

## Potato Industry | January 2022

### Food & Nutrition Policy

#### Unified Regulatory Agenda

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) recently released the Biden administration's [Unified Agenda of Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions](#). The agenda reports on actions that executive branch agencies plan to take in the coming months. A few anticipated timelines include the following:

- FDA Proposed Rule on Definition of Healthy- 1/2022
- USDA Interim Final Rule on School Meals Temporary Standards for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium- 1/2022
- USDA Proposed Rule on Revisions to the WIC Food Packages- 4/2022
- USDA Proposed Rule aligning School Meal Patterns with the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans- 10/2022

#### USDA Provides \$1.5 Billion for School Meal Programs

The USDA will provide up to \$1.5 billion in funding to help schools across the country deal with pandemic-related supply chain issues. Schools will receive \$1 billion in funds known as Supply Chain Assistance funds to purchase unprocessed and minimally processed domestic food such as fresh fruit, milk, cheese, frozen vegetables and ground meat for school meal programs through the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). Additionally, the USDA will purchase \$300 million in domestically grown and produced food for states to distribute to schools with an additional \$200 million for states to purchase local foods from historically underserved producers. A breakdown of funding allocated to each state may be viewed [here](#).

#### USDA Releases Webinar on National Bioengineered Food Disclosure Standard

The USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) [released a webinar](#) about recordkeeping requirements under the National Bioengineered Food Disclosure Standard (BE standard), which is now in effect as of Jan. 1, 2022. The AMS says recordkeeping is an important component of the standard, and the webinar provides details on the kinds of records that must be established and maintained to provide evidence of compliance. As a reminder, [here](#) is a short list of certain kinds of potatoes on the BE list that this would apply to.

### Food Safety & Agriculture

#### USDA Expands Conservation Program to Support Climate Smart Agriculture

On Jan. 10, 2022, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service announced new opportunities for climate smart agriculture in 2022, like the nationwide availability of the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#) Conservation Incentive Contracts option, a new and streamlined EQIP Cover Crop Initiative, and added flexibilities for producers to easily re-enroll in the [Conservation Stewardship Program \(CSP\)](#). NRCS also announced a new partnership with Farmers for Soul Health to advance soil health practices.

#### USDA to Hold Fruit and Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee Public Meeting

The USDA Fruit and Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee will hold its biannual public meeting on Feb. 1, 2022 at 10 a.m. EST to examine industry recommendations from the Produce Marketing Association (PMA) and the United Fresh Produce Association (United Fresh). Members of the public can register and attend the webinar [here](#). Since its inception in 2001, this Advisory Committee has met up to two times per year to develop recommendations for submission to the Secretary of Agriculture on issues affecting the U.S. produce industry.

### **Nestlé Scientists Develop Nutritional Concept for Carbohydrate Quality**

Nestlé Scientists developed a nutritional concept called *GRAINSMART balance* to define a target ratio of carbohydrates, fibers, and sugars in food. The concept defines a ratio between carbohydrates, fibers, and sugars of 10:1:2 respectively, which indicates that for every 10 grams of total carbohydrates there should be minimum 1 gram of fiber and no more than 2 grams of free sugars when developing certain food products, such as cereals. The *GRAINSMART balance* concept is being applied to product development for Nestlé's cereal portfolio, with plans for products meeting the ratio to bear a special *GRAINSMART balance* logo on the food package. While this ratio is being applied to grain foods at this time, it may affect carbohydrate quality conversations across the food supply.

### **USDA Examines SNAP Participant Health Data**

The USDA's Food and Nutrition Service looked at National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) data to examine the relationship between Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participation and indicators of diet quality, nutrition, and health. Researchers found that while SNAP participants had a lower total Healthy Eating Index (HEI)-2015 scores than non-participants, all Americans fell short of meeting the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Overall, SNAP participants consumed less fruits and vegetables and more added sugars than income-eligible non-participants but scored better on refined grains and sodium intake.

### **CDC 2019 Survey Data on U.S. Fruit and Vegetable Consumption**

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a 2019 survey that found that only 12.3% of adults met fruit recommendations, ranging from 8.4% in West Virginia to 16.1% in Connecticut, and only 10.0% met vegetable recommendations, ranging from 5.6% in Kentucky to 16.0% in Vermont. More women met both fruit and vegetable recommendations (14.5% and 12.4%, respectively) than did men (10.1% and 7.6%, respectively). The prevalence of meeting fruit intake recommendations was highest among Hispanic adults (16.4%) and lowest among males (10.1%). Meeting vegetable intake recommendations was highest among adults aged ≥51 years (12.5%) and lowest among those living below or close to the poverty level (6.8%).

### **PBH Draft Report on Disparity Between Federal Spending & America's Fruit and Vegetable Consumption**

A recent 2021 Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH) report titled *Fruit and Vegetable Gap Analysis: Bridging the Disparity Between Federal Spending and America's Consumption Crisis* seeks to examine how government funding and programming can be an asset and opportunity to better equip and empower Americans to increase consumption of fruits and vegetables. The report recommends increased Federal funding for the promotion of fruit and vegetable intake in the U.S. The report will be open for a 30-day public comment period ending on Friday, February 4, 2022. Public comments will be considered for integration into the report's final analysis, results and recommendations, which will be issued later in 2022.

### **UNICEF Report Calls for Bolder Action on Children's Diets**

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is calling for bolder action around nutrition in children's diets in their report, titled, *Fed to fail: The crisis of children's diets early in life*. Within this report, UNICEF highlights eight findings of which one includes that children six-months to two-years of age are not fed the right foods at the right time. In response, UNICEF calls for policymakers to increase the availability and affordability of nutritious food including fruits, vegetables, eggs, fish, meat and fortified foods, by incentivizing their production, distribution, and retailing. The report also calls for national standards and legislation across the globe to protect children from "unhealthy processed and ultra-processed foods."