

Executive Summary

INFORMING THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE:

Ambitious, Actionable Recommendations to End Hunger, Advance Nutrition, and Improve Health in the United States

A REPORT OF THE

Task Force on Hunger,
Nutrition, and Health

CONVENED BY



Tufts
UNIVERSITY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the executive summary of *Informing the White House Conference: Ambitious, Actionable Recommendations to End Hunger, Advance Nutrition, and Improve Health in the United States*, a report of the Task Force on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health. Read the full report [here](#).

More than 50 years have passed since President Nixon convened the first-ever—and until now, the only—White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, and Health in 1969. That conference was historic in its bipartisanship, inclusivity, vision, and impact, as it resulted in the creation and/or expansion of many of the nation’s major food and nutrition policies and programs. But in the absence of further, sufficiently coordinated national attention to these issues, the nation has been riding the coattails of these policies for 50 years.

In September 2022, federal agencies and other diverse stakeholders will convene for a second White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health to face some of the country’s most prominent food and nutrition challenges—persistent food insecurity, increasing prevalence of diet-related diseases, and widening health disparities. About one in 10 U.S. households were food insecure at least some time during 2020, and suboptimal diets and the proliferation of diet-related diseases, such as obesity and type 2 diabetes, have contributed to a situation in which only one in 15 U.S. adults have optimal cardiometabolic health. Youth are also affected—one in four have prediabetes, one in four have overweight or obesity, and one in eight have diet-related fatty liver disease. These adverse health outcomes disproportionately affect people from racial and ethnic minority groups, people with lower incomes, residents of rural areas, and other populations impacted by systemic inequities. Beyond effects on health, these issues exert substantial strains on productivity, health care spending, and military readiness.

It is clear that the challenges of food insecurity, diet-related diseases, and health inequities intersect with and exacerbate each other, and that radical systemic changes across multiple sectors are needed to adequately address them. Achieving the 2022 White House Conference goals of ending hunger, improving nutrition, and reducing diet-related diseases in the United States calls for a modern, multi-sector, coordinated national strategy.

This report, authored by the Task Force on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health—a nongovernment, nonpartisan group of subject matter experts and multi-sector leaders—provides a series of policy recommendations and actions to advance the goals of the Conference. The report proposes a far-reaching, consensus-based strategy that reflects a diverse set of perspectives from leaders across academia, civil society, government, and the private sector. In addition to the Task Force, the report was informed by a review of a wide range of existing policy reports; a Strategy Group of approximately two dozen national and other leading organizations that provided a broader reflection of views and issues across America; three in-person policy convenings in different cities that brought together a combined total of more than 240 multi-sector leaders and stakeholders; and a series of listening sessions planned with communities around the nation to center the knowledge of individuals with diverse lived experiences in food insecurity, nutrition insecurity, and diet-related conditions. All of these activities provided key insights that helped shape the policy recommendations and actions included in this report.

Advancing this bold, high-impact agenda calls for political will and bipartisan solutions and requires actions by Congress, the White House, numerous federal agencies, state and local governments, nongovernment organizations, and the private sector. The Task Force members are banded together in their unwavering belief in the paramount importance of taking decisive action to achieve transformative change to end food insecurity and hunger, improve nutrition, and reduce diet-related diseases.

The September 2022 White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health has the opportunity to catalyze a new legacy for a 21st-century U.S. food system that is resilient, equitable, and nutrition-focused. Such a food system can help end hunger and advance well-being for the American people, reduce health care spending, support equity across identity and income groups, catalyze new jobs and small businesses, advance minority-owned businesses and rural development, enhance military readiness, and provide for greater security and prosperity for the nation.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS IN THIS REPORT

A. FEDERAL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

1. Increase access to and participation in federal nutrition programs by expanding eligibility, simplifying enrollment, and improving convenience for participants.
2. Eliminate food insecurity among participants of federal nutrition programs by ensuring benefit amounts are sufficient to meet households' food needs.
3. Increase nutrition security by promoting dietary patterns that align with the latest *Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA)* through federal nutrition programs.
4. Improve program convenience and benefit flexibilities for participants of Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT)-based programs (e.g., Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)) to increase participation in these vital programs and allow the programs to better promote food and nutrition security.
5. Leverage the federal nutrition programs' power in economic stimulus to support food systems that promote foods that align with the latest *DGA*.

