatives.
- Provide physical activity choices and resources that are relevant for individuals at various stages of life.
- Design and implement community-based policies (i.e., schools, work place, hospitals, neighborhoods) to ensure that healthier choices are available to consumers at all times.

Interested in working with CNPP directly? Here are 3 ways!

1. Visit <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/partnering-program.html> to learn how to join the Nutrition Communicators Network as a **Community Partner** or a **National Strategic Partner**.
2. Use **SuperTracker** in your program or practice to help your target audience track and assess their diet and physical activity. This free application represents the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans, Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, and includes consumer-friendly features such as My Weight Manager, My Top 5 Goals, journaling, and social media interactivity.
3. Click on the “Stay Connected”  at ChooseMyPlate.gov and sign up to **receive email updates** about press releases, new materials for consumers and health professionals, SuperTracker news, social media, and more.

