

Rethinking the Food Pyramid and Dietary Guidelines

*A summary of the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
First published in 1980 and updated frequently
Criticized in 2021 and updated there after
IMA Sr. Fellows believe further updates are needed*



**Dietary
Guidelines
for Americans**

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020–2025

provide science-based recommendations to promote health and prevent chronic disease across all life stages, from birth through older adulthood.

These guidelines emphasize the importance of healthy dietary patterns and offer specific advice on nutrient intake.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs) have been criticized for the following reasons:

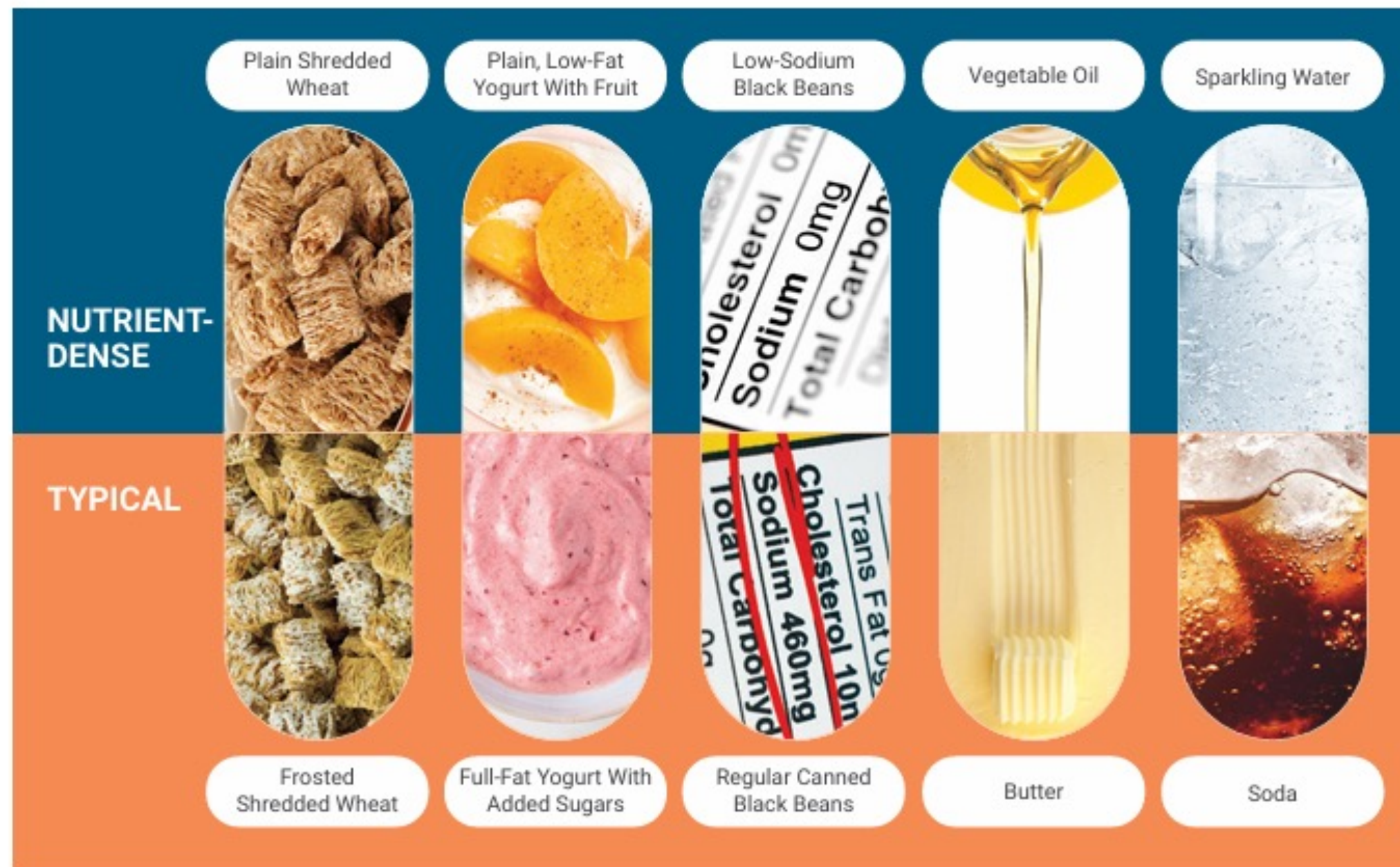
- Decisions on sugar and alcohol intake limits in the updated DGAs for 2020-2025.
- Increased consumption of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, plant-based foods, but reduced consumption of saturated fat, and sodium. Still promoting low-fat, Food Pyramid (MyPlate), no mention of HFCS still found in foods/drinks, high-grain diet, vegetable oil and seed oils as replacements for butter.
- Excluding the 60% of the population diagnosed with one or more diet-related chronic disease.



