



Anniversary report calls for comprehensive food policy reform March 24, 2020

A [report](#) released today in honor of the 50th Anniversary of the White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, and Health presents an ambitious, but needed package of 60 policy recommendations for combating diet-related disease, reducing disparities, and creating a more sustainable food system. At a time when the nation's attention is rightly focused on combating the coronavirus, work must continue to strengthen our nutrition programs, lessen the food system's impact on the planet, and reduce the epidemic of diet-related disease that is weakening our nation's resilience.

The report was authored by a 16-member report workgroup, co-chaired by Dr. Walter Willett, Professor of Epidemiology and Nutrition at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, and Jerold Mande, Professor of the Practice at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University.

The report is the culmination of a [series of events](#) honoring the 1969 White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, and Health. The [1969 White House Conference](#) was a seminal event in food and nutrition policy that led to marked improvements in hunger and malnutrition through federal action. The anniversary report authors recognize that 50 years later the US faces a new nutrition crisis, one marked by increases in diet-related disease, widened disparities in accessibility and affordability of healthy foods, and added challenges of climate change and sustainability.

“This important anniversary offered an opportunity to reflect on how far our country has come in reducing severe nutrient deficiencies and extreme hunger, largely through federal bipartisan leadership.” said Dr. Willett. “But it was also a reminder that we still face enormous diet-related health and sustainability challenges and that progress is not possible without comprehensive, multi-sectoral action.”

The report's recommendations span eleven broad categories, including federal nutrition programs, the food environment, healthcare, worksites, agriculture, government coordination, business, and research. Among the 60 recommendations, the authors highlight five key areas with the potential to deliver population-scale benefits: 1) leveraging the power of U.S. Department of Agriculture programs, 2) utilizing economic incentives, 3) protecting children from harmful advertising and marketing, 4) equipping health professionals with effective nutrition interventions and better nutrition knowledge, and 5) better aligning agriculture with health and sustainability goals.

“Our goal with this report was to reflect the diverse priorities of our Conference partners,” said Mande. “We hope that this document can serve as a unifying agenda, spark a broader dialogue on these issues, and inspire policy action on food systems and health, access and equity, and sustainability in 2020 and beyond.”



At the time of its release, twenty-nine organizations have already signed-on in support of the report and its recommendations (see below). Any organizations interested in joining as signatories should reach out to Jerold.Mande@tufts.edu.

Organizations signed-on in support

Endorsement of this report does not imply that signatories have taken a position on every priority referenced.

- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
- American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
- American Public Health Association
- Center for Science in the Public Interest
- Climate Reality
- Coalition for Healthy School Food
- Columbia University, Teachers College, Program in Nutrition, Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy
- Community Servings
- Duke University World Food Policy Center
- Food Tank
- FoodCorps
- Foodicine Health
- Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University, Division of Agriculture, Food and Environment
- Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University, Division of Nutrition Interventions, Communication, and Behavior Change
- Harvard Law School, Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation
- Harvard Law School, Food Law and Policy Clinic
- Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Department of Nutrition
- Hunger Free America
- Mission: Readiness
- National WIC Association
- Partnership for a Healthier America
- Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior
- Supporters of Agricultural Research
- The Harkin Institute for Public Policy & Citizen Engagement
- Trust for America's Health
- UCLA School of Law, Resnick Center for Food Law and Policy
- UCONN Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity
- Union of Concerned Scientists
- Yale School of Public Health, Office of Public Health Practice