

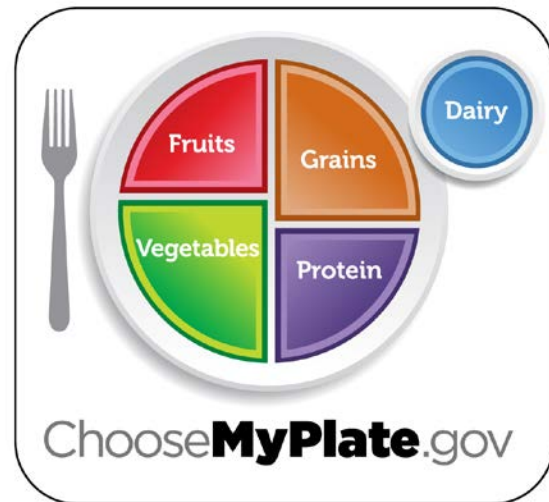


ChooseMyPlate.gov Offers a Guide to a Healthful & Varied Diet

The United States Department of Agriculture recently unveiled the federal government's new food icon, *MyPlate*. The new icon is replacing the food pyramid icon used by the USDA since 1992. The new *MyPlate* icon focuses on a healthful diet consisting of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein and dairy foods. The USDA encourages people to make sure half of their plate is covered in fruits and vegetables.

Along with the new icon, the USDA unveiled ChooseMyPlate.gov, a consumer website designed to help consumers, health professionals and the food industry build healthier diets.

Soy foods are a flexible part of a healthful diet and are included in three of the *MyPlate* sections:



Vegetables:

- Soy beans are included in the “Beans and Peas” category of vegetables.
- In the sidebar link [“Tips to help you eat vegetables,”](#) the USDA says, “Select vegetables with more potassium often, such as sweet potatoes, white potatoes, white beans, tomato products (paste, sauce and juice), beet greens, soybeans, lima beans, spinach, lentils, and kidney beans.”
- In the sidebar link, [“Health benefits and nutrients,”](#) soybeans are featured as a good source of potassium. The USDA says, “Diets rich in potassium may help to maintain healthy blood pressure. Vegetable sources of potassium include sweet potatoes, white potatoes, white beans, tomato products (paste, sauce, and juice), beet greens, soybeans, lima beans, spinach, lentils, and kidney beans.”

Protein Foods:

- Soy products are included in the “Beans and Peas” category of protein foods and are mentioned as “processed soy products.” Additionally, the USDA points out that beans and peas are a unique food since they are able to count as vegetables and protein foods.
- The “processed soy products” category includes such foods as: tofu, bean burgers, veggie burgers, tempeh and texturized vegetable protein (TVP)
- The USDA encourages consumers to eat a [variety of protein foods](#) to improve nutrient intake and health benefits. They recommend choosing beans, peas or soy products as main dish or part of a meal often.

- There is a separate page included in this section for those following a [vegetarian or vegan diet](#) saying “Protein sources from the Protein Foods Group for vegetarians include eggs (for ovo-vegetarians), beans and peas, nuts, nut butters, and soy products (tofu, tempeh, veggie burgers).”

Dairy:

- Soy milks are mentioned in the dairy section under “Calcium-fortified soy milk (soy beverage)”
- The USDA mentions soy milk as an effective option for the lactose intolerant saying “If you avoid milk because of lactose intolerance, the most reliable way to get the health benefits of dairy products is to choose lactose-free alternatives within the Dairy Group, such as cheese, yogurt, lactose-free milk, or calcium-fortified soy milk (soy beverage) or to consume the enzyme lactase before consuming milk.”
- Calcium-fortified soy milk is singled out as the sole plant-based source in the dairy group. The USDA says “Calcium-fortified foods and beverages such as cereals, orange juice, rice milk, or almond milk may provide calcium, but may not provide the other nutrients found in dairy products.”

For more information on the new *MyPlate* icon and how soy can fit into a healthful diet, please visit:

ChooseMyPlate.gov

[Soyfoods Association of North America](#)