

# NUTRITION POLICY

## Making Half the Plate Fruits and Vegetables a Reality

United Fresh leads the produce industry in shaping federal nutrition policy to drive increased consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables. This is accomplished through policies including the Child Nutrition Reauthorization bill, the Farm Bill, annual appropriations legislation, accurate nutrition labeling, and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA). Policy success through federal programs such as the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), school lunch, school breakfast, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) have provided millions of children and families access to fresh fruit and vegetables throughout the year. Through this investment, federal nutrition programs have been essential to enhancing the health of Americans – especially children – while at the same time supporting the growth of produce consumption for both the immediate and long-term benefits.

Although progress has been made in increasing fruit and vegetable offerings across federal nutrition programs that target children, Americans across all socio-economic groups significantly under-consume fruits and vegetables. And, still, while policymakers agree that Americans should be eating more produce, aligning federal policies is an ongoing challenge as policymakers face competing industry and government control interests.

### Policy Priorities

- Maintain the current serving requirements for fruits and vegetables, including serving size and color subgroups for school breakfast and lunch that ensure a wide variety of produce.
- Expand USDA School Kitchen Equipment grants to help schools access school kitchen equipment to serve fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Ensure FFVP serves only fresh fruits and vegetables, as consistent with the program's origin and current policy.
- Increase the WIC fruit and vegetable voucher allocations to the level supported in 2017 recommendations from the National Academy of Sciences.
- Continue funding for Food Insecurity and Nutrition Incentive (FINI) and other incentive programs to serve more participants, including children.

### Fruit and Vegetable Impact on Federal Nutrition Programs by the Numbers

- Fruit and vegetable serving requirements in school meals serve 44 million students each day and ensure a wide variety of produce in portions appropriate to meeting daily DGA recommendations.
- Nearly 7,600 elementary schools, serving four million students, participate in the FFVP that provides students with a free fresh fruit or vegetable snack every day.
- As part of the current WIC nutrition package, participants (7 million) are provided a monthly fruit and vegetable voucher valued at \$11 for mothers and \$8 for each child.
- Purchasing data from a 2016 USDA study that ranked commodity purchases in SNAP showed that no fresh produce commodities were included in the top 39 foods purchased.