

**TREE NUTS HIGHLIGHTED IN THE NEW FOOD GUIDANCE SYSTEM:
Advice from the International Tree Nut Council
Nutrition Research & Education Foundation**

Davis, CA— The International Tree Nut Council Nutrition Research & Education Foundation (INC NREF) applauds the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on its new Food Guidance System symbol—MyPyramid—which replaces the Food Guide Pyramid. The new symbol and interactive Web site, MyPyramid.gov, emphasize the importance of individualized dietary guidance.

Tree nuts, such as almonds, Brazils, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamias, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios and walnuts, play an important role in MyPyramid. They are included in the meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, and nuts group, and are recommended as a snack or as a substitution for other sources of protein. The latter is important as more Americans move toward more plant-based diets.

In MyPyramid, ½ ounce of nuts is equivalent to one ounce of meat and one teaspoon of oil. As with all foods, portion control is critical. “Nuts tend to be filling, which can actually help with weight control,” states Maureen Ternus, M.S., R.D., registered dietitian and Nutrition Coordinator for INC NREF. “Since tree nuts have such rich and complex flavors, a single serving is quite satisfying.” The new food guidance system suggests choosing nuts as a snack or enjoying them throughout the day in main dishes or sprinkled on yogurt, salads, soups or pasta.

Chock full of vitamins and minerals, tree nuts also contain a wide variety of phytochemicals, or plant compounds such as phytosterols (beta-sitosterol), carotenoids, flavonoids and proanthocyanidins, which may help protect against heart disease, cancer and other chronic diseases.