WASHINGTON, June 2, 2011 – First Lady Michelle Obama and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today unveiled the federal government's new food icon, MyPlate, to serve as a reminder to help consumers make healthier food choices. MyPlate is a new generation icon with the intent to prompt consumers to think about building a healthy plate at meal times and to seek more information to help them do that by going to www.choosemyplate.gov. The new MyPlate icon emphasizes the fruit, vegetable, grains, protein and dairy food groups. Nutrition, health and consumer advocates applauded the MyPlate icon and reiterated their commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of Americans nationwide.

Nancy Chapman, Executive Director, Soyfoods Association of North America (SANA)

"Now more than ever the 2010 Dietary Guidelines are relevant for all Americans, regardless of age, cultural preferences, or dietary needs. By creating the new food icon, USDA helps all adults and children understand what a healthy plate should look like when they sit down at the dinner table. SANA applauds the Administration for taking another huge step with this practical guidance."

Scott DeFife, Executive Vice President of Policy and Government Affairs for the National Restaurant Association

"The National Restaurant Association applauds the work to create an icon that gives consumers a clearer idea of how to think of their everyday meal options. The industry will continue to play an active role in helping to create an environment that addresses today's healthy living challenges. Much like the upcoming national menu labeling standard, the new food icon will be a useful resource to help inform all Americans' food choices."

Ginny Ehrlich, CEO of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation

"In order to reverse the trend of childhood obesity in the U.S., both parents and kids need accurate, easy to understand information about what constitutes a healthy diet. First Lady Obama has done an excellent job helping parents and kids understand the importance of eating right and staying active, but many Americans still need help understanding how to plan healthy meals. We are pleased that the USDA has seized the opportunity to help consumers better understand the basics of good nutrition and hope that this new icon helps parents make healthier choices for their families."

Wayne T. Gattinella, CEO and President of WebMD

"WebMD fully supports the USDA's new initiatives to encourage healthy food choices for consumers. As an organization founded on the philosophy of empowering consumers with clear, actionable health information, WebMD will leverage its reach to over 90 million consumers to educate them on the USDA's new nutrition icon and guidelines."

James H. Hodges, President, American Meat Institute Foundation

"We are pleased that the new food icon unveiled today, just as the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010, affirms in a clear and simple fashion that protein is a critical component of a balanced, healthy diet. Lean
meat and poultry products are some the most nutrient rich foods available, are excellent sources of complete protein, iron and zinc and maintain an excellent nutrition per calorie ratio. AMI will continue to voice support for the premise that a well-balanced diet, proper portion sizes and exercise are keys to overall good health and wellness."

Ric Jurgens, Chairman of the Board and CEO, Hy-Vee, Inc.

"As a company committed to making peoples’ lives easier, healthier and happier, we applaud the USDA and the Let's Move! initiative for taking this important step forward in nutrition education. We will do all we can to support the icon's success."

Barbara Byrd Keenan, Executive Vice President for the Institute of Food Technologists

"The new Dietary Guidelines set high standards that will require a concerted effort among numerous scientific disciplines to gradually change consumer behavior. This new icon will make it easier for consumers to incorporate the dietary guidelines into their food choices, which will ultimately help improve the health of our country."

David A. Kessler M.D., Former FDA Commissioner, Professor of Pediatrics, Epidemiology and Biostatistics, University of California, San Francisco

"The Plate is a major step forward in our nation's efforts to promote health and prevent disease. In today's environment, when food is on every corner, at every event, and two-thirds of the nation is overweight or obese, consumers need clear guidance on healthy eating. The Plate shows more clearly than the Pyramid what healthy eating is. The Plate and the comprehensive communications effort it represents will help reverse trends for obesity. The First Lady and Secretary Vilsack are taking an important stand for public health. The First Lady has challenged our country's food companies to lead in our fight against obesity. The new Plate will help everyone who has accepted her challenge."

David Kirchhoff, President and CEO of Weight Watchers International, Inc.

"We applaud the introduction of the new, common sense icon for the Dietary Guidelines, the plate. Like the 2010 Dietary Guidelines, which were released in January, the new Plate is important because it can help guide more Americans to the smart food choices that can help them reach a healthier weight. By fostering a leaner nation, we can in turn help to cut the health care costs linked to weight related illnesses, including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure and some types of cancer. This is an important step."

Robb MacKie, American Bakers Association President and CEO

"ABA commends USDA, HHS, and especially First Lady Michelle Obama for developing the new healthy eating icon based on the sound science of the new dietary guidelines. Consumers are struggling to find simple, clear and easy to follow directives. The new icon is a powerful tool to help adults, parents and their children integrate healthy and sensible eating habits into their daily lives. Appropriately, grains occupy the single largest portion on the plate - a reaffirmation of enriched and whole grains as the foundation of a healthy lifestyle."

Manuela McDonough, Program Manager, Institute of Hispanic Health at the National Council of La Raza

"NCLR welcomes the new food icon. We applaud the USDA on creating an easy-to-understand tool that will help Americans, especially Latinos, make healthier food choices."

Shalene McNeill, PhD, RD, executive director of human nutrition research, National Cattlemen's Beef Association

"America's cattle farmers and ranchers are eager to help consumers use this new visual tool. We believe illustrating how to create a balanced mix of nutrition from all food groups to create a healthful plate gets back to basics. More than 90 percent of Americans are enjoying beef in their diets. Now, this
straightforward visual illustrates how to build a healthful plate using protein-rich foods like lean beef."

