The Ohio State Food Innovation Center (FIC) is a multi-college network on the OSU campus that supports collaborative, trans-disciplinary research addressing global and domestic food issues. Since 2010, the FIC has built an active network of faculty, staff, and graduate students at the university. The FIC also engages an external audience by convening on a variety of food and health topics ranging from childhood obesity to the future of food. Over the last year, the FIC has hosted several conferences and panel discussions on our nation’s nutrition policy known as the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA).

Since 1980, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans have served as the basis for all Federal food and nutrition programs while also providing nutrition advice to the general public. However, today more than one-third of the adult population is characterized as obese, with diet-related complications including diabetes, heart disease, and hypertension. This disturbing trend, coupled with increased confusion about the “ideal” diet prompted the FIC leadership to lead the conversation on national dietary policy. Three programs in total were held during the 2014-2015 academic year.

- **The New Dietary Guidelines for Americans: Preparing for the 2015 Release** (November 20, 2014, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH)
- **Dietary Guidelines for Americans Summit** (May 21, 2015, National Geographic Headquarters, Washington, DC)
- **Collaboration and Engagement: Making the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Actionable for Americans** (October 6, 2015, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Food and Nutrition Expo, Nashville, TN)

Each program included nationally known nutrition experts, past members of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee, food industry leaders, policy makers, and others engaged in the national food and health dialog. A primary goal for each session was to identify ways in which the DGA could be implemented in a manner that truly moves the needle on our national health crisis. As multiple presenters noted, the Dietary Guidelines have no value if people across the nation don’t adopt the recommended practices. Key takeaways include:

- A focus on food and food patterns – not nutrients – can be more effective.
- Public private partnerships are needed to support a broad, participatory approach.
- The dietary guidelines must take into account the growing diversity of the country.
• The best practice for changing behavior is through positive messaging from a trusted source.

• More dietary guidance is needed for meals consumed away from home.

On Thursday, January 7, 2016, the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines were released. Key recommendations include:

• An emphasis on healthy eating patterns that accounts for all food and beverages within an appropriate calorie level. These healthy eating patterns should be followed across the lifespan.

• Limiting saturated fats, trans fats, added sugars, and sodium.

• Recognition that shifts in food and beverage behavior will be needed. These shifts can be minor such as simple substitutions. Consideration should be given to cultural and personal preferences when making healthier food choices.

• Everyone has a role in creating and supporting healthy eating patterns where we live, work and play.

Overall, we are pleased to see that many of the topics discussed and emphasized during all three FIC DGA forums can be found throughout the key recommendations in the newly released DGA.

You can read the 2015-2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans in its entirety here.

The Food Innovation Center is capturing reactions to the release of the DGA from around the nation. Below is a sampling of recent press and other commentary from the public and private sector as well as major media sources:

HHS and USDA Press Release

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Press Release

Center for Science in the Public Interest Press Release

The Journal of the American Medical Association Viewpoint

U.S. Cracks Down on Americans’ Intake of Sugar, Saturated Fat; Reuters

New U.S. dietary guidelines: Everything you need to know about what to eat/what not to eat; The Washington Post

New Dietary Guidelines Crack Down On Sugar, But Red Meat Gets A Pass; NPR

New Dietary Guidelines Urge Less Sugar for All and Less Protein for Boys and Men; The New York Times

New Dietary Guidelines for Americans Go Public; U.S. News Health