

Invited Speaker Abstract

Official Language: English

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Title of Presentation

Cultivating sustainable food and water systems: a framework for action for nutrition and dietetics professionals

1. Abstract

A sustainable, resilient and healthy food and water system is one in which “individuals have equitable and optimal access to food and water, both now and in the future” (Tagtow et al., 2014). This has direct relevance to the profession: patients and clients rely on the food system for their nutritional needs, and nutrition and dietetics professionals can actively support the development of sustainable food systems.

This presentation introduces a framework for action for how nutrition and dietetics professionals can accelerate progress in support of sustainable food and water systems. The framework for action was developed through a roundtable meeting of nutrition and dietetics professionals and experts from across the food system, convened by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The framework for action identifies five key areas of impact: nutrition and dietetics professionals can cultivate sustainable food and water systems by 1) shaping and delivering dietary guidance, 2) improving food and nutrition security, 3) aligning food production and nutrition, 4) optimizing food environments and 5) reducing waste of food, water, and other resources. Each impact area has implications for education and training, research, practice and policy. Additionally, each impact area can be adapted to various global contexts and scaled to address issues at the individual, community, institutional and population levels. The framework specifies ways that nutrition and dietetics professionals can grow and leverage their skill and expertise in this area to support greater multi-sectoral collaboration.

A framework for action helps individual practitioners identify opportunities to engage and facilitates larger systemic efforts from the profession. In addition to helping nutrition and dietetics professionals respond to the changing needs of consumers, deeper engagement in sustainable food and water systems also facilitates greater contribution to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which requires a systems approach that leverages multi-sectoral collaboration.

2. key references

HLPE. Nutrition and food systems: a report by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization; 2017.

Tagtow A, Robien K, Bergquist E, Bruening M, Dierks L, Hartman BE, Robinson-O'Brien R, Steinitz T, Tahsin B, Underwood T, Wilkins J. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: standards of professional performance for registered dietitian nutritionists (competent, proficient, and expert) in sustainable, resilient, and healthy food and water systems. *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*. 2014;114(3):475-88.

Vogliano C, Steiber A, Brown K. Linking agriculture, nutrition, and health: The role of the registered

dietitian nutritionist. Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. 2015;115(10):1710-4.

3. key messages

1. The sustainability of food and water systems is critically important for meeting nutritional needs.
2. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics has developed a framework for action for how nutrition and dietetics professionals can actively support the development of sustainable food and water systems.
3. Achieving larger, systemic goals such as those specified in the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires engagement from individual practitioners as well as coordinated efforts from the profession.