

FDA Holds Public Meeting on Comprehensive, Multi-Year Nutrition Innovation Strategy

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- In a March 29 speech at the National Food Policy Conference, FDA Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb announced the Nutrition Innovation Strategy (NIS). Commissioner Gottlieb hopes to improve public health by: (1) empowering consumers to make better and more informed decisions about their diets, (2) encourage the development of healthier foods, and (3) expand the use of nutrition to reduce the instances and impact of chronic disease. As part of NIS, Dr. Gottlieb [announced](#) a plan to limit the use of the term “milk” to “the lacteal secretion” of mammals.
- On June 26, FDA announced a [public meeting](#) to discuss the implementation of NIS. The meeting was held on July 26 (see [agenda](#)) and included remarks by Dr. Gottlieb, a presentation of consumer trends in the marketplace, and discussions regarding standards of identity, ingredient lists, nutrition facts, and label claims.
- Some highlights from the meeting:
 - In the Opening Remarks, Dr. Gottlieb [reiterated and elaborated](#) on his concerns regarding plant-based products using the term “milk” (or other dairy related terms) as part of their name.
 - In the Consumer Trends in the Marketplace discussion, it was noted that there is a growing preference for minimally processed foods.
 - In the Evolving Food Landscape and Industry Innovation Panel there continued discussion on the need for a reworking of standards of identity to enable innovation of healthier food options that would still fall within the standard.
 - In the morning Claims and Statements Used on Food Labels / Icon for “Healthy” breakout session there was a discussion regarding “healthy” claims. In this discussion there was a general consensus that a major hurdle in properly implementing healthy icons and in making health claims is consumer understanding. There is still a [wide diversion of opinions](#) on what constitutes a “healthy” food and this undoubtedly contributes to continued consumer confusion. Many participants seemed

to agree that increased consumer education regarding existing label requirements would help.

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