

# Congress to nutritionists: Don't talk about environment

By Dan Charles, NPR

A government-appointed group of top nutrition experts, assigned to lay the scientific groundwork for a new version of the nation's dietary guidelines, decided earlier this year to collect data on the environmental implication of different food choices.

Congress now has slapped them down.

Lawmakers attached a list of "congressional directives" to a massive spending bill that passed both the House and the Senate in recent days. One of those directives expresses "concern" that the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee "is showing an interest in incorporating agriculture production practices and environmental factors" into their recommendations, and directs the Obama administration to ignore such factors in the next revision of the guidelines, which is due out next year.

The directive is not legally binding, but ignoring it would provoke yet another political battle between the Obama administration and Congress.

The federal dietary guidelines have never explicitly considered the effects of food choices on the environment, but the idea of doing so is not new.

**Read the whole story**