

## In this Issue

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On behalf of the Delaware Academy of Medicine and the Delaware Public Health Association, I am honored to act in the capacity as guest editor for this edition of the Delaware Journal of Public Health. With gardens in bloom, it is fitting that this edition focuses on nutrition.

Food is a complex and often politically charged topic. Discussions about our food system and how food is produced, manufactured, regulated, marketed and consumed often stimulate robust and contentious debates. While it is clear that we still have a way to go to ensure that all children are able to eat well, a number of new national efforts have been released this year, likely advancing the science, and implementation of the science, for public health.

This year the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans have been formally released in print. While they continue to remind us all that cutting the sugar, saturated fat and salt will be key to a healthy nation, the new guidelines now emphasize overall eating patterns with less of an emphasis on dietary components alone and more recognition for the combinations of foods and drinks people consume. Also released this year, the Interagency Committee on Human Nutrition Research provides researchers a new National Nutrition Research Roadmap articulating 11 research priorities in an effort to support inter-agency and, effectively, inter-disciplinary work across the US.

While it is clear a healthy diet is important for us all, children's diet remains a critical focus of importance. Only 40% of children meet U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Patterns fruit intake recommendations, and only 7% meet vegetable recommendations. No population sub group of children over the age of 5 of any ethnicity or age group meets the Healthy People 2020 total vegetable target, though diet is a key contributor to disparities in many chronic diseases and conditions. Black children are at greatest risk and consume significantly fewer vegetables overall.

Similarly concerning, trends show Mexican-American children have had a decreased vegetable intake over the past 5 years. And it is still the case that white potatoes, most often fried or in chip form, account for an average of 30% of a child's total vegetable intake.

As I reflect on the work already happening in Delaware, however, I am encouraged.

Our agricultural and health care networks are strong, and efforts to promote and support food security are well established. I am confident that with this robust network of support, new ideas and collaborations will emerge to create an even more dynamic local food system in Delaware.

We hope you will find this edition of the DJPH insightful and thought provoking.

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