B. PUBLIC HEALTH AND NUTRITION EDUCATION

6. Strengthen, coordinate, and invest in the public health infrastructure to address nutrition, hunger, and health.
7. Strengthen federal nutrition education programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed), WIC Nutrition Education, and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), to allow them to provide more effective nutrition education to more people.
8. Improve the readability, content, and usefulness of packaged food labels to make it easier to identify more nutritious food options both within and across food categories.
9. Reduce the marketing of foods that do not align with the latest *DGA* and increase the marketing of foods that align with the latest *DGA* to children and populations with disproportionate rates of diet-related chronic conditions.
10. Increase consumer understanding and improve translation of the evidence connecting food, nutrition, and health outcomes.
11. Improve the nutritional quality of foods offered in federal, state, and local government facilities, including worksites, military installations and facilities, national parks, and correctional facilities.
12. Create and invest in programs and policies that promote human milk feeding as the premier source of infant nutrition.

C. HEALTH CARE

13. Accelerate access to "Food Is Medicine" services to prevent and treat diet-related illness.
14. Increase access to and insurance coverage for behavioral interventions and nutritional counseling to improve diet and health.
15. Build a diverse health care workforce with appropriate training and expertise in diet and health.
16. Facilitate health system screening for food and nutrition insecurity and follow-up referrals to appropriate interventions.
17. Leverage the integral role hospitals play in regional food systems and local communities to improve food and nutrition security for community members.

D. RESEARCH AND SCIENCE

18. Create a new national nutrition science strategy to improve coordination and investment in federal nutrition research focused on prevention and treatment of diet-related conditions.
19. Increase leadership, coordination, and investment in nutrition research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH).
20. Utilize research and data sharing to improve nutrition policies and programs across federal agencies.
21. Catalyze private sector and philanthropic research funding to stimulate high-integrity, transparent investment in unbiased research that can help address the nation's priorities for hunger, nutrition, and health.

E. BUSINESS AND INNOVATION

22. Fund and implement a comprehensive strategy to build a national ecosystem of evidence-based, mission-oriented business innovation to reduce hunger, improve nutrition, reduce diet-related chronic conditions, and increase health equity.
23. Support new and small food sector businesses owned by historically underserved and marginalized groups.
24. Encourage the private sector (food and non-food businesses) to improve food security, nutrition, and health through food- and nutrition-focused offerings in company offices, events, benefit packages, and insurance plan designs.
25. Increase the ability of food companies to communicate with consumers about the evidence for healthfulness of certain food products and nutrients.
26. Improve the resiliency, accessibility, and nutritional quality of the food supply.
27. Increase the number of new small and mid-sized farmers growing specialty crops and other foods recommended by the *DGA*.
28. Increase food recovery from farms, grocery stores, restaurants, and other food businesses for the purpose of donating to entities that address hunger and food insecurity.

F. FEDERAL COORDINATION

29. Improve coordination and collaboration among, and increase accountability for, federal agencies to address hunger, nutrition, and health.
30. Establish new structure, leadership, and authority within the federal government to increase effectiveness and synergies of diverse hunger, nutrition, and health efforts across agencies.

Task Force Informing the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health

This report is a product of the Task Force on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health (Task Force), a diverse multi-stakeholder group of experts, direct service providers, and leaders with varying expertise and perspectives. Its members are banded together in their unwavering belief in the paramount importance of taking decisive action to achieve transformative change to end food insecurity and hunger, improve nutrition, and reduce diet-related diseases in the United States.

The Task Force was convened by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, Food Systems for the Future, the Gerald J. and Dorothy R. Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University, and World Central Kitchen.

Task Force member titles and affiliations are listed below for identification purposes only; Task Force members served in an individual capacity and made collaborative decisions by general consensus. Any specific recommended action in this report represents the overall views of the Task Force and should not be considered as endorsed by any individual Task Force member. Moreover, Task Force members may prioritize different matters of primary focus or have varying criteria for how to operationalize some of the actions herein. The perspectives and recommendations in this report do not necessarily reflect the official views, opinions, or positions of any Task Force member's employer, institution, or organization; nor the official views, opinions, or positions of the Task Force convener organizations.

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STRATEGY GROUP INFORMING THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON HUNGER, NUTRITION, AND HEALTH

The Strategy Group had the opportunity to provide inputs and feedback for the Task Force to consider as it completed this report. The views, opinions, and recommendations in this report do not necessarily reflect the official views, opinions, or positions of any given Strategy Group organization, and these organizations should not be construed as approvers of nor endorsers of the report.

The 1890 Universities Foundation, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Diabetes Association, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Society for Nutrition, Bread for the World, Center for Science in the Public Interest, Commonwealth Kitchen, Food is Medicine Coalition, Hunger Free America, International Fresh Produce Association, Intertribal Agriculture Council, MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, National Alliance for Hispanic Health, National Association of Community Health Centers, National Family Farm Coalition, National Produce Prescription Collaborative, National REACH Coalition, National WIC Association, Partnership for a Healthier America, ScratchWorks, Swipe Out Hunger, The Nature Conservancy, Wholesome Wave

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