



MEDIA RELEASE

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Dietitians weigh into Federal Government's new Healthy Food Partnership

Australia's peak body for dietitians has thrown its support behind the Federal Government's new Healthy Food Partnership, which meets for the first time today to discuss ways to curb obesity and tackle poor nutrition in Australia.

Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) CEO Claire Hewat said the Association hopes the Healthy Food Partnership will help cut rates of obesity and other nutrition-related preventable conditions over time.

Rural Health Minister Fiona Nash, minister responsible for food policy, will chair today's meeting in Canberra, which brings together preventative health groups, food industry bodies, and government.

Ms Hewat said the role of good nutrition in improving health and preventing many lifestyle diseases is proven beyond doubt, and congratulated the Federal Government for recognising this.

'We ultimately want all Australian to eat better and be healthier, so we're pleased to have a seat at the table collaborating with all the stakeholders on this important initiative,' said Ms Hewat.

DAA represents more than 5,800 dietitians nationally, and its members have expertise in weight loss and the nutritional needs of Australians – from infancy to the elderly, and from a range of demographic backgrounds.

'Accredited Practising Dietitians, who are nutrition scientists with years of university study behind them, help people make the right decision about what to eat, including around food choices and portion sizes, and support them to stick to a healthy diet.

'So they're a key part of the solution in tackling overweight and obesity and other nutrition-related health problems,' said Ms Hewat, and Advanced Accredited Practising Dietitian.

Minister Nash said earlier this week that the Healthy Food Partnership will work together on strategies to educate Australians on consuming fresh produce and appropriate portion sizes, and to accelerate efforts to reformulate food to make it healthier.

She highlighted that Australians are under-consuming fresh fruit and vegetables and this presents a dual opportunity, in that increasing intake of fresh produce would benefit both the health of Australians and our nation's farmers.

The new Healthy Food Partnership includes the Dietitians Association of Australia, the Public Health Association of Australia, the Heart Foundation, the Australian Food and Grocery Council, Woolworths, Metcash (owner of IGA), Coles, and industry groups such as AusVeg, Dairy Australia and Meat and Livestock Australia.

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For further information or to organise an interview with Claire Hewat, contact Jess Turner, Dietitians Association of Australia, on 0409 661 920.