



July 15, 2010

Ms. Carole Davis, Co-Executive Secretary and Designated  
Federal Officer (DFO) of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee  
Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 1034  
Alexandria, VA 22302

Dear Ms. Davis:

On behalf of WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease, the only national organization dedicated to advancing women's heart health through advocacy, community education and patient support, we are writing in support of the dietary recommendations for coronary disease that are included in the *Report of the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010*.

As the leading voice for the 42 million American women living with or at risk of heart disease, WomenHeart advocates for equal access to quality care and provides information and resources to help women take charge of their heart health. A critical step in the process of taking charge of your heart health is to learn about nutrition and to adopt a diet that helps maintain weight and cholesterol levels within normal limits.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death of American women, killing more than a third of them.<sup>1</sup> The relative risk for cardiovascular disease increases by 20% in women who are overweight and by 64% in women who are obese.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the increasing prevalence of obesity is driving an increased incidence of Type 2 Diabetes,<sup>3</sup> and women with diabetes are 2.5 times more likely to have heart attacks.<sup>4</sup> Given that 61% of the women in the U.S (68.6 million) are overweight and obese,<sup>5</sup> urgent action is needed.

We stand ready through our education and support efforts and with the help of the WomenHeart Governing Board, Scientific Advisory Council, staff and network of WomenHeart Champions to help women adopt the nutrition and physical activity guidelines outlined in this report.

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Tate, CEO

<sup>1</sup> Lloyd-Jones D, Adams R, Brown T. et al. Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics 2010 Update: A Report from the American Heart Association Statistics Committee and Stroke Statistics Subcommittee. *Circulation*. 2010;121:e1-e170.

<sup>2</sup> Wilson PW, D'Agostino RB, Sullivan L, Parise H, Kannel WB. Overweight and obesity as determinants of cardiovascular risk: The Framingham Experience. *Arch Intern Med*. 2002; 162: 1867-1872. <sup>3</sup> Lloyd-Jones D, Adams R, Brown T. et al. 2010

<sup>4</sup> Lloyd-Jones D, Adams R, Brown T. et al. 2010

<sup>5</sup> Lloyd-Jones D, Adams R, Brown T. et al. 2010