

U.S. Farm Spending Diverges from Nutritional Guidelines From [AFA Agriculture Fairness Alliance](#)

September 15, 2021

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) recommends making “half your plate fruits & vegetables.” [dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2021-03/Dietary_Guidelines_for_Americans-2020-2025.pdf#page=26]

Think about how the following recommendations can come together over the course of your day or week to help you create a healthy eating routine:

To learn what the right amounts are for you, try the personalized **MyPlate Plan**.²

Based on decades of solid science, MyPlate advice can help you day to day and over time.

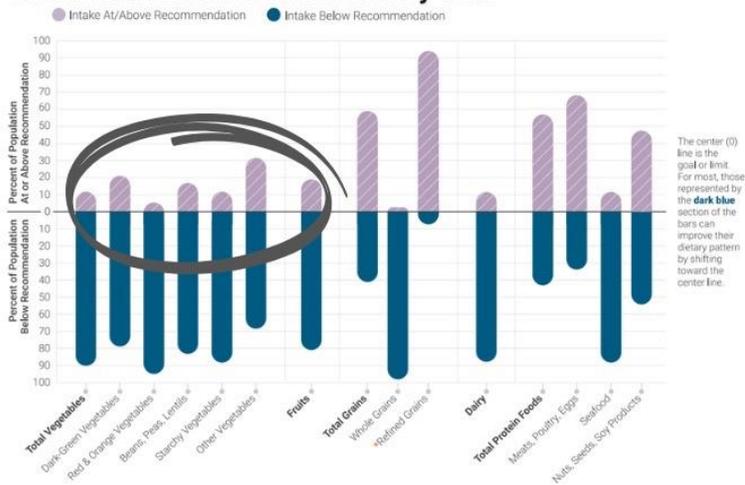
The benefits of healthy eating add up over time, bite by bite. Small changes matter. **Start Simple with MyPlate.**

DGA Dietary Guidelines for Americans | **Start simple with MyPlate**

² Available at: [MyPlate.gov/myplate-plan](https://myplate.gov/myplate-plan)

Yet, the DGA also observes that 80-90% of Americans fail to consume the recommended amounts of vegetables and fruits.

Figure 1-6
**Dietary Intakes Compared to Recommendations:
Percent of the U.S. Population Ages 1 and Older Who Are
Below and At or Above Each Dietary Goal**



[Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025, p.43](#)

Meanwhile Americans consume too many refined grains, and for the most part eat adequate amounts of meat, poultry, and eggs.

Interestingly, these dietary intakes seem to correlate with federal farm spending.

Portion of 2020 Farm Spending on the Top Consumed Foods

[2020 was an extraordinary year where farm spending more than doubled due to the SARS-CoV2 pandemic as well as international trade issues. If we exclude those extraordinary expenses ...]

- Meat, poultry, eggs (26%) + Animal Feed (16%) = 42%
- Food grains 14%

Portion of 2020 Farm Spending on the least consumed healthy

- Fruit 1.3%
- Vegetables 1%
- Dairy 6.7% (not including animal feed)

What about Dairy?

Considering that the NIH estimates that 36% of Americans have lactase maladaptation, [niddk.nih.gov/health-information/digestive-diseases/lactose-intolerance/definition-facts] it follows that at least a third of Americans would look for their calcium, potassium, and vitamin D from alternatives to dairy. Alternative sources identified by the DGA are “nuts, seeds, and soy products,” categories that, according to the chart above, Americans are consuming at greater rates.

According to the DGA, fortified soy alternatives meet the requirements for dairy:

“Dairy and *fortified soy alternatives* provide protein and a variety of nutrients that are underconsumed during (childhood and adolescence). These include three nutrients of public health concern: potassium, calcium, and vitamin D.” [*Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025.pdf p.101*](#)

So it’s possible that more people are acquiring the nutrients afforded in dairy by alternative means.

An Opportunity

The USDA has an opportunity to increase federal spending on the production, distribution, and accessibility of fruits, vegetables, and food crops that deliver adequate dietary fiber. In doing so, more Americans might be attaining the daily dietary goals laid out in the DGA.

Portion of 2020 Farm Spending after removing COVID and Trade relief Spending

- Meat, poultry, eggs **13%** + animal feed **24%** = **37%**
- Food grains **7%**
- Fruit **2%**
- Dairy **1.3%**
- Vegetables **0.8%**

Note: approximately 25% of farm spending is ‘uncategorized’, meaning that there’s no clear way to attribute that spending to specific end products.