

# Boosting Public Health with the Power of Blueberries

*The Case for a Berry Subgroup in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA)*



- Past DGAs divided vegetables into color- and type-based subgroups, but current editions no longer provide this level of specificity.

## Why It Matters

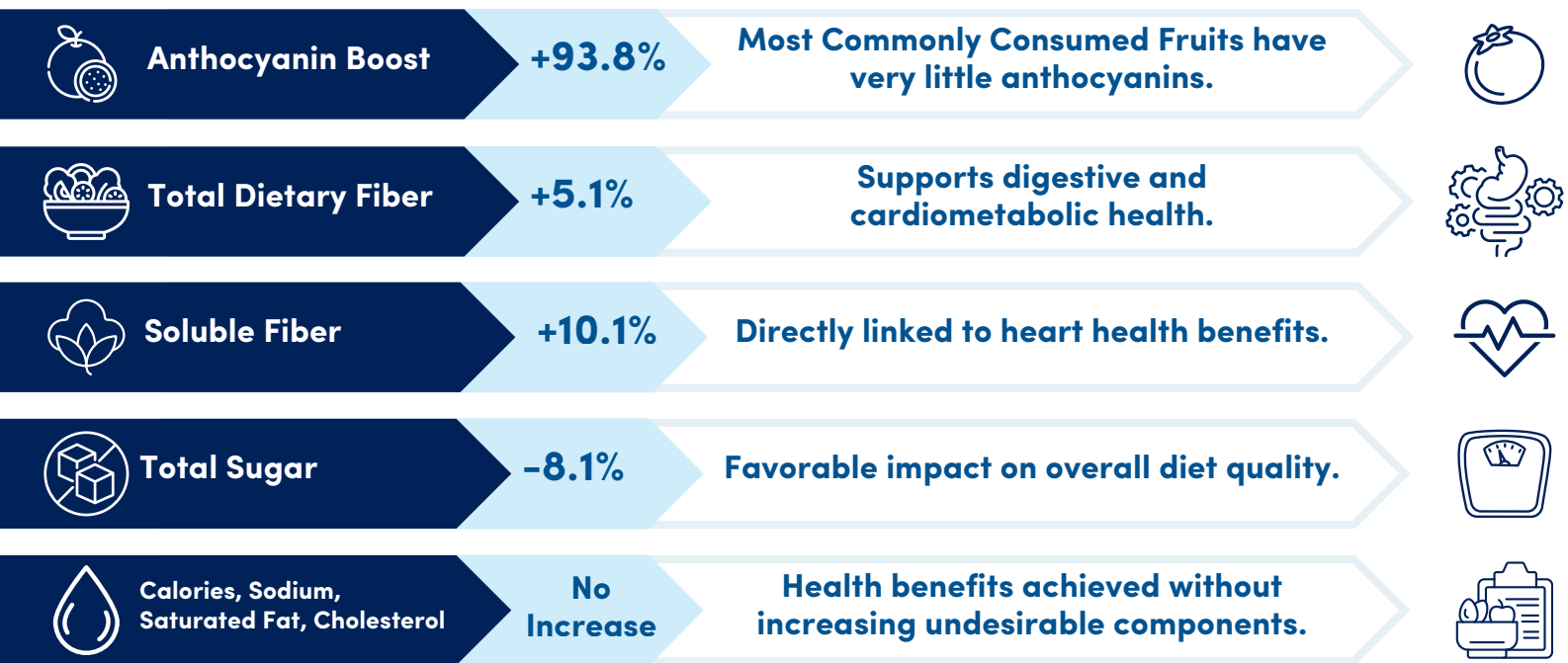
- Fruit has never been divided into subgroups, despite wide variation in nutrient content and bioactive compounds.
- Targeted fruit subgroups, especially for berries, could improve diet quality and reduce chronic disease risk.

## Berries: A Nutrient Powerhouse

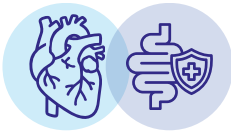
- Rich in anthocyanins & flavonoids – bioactives with anti-inflammatory and antioxidant activity that support heart and brain health.
- High in fiber – helps digestion, keeps you full, and supports healthy blood sugar and cholesterol.

## Modeled USDA Dietary Pattern Impact:

*(1 Serving Replacement of Common Fruit with Berries in a 2,000-Calorie Diet)*



**The inclusion of a single serving of berries a day yielded a nearly 94% increase in anthocyanin intake and other favorable shifts in fiber and sugar content.**



# Blueberry Bioactives: Gut and Heart Health

- Anthocyanins & Flavonoids: Reduce oxidative stress, improve blood vessel function, and support heart health.
- Prebiotic Effects: Promote healthy gut bacteria, improving digestion, immunity, and metabolism.
- Anti-Inflammatory Benefits: Reduce inflammation linked to heart disease, diabetes, and obesity.
- Evidence in Infants: Early blueberry consumption improves infant gut microbiome, strengthens immunity.

## Why a Berry Subgroup Matters

Encourages diverse fruit consumption beyond commonly eaten fruits

Supports targeted nutrient intake, including anthocyanins and fiber

An easy and delicious way to improve diet quality and public health

## ✓ Key Recommendations for Federal Nutrition Programs

- Include guidance for berries or anthocyanin-rich fruits in SNAP, WIC, and school meals.
- Recommend at least one daily serving of berries to improve nutrient intake.
- Promote variety in fruit intake to support long-term health.

Recognizing berries as a distinct DGA fruit subgroup is a **science-backed** way to boost fiber and bioactive intake, support gut, heart, and immune health, and lower chronic disease risk. **Including specific berry recommendations, especially for blueberries, in the DGAs and federal nutrition programs would promote healthier choices and improve Americans' overall diet.**

### Sources:

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