Figure 1-2

Making Nutrient-Dense Choices: One Food or Beverage At a Time

Every food and beverage choice is an opportunity to move toward a healthy dietary pattern. Small changes in single choices add up and can make a big difference. These are a few examples of realistic, small changes to nutrient-dense choices that can help people adopt healthy dietary patterns.



Missing the boat on:

- Cereals in general
- The sodium (NaCl) controversy
- Recommendation on vegetable oil
- Not lambasting the soda-pop industry on use of HFCS and synthetic sweeteners
- No mention of food additives/preservatives and harmful food coloring

Notice the date on the current website: Feb 2025 does not give new Secretary of HHS (RFK, Jr.) time to have input. Old administration personnel still writing healthcare policy. We need a new update!



The screenshot shows the top of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans website. The header is blue with white text for navigation: Home, About, Current Dietary Guidelines, Work Under Way (underlined), Related Projects, and Most Popular Questions. Below the header, a breadcrumb trail reads: Dietary Guidelines for Americans | Work Under Way | Scientific Report of the 2025 Guidelines Advisory Committee. The main content area has a dark blue background with a pattern of food icons. A white box in the center contains the title: Scientific Report of the 2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee. Below this, text states: The Scientific Report of the 2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (Scientific Report) has been submitted to the Secretaries of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and is now available online. The public was invited to provide comments on the Scientific Report from December 11, 2024, to February 10, 2025. Below this, text says: Use the links below to download the Scientific Report, in full or in part by section or chapter. Supplementary materials for data analysis, food pattern modeling, and systematic reviews are also provided below. On the right side, there is a thumbnail image of the report cover, which features the title and logos for HHS and USDA.

for Americans

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Dietary Guidelines for Americans | Work Under Way | Scientific Report of the 2025 Guidelines Advisory Committee

Scientific Report of the 2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee

The *Scientific Report of the 2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee* (Scientific Report) has been submitted to the Secretaries of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and is now available online. The public was invited to provide comments on the Scientific Report from December 11, 2024, to February 10, 2025.

Use the links below to download the Scientific Report, in full or in part by section or chapter. [Supplementary materials](#) for data analysis, food pattern modeling, and systematic reviews are also provided below.

Scientific Report of the 2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee

Advisory Report to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and Secretary of Agriculture

United States Department of Health and Human Services

United States Department of Agriculture

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Check out the 2020- 2025 Edition!

Make Every Bite Count
with the *Dietary
Guidelines!*

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2025 Scientific Report

Find out more about the Committee's findings and advice to HHS and USDA



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Find out how to provide comments to HHS and USDA on the Scientific Report

Four Overarching Guidelines as they stand now:

- **Follow a healthy dietary pattern at every life stage**
 - It's never too early or too late to eat healthfully. (we can agree)
- **Customize and enjoy nutrient-dense food and beverage choices**
 - Reflect personal preferences, cultural traditions, and budgetary considerations. (we can agree)
- **Focus on meeting food group needs with nutrient-dense foods and beverages, and stay within calorie limits**
 - Ensure a balanced intake across all food groups. (we can agree)
- **Limit foods and beverages higher in added sugars (SSB), saturated fat, and sodium, and limit alcoholic beverages**
 - Reduce intake of these components to promote better health. (**PROBLEMS**)

Key Nutritional Recommendations from this policy:

- **Added Sugars:** Limit to less than 10% of total daily calories for individuals aged 2 and older; avoid for infants and toddlers. (issues)
- **Saturated Fat:** Limit to less than 10% of total daily calories starting at age 2. (why the limit?)
- **Sodium:** Limit to less than 2,300 mg per day for individuals aged 14 and older. (Sodium hoax)
- **Alcoholic Beverages:** If consumed, limit to 2 drinks or fewer per day for men and 1 drink or fewer per day for women. (alcohol is a mycotoxin)

