



U.S. FOOD & DRUG
ADMINISTRATION

FDA Deputy Commissioner for Human Foods Commits to Fulfilling Vision of Proposed Program

The following is attributed to Jim Jones, Deputy Commissioner for Human Foods.

Earlier this year, U.S. Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Robert M. Califf, M.D. laid out a bold vision to transform the agency's human foods enterprise. I am thrilled to have joined the FDA last month as the first Deputy Commissioner for Human Foods to help make this vision a reality.

Commissioner Califf's proposal outlined a [framework](#) for a unified [Human Foods Program](#) (HFP) and new model for the [Office of Regulatory Affairs](#) (ORA). I am committed to upholding and executing this framework guided by the principle of protecting and promoting the health and wellness of all U.S. consumers. We'll start driving towards this goal by focusing our efforts on three priority areas: preventing foodborne illness, decreasing diet-related chronic disease through improved nutrition, and safeguarding the food supply through the safe use of chemicals and dietary supplements.

Preventing Foodborne Illness

Protecting the safety of our food supply and working with industry and other regulatory partners to ensure that our food is not contaminated at any point during its journey along the supply chain is critical to meeting the mission of the FDA. We must work in close coordination with federal partners, state, local, tribal and territorial regulatory entities, agriculture departments and international regulatory counterparts to prevent and rapidly respond to foodborne illness outbreaks. I'm committed to expanding our collaboration with these stakeholders to further reduce the potential for food contamination. We'll be applying knowledge gained from previous outbreaks as we work together to keep our nation healthy and well. In fact, I'll be making visits to our partners in the field routinely to enhance and improve stakeholder engagement as it is key to understanding the environment related to foods regulated by the agency. I look forward to optimizing our established partnerships and will be working on developing new ones to help achieve the goals of the HFP.

We're proposing to stand up an Office of Critical Foods as part of the unified HFP to manage the regulation of infant formula and medical foods. I'm dedicated to continuing the agency's work in helping to ensure the safety and availability of infant formula. As part of this work, the FDA is working to incentivize redundancy and resiliency of the infant formula supply chain infrastructure over the long term and work with manufacturers to help ensure they are taking all appropriate steps to manufacture product safely to avoid the need for recalls and shutdowns. We're committed to continuing to work with industry and other federal partners on this effort.

Congress enacted the [Food Safety Modernization Act](#) (FSMA) in response to dramatic changes in the global food system providing FDA with new authorities and mandate to shift to a prevention-driven framework to ensure the safety of the U.S. food supply. As scientific advances deepen our understanding of foodborne illness, the HFP is committed to preventing foodborne illnesses that cause a significant public health problem and are a threat to the economic well-being of the food system. Our team's efforts to foster the health and wellness of all U.S. consumers through the work of a unified HFP, aligned with the agency's actions laid out in the [New Era of Smarter Food Safety blueprint](#), is essential to furthering the agency's progress meeting FSMA's charge.

Decreasing Diet-Related Chronic Disease Through Improved Nutrition

We know diet-related chronic diseases are the leading cause of death and disability in the U.S., and that these diseases can be avoided. I'll be working with my team to leverage tools at the agency's disposal to help our nation live healthier lifestyles through improved nutrition. Our goal is to ensure people in the U.S. have greater access to healthier foods and nutrition information we can all use to identify healthier foods more easily.

The FDA's nutrition priorities include reducing sodium across the food supply, updating and making labels more accessible to help consumers make healthy choices, promoting healthy habits early, and supporting innovation. We have already made significant progress. For example, we are conducting research to explore the development of a standardized, science-based front-of-package labeling scheme to help consumers, particularly those with lower nutrition knowledge, quickly and easily identify foods that are part of a healthy eating pattern. Next month, we will host a public meeting with the Reagan-Udall Foundation to hear input from [stakeholders on front-of-package labeling](#)[External Link Disclaimer](#) as well as a [virtual public meeting and listening sessions](#) on strategies to reduce added sugars consumption in the U.S. As part of our strategic vision of increasing our engagement with stakeholders in the nutrition space, next week, we'll kick off an ongoing series of [Tribal Listening Sessions](#)[External Link Disclaimer](#) to begin a conversation with federally recognized tribes on food sovereignty, food equity, and other issues that impact nutrition.

But we know more can and needs to be done. To elevate and strengthen the FDA's nutrition portfolio, the proposed HFP includes creating a Nutrition Center of Excellence. The Center will allow the FDA to focus even more strategically on nutrition policies and initiatives.

Safeguarding the Food Supply Through the Safe Use of Chemicals and Dietary Supplements

The FDA supports innovation in food ingredients and food packaging, advances in safety testing and assessment methodologies, and new information sources on food composition and consumption, while maintaining as its first priority the safety of the foods available to U.S. consumers, including our most vulnerable populations, such as children. As a former U.S. Environmental Protection Agency pesticide and chemical regulator, I bring a wealth of experience and background in chemical safety. I'm confident that we can move the needle forward in preventing and reducing people's exposure to contaminants, or other harmful chemicals, through foods to the greatest extent possible. For example, the FDA is working on a [proposed rule](#) to amend our regulations to remove the authorization for the use of Brominated Vegetable Oil as a food ingredient because a recently published study raised potential safety concerns. We're also continuing to make significant progress in reducing exposure to environmental contaminants that may be found in foods babies and young children eat through

our [Closer to Zero](#) initiative.

I'm excited to lead the teams that will comprise the proposed [HFP's Office of Food Chemical Safety, Dietary Supplements, and Innovation](#). We'll work together to leverage the scientific expertise that applies to safety evaluations of both foods and dietary supplements and to facilitate the safe use of innovative ingredients.

Helping people live healthier lives through the food they eat remains the cornerstone of our vision for the new HFP. I'm confident that with the help of the world-class experts in the FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, Office of Food Policy and Response and ORA, we'll bring the best we have to bear by creating a unified program that surpasses what each has been able to accomplish separately. I look forward to sharing further details about the actions I'll be taking as Deputy Commissioner for Human Foods to realize our vision for the foods program transformation in the coming months.

Related Information

- [FDA Names First Deputy Commissioner for Proposed, Unified Human Foods Program](#)
- [FDA's Proposal for a Unified Human Foods Program and New Model for the Office of Regulatory Affairs](#)

