



**April 22, 2016**

**Lorrene Ritchie, PhD, RD, Director and CE Specialist, Nutrition Policy Institute in the University of California's Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources, commends the U.S. Department of Agriculture upon the release of the Final Rule containing new nutrition standards for the Child and Adult Care Food Program.**

I congratulate USDA on issuing the final version of its new nutrition standards for the Child and Adult Care Food Program. These new, science-based standards carry the program a long way forward from meal patterns that have been essentially unchanged since the program's introduction in 1968. At USDA's behest, the Institute of Medicine convened a committee of eminent nutrition researchers to develop science-based recommendations for CACFP meals and snacks that meet the challenge of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010: to align the CACFP standards with the latest Dietary Guidelines for Americans. USDA has taken the IOM's recommendations and translated them into nutrition standards that help address obesity and overweight as well as food insecurity. The new standards are straightforward for childcare sponsors and providers and impose no new, added costs.

I applaud USDA's decisions to increase servings of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, cereals low in sugar, and healthy beverages, including breastfeeding. The new meal patterns demonstrate that the process for regularly updating nutrition standards in the federal food programs, using evidence-based IOM recommendations, is working well. The new CACFP standards should make a significant beneficial contribution to the health and development of the nation's young children.

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