



News Release

For Immediate Release, June 2, 2011

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New MyPlate Dietary Guidance Will Dramatically Transform How Americans Eat

Helps Nation Visualize Half a Plate of Fruits and Vegetables

WASHINGTON, D.C. – MyPlate, the dietary guidance icon released today by USDA, will revolutionize how Americans conceptualize and plan daily meals, including a landmark recommendation that each meal include half a plate of fruits and vegetables. United Fresh and the produce industry strongly support the adoption of MyPlate and the consumer message to “make half your plate fruits and vegetables.”

“The new MyPlate and accompanying messaging is a tipping point in how Americans literally visualize what they should eat,” said Tom Stenzel, president and CEO of United Fresh. “The breakthrough message to ‘make half your plate fruits and vegetables’ is simple, compelling and effective. It is a message that consumers can practice every day at every meal. The produce industry is firmly committed to working closely with USDA and others to support and promote MyPlate and the half a plate message as part of a lifetime of healthy eating.”

In addition to being a leading advocate for policy changes to increase fruit and vegetable consumption to support the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, United Fresh has also emphasized the need for clear, persuasive consumer education that can effectively change consumers’ dietary behavior. Last year, United provided input to USDA and the Department of Health and Human Services on ways to implement the core messages in the new dietary guidelines released in January 2011. In that input, United recommended that USDA and HHS:

- Provide clear, strong, compelling and actionable messages to consumers to increase fruit and vegetable consumption and other necessary dietary changes
- Use "Half Your Plate Should Be Fruits and Vegetables" to illustrate how many fruits and vegetables children and adults need to eat at every meal
- Commit to implementing policy and environmental changes that will create healthier food environments and systems-wide approaches.

“MyPlate and the ‘make half your plate fruits and vegetables’ message will have its most dramatic impact on improving child nutrition this fall in schools that have salad bars. Once kids learn to make half their plate fruits and vegetables and see the MyPlate icon, all it takes is a trip to their school’s salad bar to make that happen,” said Dr. Lorelei DiSogra, vice president of nutrition and health for United Fresh. “This messaging complements our exciting *Let’s Move Salad Bars to Schools* initiative, which supports First Lady Michelle Obama’s *Let’s Move!* initiative to end childhood obesity. Combining this powerful new message to eat more produce with the increased availability that salad bars provide will benefit the health of millions of kids across our nation.”

“Today, the government has taken a very positive step in recognizing and emphasizing the importance of eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables,” added Stenzel. “It is now the responsibility of the produce industry to promote MyPlate and the ‘make half your plate fruits and vegetables’ message at every opportunity, and continue providing the American people with a bounty of diverse, healthy, safe fruits and vegetables.”

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*Founded in 1904, the **United Fresh Produce Association** serves companies at the forefront of the global fresh and fresh-cut produce industry, including growers, shippers, fresh-cut processors, wholesalers, distributors, retailers, foodservice operators, industry suppliers and allied associations. From its headquarters in Washington, D.C. and Western Regional office in Salinas, Calif., United Fresh and its members work year-round to make a difference for the produce industry by driving policies that increase consumption of fresh produce, shaping critical legislative and regulatory action, providing scientific and technical leadership in food safety, quality assurance, nutrition and health, and developing educational programs and business opportunities to assist member companies in growing successful businesses. For more information, visit www.unitedfresh.org or call 202-303-3400.*