

[DATE]

Dear United States Department of Agriculture,

My name is [YOUR NAME]. I am writing on behalf of [YOUR ORGANIZATION. BRIEFLY DESCRIBE YOUR ORGANIZATION, AND WHY THIS IS OF CONCERN. IF YOU ARE WRITING AS A PRIVATE CITIZEN, SIMPLY STATE WHY YOU CARE ABOUT THIS ISSUE.] I would like to comment on the forthcoming revisions to the Dietary

Guidelines, specifically the lowered threshold for drinking for men. I am strongly in favor of this change for three reasons: 1) it addresses the slowly unfolding public health crisis stemming from alcohol harm; 2) it reflects current research that has observed new and worrisome links between alcohol and common cancers; and 3) it reflects a transparent effort to clear the air after three decades of flawed, industry-funded alcohol research.

- 1) Alcohol harm remains a major source of harm and death in the United States. In the July 31, 2020, *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, scientists from the Centers for Disease Control noted that alcohol mortality is one of the leading preventable causes of death, killing nearly 100,000 United States residents annually. The majority of deaths were men and were caused by chronic use. In light of this, the Guidelines' lowering of drinking recommendation for males is the right move at the right time.
- 2) The state of the science as regards alcohol's role in common cancers (particularly, but not exclusively, colon and breast cancer) and other causes of death keeps evolving. In particular, the authors note that risk of many common cancers obeys a dose-response relationship. This means that that there is no "moderate" drinking threshold beneath which there is no risk. Drinking alcohol means exposing oneself to the potential for harm, and responsible Dietary Guidelines must reflect this.
- 3) We would like to proactively rebut industry claims that this ignores the science. The claims of cardioprotective drinking are underpinned by industry-funded studies using flawed or biased data collection methods, which the Guideline authors clearly delineate. The Guideline authors' methods and findings are clear, transparent, and up-to-date, and should be considered the state of the science.

In summary, lowering the recommending drinks-per-day for men to one confronts an ongoing public health challenge, reflects the state of the evidence, and promises to return equanimity to a field that had long been warped by industry money. Please approve it as is.

Sincerely,

[ NAME ]

[ TITLE ] [ ORGANIZATION ]