Marion Nestle, Professor of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health, New York University

"The new plate icon makes it clear that healthy eating means lots of vegetables, fruits, and whole grains, and for that alone it is a big step forward. The plate is easy to understand. You don't need a computer to use it. It lets you fill your plate with whatever foods you like without worrying about portion numbers. Best of all are the messages that come with it. Enjoy your food! Yes! High marks to USDA for this one."

Dr. Elizabeth Pivonka, president and CEO of Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH)

"This science-based government recommendation to make half your plate fruits and vegetables is a significant and positive step in the battle to fight obesity and related health issues in America. The plate icon is a simple, memorable way to show Americans the proportion of fruits and vegetables they should be eating at every meal occasion," says Dr. Elizabeth Pivonka, president and CEO of Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH), the nonprofit entity in partnership with CDC behind the Fruits & Veggies—More Matters® national public health initiative."

Nancy Rice, SNS, President, School Nutrition Association

"The School Nutrition Association (SNA) welcomes USDA's new food icon and encourages all Americans to use it as a guide for planning their meals daily, weekly and throughout the year. School nutrition professionals are thrilled to have this new resource to help students understand the importance of healthy eating and well-balanced meals. The new food icon clearly shows young people just how important eating fruits and vegetables with their school meals are to their diet, health and development. We hope that parents, teachers and all role models for children will join us in promoting the new food icon to help children gravitate to a lifetime of healthier eating habits."

Leslie G. Sarasin, President and CEO, Food Marketing Institute

"The new USDA food graphic offers Americans a clear visual of a healthy plate representing the full spectrum of nutritious foods we all need in our diets. As FMI member companies seek to feed families and enrich lives, this new icon will serve supermarket shoppers as a vivid reminder of what to put in their shopping carts so that it will later become part of a well-balanced plate."

David B. Schmidt, President and CEO, International Food Information Council Foundation

"We look forward to helping USDA and DHHS motivate more consumers to adopt healthful diets and lifestyles. The IFIC Foundation has been pleased to partner with these Departments on key nutrition education initiatives and we are ready to serve as a resource for government officials, health professionals, journalists and consumers who seek key insights on health, nutrition, and food safety."

Lieutenant General Norman R. Seip, US Air Force (Ret.), member of the national nonprofit Mission: Readiness

"The USDA's new campaign to promote better eating habits is an important step toward making sure our obesity crisis does not become a national security crisis. Currently, about one in four young adults is too overweight to join the military, and the Defense Department has told Congress that weight problems, coupled with other factors, could undermine future recruiting efforts."

Tom Stenzel, President and CEO, United Fresh Produce Association

"The new dietary guidance icon will be a tipping point in how Americans literally visualize what they should eat. The message to 'make half your plate fruits and vegetables' is simple, compelling and effective. It is a breakthrough message that consumers can practice every day at every meal. The produce industry is firmly committed to working closely with USDA and others to support the new dietary guidance and help promote "make half your plate fruits and vegetables" as part of a lifetime of healthy eating. USDA's new icon can have a dramatically positive impact on childhood nutrition as well, especially when combined with the progress we are making in placing salad bars in schools. Making half your plate fruits and vegetables
complements the exciting 'Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools' initiative, which supports First Lady Michelle Obama's 'Let's Move!' initiative to end childhood obesity. Combining the message to eat more produce with increased availability through school salad bars will benefit the health of millions of kids across our nation.

Connie Tipton, President and CEO, International Dairy Foods Association

"We're delighted that this new education tool provides a clear, visual message that milk and other dairy products are important for a nutritious diet. The dairy industry commends the USDA for highlighting how beneficial a serving of dairy at every meal can be, and for educating people about dairy's role on the table and in the American diet."

Michael Ty, National President, American Culinary Federation, CEC, AAC,

"The American Culinary Federation commends the USDA and First Lady Michelle Obama on the MyPlate food icon designed to help Americans make healthier food choices. Our membership—chefs, cooks and culinary educators in all areas of foodservice—are in a position to help fight the battle of obesity and its detrimental effect on health. We understand the need to help consumers eat a more healthy diet, and are already involved in the Chefs Move to Schools initiative to promote proper nutrition and fight the obesity epidemic. Eating healthy and providing nutritious, good-tasting options will continue to be a significant trend affecting the culinary industry, driven by consumer demand and government regulations. The MyPlate icon will help everyone see their food choices more clearly and, we hope, help them adjust their eating habits to ensure proper nutrition."

Josh Wachs, Chief Strategy Officer, Share Our Strength

"We applaud USDA for adopting this creative new food icon, which provides a streamlined guide to daily food choices. Share Our Strength's Cooking Matters has brought USDA's food icon to life for more than 74,000 low income families across the country, many of whom are at risk for hunger. The 'plate' reinforces our cooking-based approach to healthy eating and will continue to be an essential part of our curriculum."

Margo G. Wootan, Nutrition Policy Director, Center for Science in the Public Interest

"While no one graphic can communicate every nuance of healthy eating, this easy-to-understand illustration will help people remember what their own plate should look like. It likely will surprise most people into recognizing that they need to eat a heck of a lot more vegetables and fruits. Most people are eating about a quarter of a plate of fruits or vegetables, not a half a plate as recommended."

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