Emphasis on **Plant-Based Foods**

The guidelines recommend increasing the intake of plant-based foods, such as beans, lentils, nuts, seeds, and soy products, while reducing consumption of red and processed meats. This shift aims to improve diet quality and reduce the risk of chronic diseases. (**Soy GMO* issues; some seeds are harmful; interesting they left out bugs**)

*Bioengineered Foods is a newer term



Guidance for Infants, Toddlers, and Pregnant Women:

- **Infants and Toddlers:** Introduce potentially allergenic foods like peanuts and eggs around 6 months of age to reduce the risk of allergies. Avoid added sugars and salt for children under 2 years old.
- **Pregnant and Lactating Women:** Consume a variety of nutrient-dense foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and dairy or *fortified soy alternatives*, to support both maternal health and fetal development. (**Where are the vitamin D and Omega-3 FA recommendations? There is that soy reference again.**)

The USDA's **MyPlate** initiative translates these guidelines into actionable steps, offering resources to help individuals and families make healthy food choices that are easy, accessible, and affordable.

Taking over from traditional Food Pyramid.

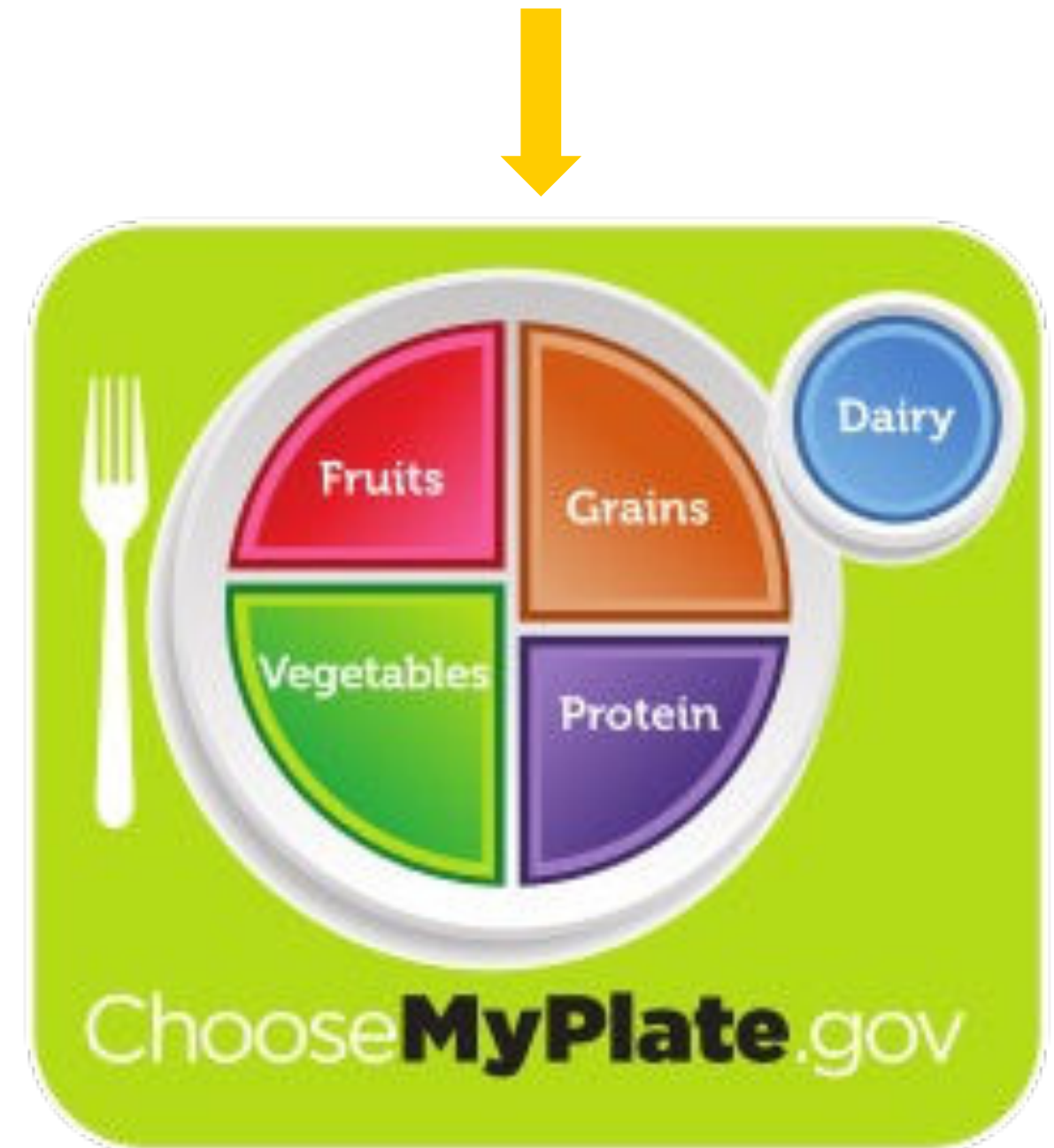
Folks who should know better are on committee to curate this:

