

## **2020 DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS LISTENING SESSION**

Good afternoon. I am Colette Heimowitz, vice president nutrition and education of Atkins Nutritionals, Inc. I want to start my comments today by commending the National Academies of Sciences, on its consensus study report "Redesigning the Process for Establishing the Dietary Guidelines for Americans."

The report is a step in the right direction as it recognizes the areas that need improvements in the current U.S. Dietary Guidelines and recommends the process be amended to represent all Americans. The report did an excellent job of acknowledging the need for adaptation given the changing landscape in America, providing counsel for all Americans and recognizing that the nutrition recommendations must allow for the prevention of chronic disease. We also appreciate the recommendations around modifying the US Dietary Guidelines to enhance transparency, promote diversity in expertise, better manage conflict of interest, and address disease-related issues. The report reflects the need for a new food modeling methodology, as well as methods for including scientific studies with the best available evidence and analyses that are continuously evolving.

We firmly believe that people can benefit from alternative dietary patterns such as a carbohydrate managed approach. With the changing landscape in America, it is critical to provide counsel for all Americans and recognize that the nutrition recommendations must allow for the prevention of chronic disease.

Currently 52 percent of the population has been diagnosed with prediabetes and diabetes. Just last week, the Gallup-Sharecare Well-Being Index reported that diabetes costs the U.S. approximately 245.5 billion dollars in health-care costs this year alone. In addition, the group reported that the obesity rate in the United States reached 28.4 percent nationally in 2016, an increase of nearly three percentage points since 2008. Obesity is a significant risk factor for the development of type 2 diabetes.

When you look at the current US Dietary Guidelines recommendation, with approximately 50 percent of calories in the form of carbohydrates, while the quality of carbohydrates are in the right place, the quantity may be too much for a certain segment of the population and the incidence of diabetes will continue to increase if we continue this counsel.

Modifying the US Dietary Guidelines to accommodate the unhealthy portion of individuals will help Americans make better food choices based on their personalized needs.

To ensure the best Guidelines are developed to reflect this need, advisory committee members need to represent various expertise related to nutrition and health to deliver Guidelines truly do what they are intended for – help Americans make better food choices and lead healthier lives.

Thank you for your time.

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