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### **New U.S. Dietary Guidelines: Make Your Calories Count with Nutrient-Dense Peanuts**

Albany, GA, February 2, 2011--The new 2010 Dietary Guidelines address the American obesity epidemic by telling consumers to "maintain calorie balance over time" and to do it by "consuming nutrient-dense foods" such as peanuts. When maintaining proper calorie balance, refined grains, solid fats, and added sugars should be replaced with nutrient dense foods. The new Dietary Guidelines explains, "A healthy eating pattern ...emphasizes nutrient-dense foods - vegetables, fruits, whole grains, fat-free or low-fat milk products, seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, beans and peas, and nuts and seeds."

According to USDA data, peanuts and peanut butter are 67% of the nuts eaten in the US. Consumer data highlights taste, health benefits, convenience, and affordability as the reason. Peanuts are technically a legume and contain more protein than any other nut.

For the first time, a Key Recommendation says to consider the protein package that brings good fats along with it. It says to "Replace protein foods that are higher in solid fats with choices that are lower in solid fats and calories and /or are sources of oils." The report explains, "The fats in meat, poultry, and eggs are considered solid fats, while the fats in seafood, nuts, and seeds are considered oils." A peanut butter sandwich, preferably on whole grain bread, would be a healthier option than a hamburger or a grilled cheese sandwich. Research has shown that peanut oil is similar to olive oil in reducing risk of heart disease.

According to the new Guidelines, "Consumption of a balanced variety of protein foods can contribute to improved nutrient intake and health benefits. For example, moderate evidence indicates that eating peanuts and certain tree nuts reduces risk factors for cardiovascular disease when consumed as part of a diet that is nutritionally adequate and within calorie needs." Research shows that a small, daily serving of peanuts or peanut butter can cut the risk of heart disease in half.

Peanuts and peanut butter are placed in the nutrient dense category because for 160 calories, they provide hard-to-get nutrients such as dietary fiber, potassium, folate, vitamin E, thiamin, and magnesium. There are numerous studies showing that peanuts help manage weight because of their high satiety value and consumers don't tire of them. Multiple studies show that participants who ate peanuts and peanut butter had a lower Body Mass Index (BMI) and more nutritious diets.

The Peanut Institute is a non-profit organization that supports nutrition research and develops educational programs to encourage healthful lifestyles. Learn more about peanuts and health at [www.peanut-institute.org](http://www.peanut-institute.org).

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