Sarah L. Booth, PhD, served as committee chairperson on the 2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee and is an expert on vitamin K.

Deanna Hoelscher served as a subcommittee chairperson and is Dean of the UTHealth School of Pub.Health in Austin. Her research interests are in food research, education and child health.

Steven Abrams, MD is a pediatrician with research interests in nutrition. Professor Dept of Peds Dell Med School UTX

MyPlate is based on faulty Food Pyramid and just a new look to old and misguided recommendations:



Let us flip this baby around

Out with the old:
Food Pyramid



And in with the new:
Food Tree



Things They Did Address:

- Complementary Feedings
 - Some questionable options
- Culturally Responsive
 - Important to remember roots of ancestors
 - Eating culturally may not always be healthy

Yuka app to screen your food and cosmetics



Visit: www.yuka.io/en/

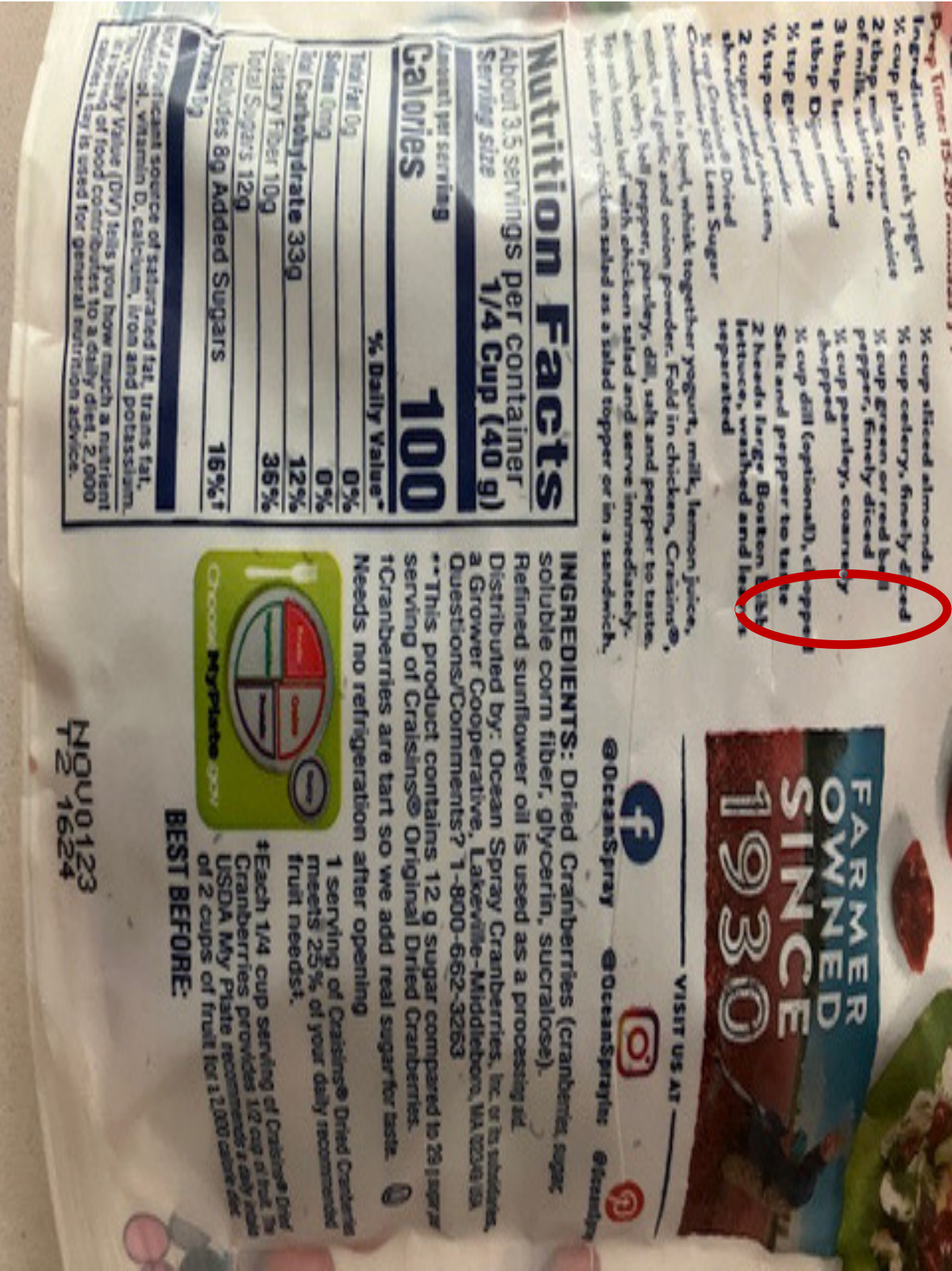
Some issues easily overcome



Craisins Dried Cranberries

Ocean spray

49/100
Poor



Why the score was so low.... Sucralose an artificial sweetener associated with increased risk of cancer and neuro toxic, can raise the risk of CVD and T2DM and inflammation in the digestive track.

Corn fiber = mold?

49/100 (Poor)

[Additives](#)

Additives

Sucralose

● High-risk



Sweetener

Replaces sugar by giving a sweet taste to the product

Potential associated risks



Suspected
carcinogenic



Cardiovascular
diseases

This sweetener could be associated with an increased risk of developing cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, chronic inflammation in the digestive tract, and other metabolic disorders. Additionally, high consumption of sweeteners would be associated with an increased risk of cancer. Finally, sweeteners are believed to have no positive effect on weight.

1. www.dietaryguidelines.gov
2. www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0002916523040996
3. luminacorps.com
4. www.urbanemu.com/about-us
5. > Deanna Hoelscher | LinkedIn
6. <https://www.linkedin.com/company/american-society-for-nutrition>
