

# AUSTRALIAN DIETARY GUIDELINES REVIEW

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**Do the Draft Dietary Guidelines live up to expectation? One of the best outcomes has been the acknowledgement that Australian adults will need to increase nut consumption by 350%.**

In December 2011 the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) released the draft Dietary Guidelines for Australians. These guidelines provide simple diet messages that if followed will help ensure good health. Along with the guidelines is an associated pictorial food plate model – the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating (AGHE). These guidelines are underpinned by a scientific literature review and dietary modelling to ensure suitable for all Australians.

Nuts for Life has made several written submissions and attended meetings since this review began to ensure nuts play a more prominent role in these documents. It's important we participate in the process because these documents are reviewed every 5-10 years, yet are used as the basis for health advice by health professionals such as our GP and dietitian targets, included in the school curricula and used by the food industry to substantiate claims.

**One of the best outcomes has been the acknowledgement that Australian adults will need to increase nut consumption by 350%.** There is some inconsistency between all the documents particularly for nut serving size and frequency of eating, and recommendations for young children. We will address these in a submission due 29 February 2012. There is also a movement in the food industry to have the healthy fats food group reinstated and make healthy fats a part of the plate rather than 'on the side'. We will be monitoring this as it progresses.

These regulatory affairs and public health activities cannot be achieved without the support of industry and the Australian Macadamia Society is one of the founding members of Nuts for Life - financially contributing since 2003. We would like to thank the AMS and its members for this long term commitment. We will use the final documents, when released later in the year, to showcase the health benefits of a daily handful of nuts such as macadamias.

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As they currently stand the draft Australian Dietary Guidelines are:

## ***Guideline 1***

Eat a wide variety of nutritious foods from these five groups every day:

- plenty of vegetables, including different types and colours, and legumes/beans
- fruit
- grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain, such as breads, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles, polenta, couscous, oats, quinoa and barley
- lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans
- milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or their alternatives, mostly reduced fat (reduced fat milks are not suitable for children under the age of two years).

And drink water.

## ***Guideline 2***

Limit intake of foods and drinks containing saturated and trans fats, added salt, added sugars and alcohol.

a. Limit intake of foods and drinks containing saturated and trans fats

- Include small amounts of foods that contain unsaturated fats
- Low-fat diets are not suitable for infants

b. Limit intake of foods and drinks containing added salt

- Read labels to choose lower sodium options among similar foods.
- Do not add salt to foods

c. Limit intake of foods and drinks containing added sugars. In particular, limit sugar-sweetened drinks

d. If you choose to drink alcohol, limit intake.

### **Guideline 3**

To achieve and maintain a healthy weight you should be physically active and choose amounts of nutritious food and drinks to meet your energy needs

- Children and adolescents should eat sufficient nutritious foods to grow and develop normally. They should be physically active every day and their growth should be checked regularly
- Older people should eat nutritious foods and keep physically active to help maintain muscle strength and a healthy weight.

### **Guideline 4**

Encourage and support breastfeeding.

### **Guideline 5**

Care for your food; prepare and store it safely.

The plate model

