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Past 50 years, present, and future of the Korean Nutrition Society

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Abbreviations

KNIC; Korean Nutrition Information Committee

KNS; Korean Nutrition Society

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Abstract

Created in 1967, the Korean Nutrition Society (KNS) has been a vital contributor to the development of the health and nutrition of South Korea. With members from many different fields focusing on nutrition and health sciences, the impact of the KNS has not only been felt in South Korea, but also worldwide. The KNS has helped to establish and maintain dietary recommendations in addition to providing ways to make nutrition information readily available to members, as well as the public. The KNS has also established professional journals to advance scientific discoveries in nutrition and health. With 50 years of progress from the KNS, their contributions to nutrition and health will continue to have an impact throughout the world. To celebrate the 50th anniversary and growth of the KNS, an International Conference entitled “Integrative Nutrition for an Active Life” was held by the KNS in November 2017. The articles in this special issue of *Nutrition Research* are to commemorate the KNS efforts.

Keywords: Korean Nutrition Society, Dietary Recommendations, Nutrition, Health, Education

The Korean Nutrition Society (KNS) was created by 59 founding members in 1967. This was a time of significant change in the attitudes about nutrition and public health of the people in South Korea [1]. During the 1960s, the focus on nutrition science started to shift from dietary deficiencies and food insecurity to overnutrition and diet-related chronic disease. A remarkable economic transition occurred in South Korea in the period between 1960 and 1990, leading to an increase in food availability due to the modernization of agricultural systems and the food industry, as well as an increase in food importation. Therefore, the KNS was formed to facilitate improvements in public education about nutrition and health for South Korea in step with the global initiatives to promote well-being of societies throughout the world.

For the past 50 years, the KNS has promoted programs to improve health education of South Koreans by acting as the leader of academics in nutrition and related disciplines at universities throughout the country. The 850 KNS members support these activities and coordinate collaborations in research, courses, and public education which is a mission of the society. Members of the KNS include professors and scholars in nutrition, natural sciences, medicine, pharmacology, agriculture, biology, biochemistry, and related fields who are dedicated to the advancement of nutrition sciences.

The KNS is responsible for publishing the *Journal of Nutrition and Health* (pISSN 2288-3886/eISSN 2288-3959; Scopus-listed Korean-English Journal) and *Nutrition Research and Practice* (pISSN 1976-1457/eISSN 2005-6168; SCIE-listed English journal). The *Journal of Nutrition and Health* was originally launched in 1968 under the name of the *Korean Journal of Nutrition*, but the name was changed in 2013 [2]. Originating in 2007, *Nutrition Research and Practice* is an official journal, jointly published by the KNS and the Korean Society of Community Nutrition [3]. The KNS has published the *Journal of Nutrition and Health* and *Nutrition Research and Practice* six times per year, since 1968 and

2007, respectively.

Since originating in 1967, the KNS has held its annual spring and fall conventions, in addition to symposia and workshops that focus on examining current issues and providing members with the latest findings in nutrition and emerging areas of diet and health. The President of the KNS, Dr. Moon-Jeong Chang, and the Secretary of Scientific Affairs of the KNS, Dr. Yongsoon Park, organized an International Conference which was held on the 2nd and 3rd of November 2017 and focused on “Integrative Nutrition for an Active Life” to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the KNS. More than 800 nutrition researchers, clinicians, dietitians, professors, students, government employees, and industry stakeholders from countries; such as South Korea, the United States of America, England, Japan, Canada, and China were in attendance. During the conference, it was determined that the vision for the KNS will remain, which is to work towards resolving nutritional imbalances and improving public health by developing and integrating knowledge of nutrition through a multifaceted approach of health improvement. Within this framework, the society will continue to provide reliable nutrition information, advocate the development and implementation of evidence-based nutrition policy with national institutions and industry; and promote graduate education and training in nutrition.

The KNS established the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDAs) for South Koreans, providing reference values for dietary nutrient intakes and guidance to aid South Koreans in planning their daily diets. In 2002, the KNS undertook a revision of the KRDA, which were transformed into the new Dietary Reference Intakes for Koreans (KDRIs) in 2005 [4]. The KDRIs consist of estimated average requirement (EAR), reference intake (RI), adequate intake (AI), and tolerable upper intake level (UL). Most recently, the KNS revised the KDRIs in 2015 (Ministry of Health and Welfare, 2015 KDRIs) [5].

The KNS has contributed greatly to the fields of food and nutrition by establishing

the Korean Nutrition Information Committee (KNIC), a part of KNS. The KNIC makes it possible to provide information related to the fields of food and nutrition, not only for members, but also the public in a fast and convenient manner. The KNIC continues to update nutrient databases of all foods consumed in Korea and increase availability of nutrient database information for researchers and industry. In 1997, the KNIC developed a Computer Aided Nutritional Analysis Program (CAN-Pro), which is nutritional analysis software used in nutrition management, consulting, education, and research. Web versions of CAN-Pro for businesses and the general public were launched in 2015 and 2016, respectively [6].

The contributions of the KNS in nutrition sciences have led to significant improvements in domestic and public improvements in nutrition knowledge, in addition to international collaborations across countries to advance the science and education of nutrition. The KNS is the only Korean pan-nutrition society to be a member of the International Union of Nutritional Sciences (IUNS) and the Federation of Asian Nutrition Societies (FANS) [7]. In addition, the KNS exchanged a memorandum of understanding to provide forums for dialogue on timely issues, offer opportunities for collaboration, and foster tomorrow's leaders in nutrition science with the American Society for Nutrition (ASN) in 2010, Japan Society of Nutrition and Food Science (JSNFS) in 2012, and both the Chinese Nutrition Society (CNS) and The Nutrition Society (NS) in 2014 [1]. The KNS promotes international fellowship and exchanges information and experiences in nutrition research, training, and action programs. The KNS has also been a partner affiliated with *Nutrition Research*, an Elsevier publication.

The KNS has created a strategy map to actively translate and advocate nutrition science to the public, to implement policies and practices related to nutrition, and to mentor and support young nutritionists. The members of the KNS will continue to make significant

contributions to the field of nutrition science while embracing the 50th anniversary slogan “50 Years of Health Together, 100 Years of Better Nutrition”.

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