7. The American Society for Nutrition Welcomes New President, Sarah L. Booth, PhD, and New Leadership on the Board of Directors - American Society for Nutrition
8. > Steven Abrams | LinkedIn
9. www.cdc.gov/nutrition/php/data-research/sugar-sweetened-beverages.html
10. Fast Facts: Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Consumption | Nutrition | CDC
11. www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2020-12/Dietary_Guidelines_for_Americans_2020-2025.pdf
12. www.nutritionstudies.org/3-missteps-in-the-2020-2025-usda-dietary-guidelines/
13. oimh.smhs.gwu.edu+3natlawreview.com+3dietaryguidelines.gov+3
14. natlawreview.com+2en.wikipedia.org+2dietaryguidelines.gov+2
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Tonight's panel of experts to discuss and undress the DGA:

Dr. Michael Turner (MD) is a graduate of Stanford University, Harvard Medical School, and The Mayo Clinic. He practices Integrative Medicine in his own national concierge practice in Washington, providing personalized approaches (including hormones, sleep, recovery, nutrition, supplements, and exercise) to help people achieve their optimal state of health. Called “genuine” and “caring” by patients, he brings a high degree of empathy, trademark optimism, and a holistic approach to patient care. He brings a passion for excellence to everything he does. He believes in living and modeling a healthy, balanced lifestyle. He is an IMA Senior Fellow.

Dr. Kristina Carman (ND) is an IMA Senior Fellow in Nutritional and Holistic Health, serving as a registered nutritional therapist, naturopathic doctor, functional medicine practitioner, and health coach in South Carolina. Her practice is designed to be a wellness destination, providing approachable, sustainable, and accessible health advice and support. Dr. Carman's passion for food, nutrition, and lifestyle as medicine drives her “leave no stone unturned” approach to patient care, ensuring comprehensive and individualized treatment plans. In 2025 she received one of four Awards from the IMA for her work on nutrition and holistic medicine.