

Dietary Guidelines for the Brazilian Population

Integrating Sustainability, Traditional Diets, and Cultural Wisdom into National Dietary Guidelines

- Community
- Public Health
- Foodservice
- Policy Change
- Industrialized, Capitalist Systems
- Profits as Priority

At a Glance:

- National guidelines published by the Ministry of Health of Brazil in 2014
- In 2019, Brazil developed Dietary Guidelines for children under 2 years old
- There are resources on their website for citizens as well as health professionals, community workers, educators, and capacity-building trainers
- Offers a unique industrializing nation perspective
- Available in Spanish, Portuguese, and English

The 2014 Dietary Guidelines for the Brazilian Population (DGBP) are the second edition of official national dietary guidelines for the country. The creation of these guidelines involved a public consultation process “that allowed its broad debate by various sectors of society and guided the construction of the final version” (pg. 6).

In 2019, Brazil developed Dietary Guidelines for children under 2 years old. There are several other products and resources for different target audiences on their website.



The guidelines are remarkable for a number of reasons. They:

1. Encompass biological, social, cultural, economic, and political aspects of healthy diets and take a holistic approach that integrates nutrition and sustainability.
2. Make relevant connections between the nutritional quality of food and the social and environmental impacts of food production and distribution, as well as economic sustainability, especially for small, sustainable producers.
3. Recognize and celebrate the “knowledge implicit in the creation and development of traditional dietary patterns” (pg. 21).
4. Explicitly identify the impact of the processed food industry and how rapidly shifting food environments flooded with processed and ultra-processed foods from a globalized market present a particular challenge to healthy and sustainable diets as well as local agricultural ecosystems and economies.

The DGBPs are unique amongst national dietary guidelines in offering an industrializing nation perspective that focuses on the rapid changes in dietary patterns and food systems being experienced by economically emerging countries.

These include shifts towards more industrialized food systems that are “displacing natural or minimally processed foods of plant origin...and the preparation of meals based on these foods with industrialized food products that are ready for consumption...[leading to] various ill-effects including an imbalance in the supply of nutrients and an excess of dietary energy.” (pg. 17).

Speaking from and to the experience of being in the midst of this dietary transition, the guidelines clearly articulate the detrimental influence and impact of the processed food industry and misleading food advertising.

They note a transition in “the environment in which food is sold, bought and consumed...[with] thousands of branded ultra-processed foods” being easily available and heavily promoted while at the same time “natural or minimally processed foods are sold in well-stocked supermarkets that quite often are a distance from where people live and work” (pg. 107).

These guidelines are particularly relevant for industrializing countries undergoing rapid industrialization of food systems and experiencing both under- and over-nutrition and developing dietary guidelines for the first time.

They offer robust examples of language around:

- A vision for healthy and sustainable diets
- Valuing and celebrating the knowledge embedded in traditional dietary patterns
- The links between health and the social, economic, and environmental sustainability of food production
- The importance of cultural aspects of food, such as cooking skills and eating together
- The influence of the processed food industry

Contact Information

Ministry of Health of Brazil

(in Spanish, but English translation often available in browsers)

<https://www.gov.br/saude/pt-br/canais-de-atendimento/sala-de-imprensa>



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