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August 2005

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to the sixth issue of **Eat Right Montana's** 2005 campaign, based on the new Dietary Guidelines for Americans - **A Healthier YOU: 3 steps for success**. This month we discuss the benefits of **eating more legumes** and **stretching for fitness** - with simple goal setting sections in each of our monthly handouts.

2005 has been a real bonanza for beans, peas, and lentils. In January, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommended 3 cups of legumes per week and FDA approved a new health claim for food packages: "*Diets including beans may reduce your risk of heart disease and certain cancers.*" Then, in the April release of MyPyramid.gov, legumes were the only food to be featured in two different groups.

The challenge for nutrition communicators is putting the health benefits of dried beans, peas, and lentils to work on American tables. The time is right - with the good health news and the explosion of trendy ethnic cuisines, recipes, and restaurants. These three sites can help you get the job done - with everything you wanted to know about cooking and enjoying beans, peas, and lentils (without gas!).

- **American Dry Bean Board:** www.americanbean.org/
Piles of bean basics, photos, health tips, and 100+ recipes
- **Beans for Health Alliance:** www.beansforhealth.org/
A more global focus, with lots of links and a massive bibliography
- **USA Dry Peas, Lentils, and Chickpeas:** www.pea-lentil.com/
Nutrition info, cooking instructions, and recipes

Need another reason to focus on legumes as we move into fall? September is **National 5 A Day Month**. The 2005 theme combines food and fitness (just as we do every month): **Energize and Mobilize Eat Fruits, Vegetables, and Be Active** (more at www.5aday.com/)

Thank you for your past and future support of Eat Right Montana. Feedback is always important to us; please let us know what you think.

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A Healthier YOU #6: Simple steps to boosting your bean intake
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT: Crystelle Fogle, MBA, RD
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Healthy Families 2005: Getting healthy with legumes (6th in a series of 10)

Dried beans, peas, and lentils – also known as legumes – have been getting some very high praise this year. The 2005 Dietary Guidelines made a definitive recommendation that Americans should eat more beans. On MyPyramid.gov, beans are the only food featured in two different categories.

“Legumes deserve every word of their healthy reputation,” says Crystelle Fogle, RD (registered dietitian) with the Montana Cardiovascular Health Program. “In January 2005, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved a new health claim for bean packages and cans. This statement reads, *“Diets including beans may reduce your risk of heart disease and certain cancers.”*”

According to Fogle, the plain truth about beans is that Americans aren’t getting enough. Based on USDA surveys, we only eat about one-third the recommended amount of legumes – one cup instead of the recommend three cups per week. Here are three simple ways to up your intake – of this cheap-to-buy, quick-to-prepare, and easy-to-include group of foods:

1. **Spill your beans out of a can:** For immediate gratification, canned beans are your best bet. Make sure that your cupboard is never bare of several kinds – and you’ll be able to whip up a *Tuscan Bean and Tomato Salad* or *Mexican Black Bean Soup* from www.americanbean.org/
2. **Rinse your troubles away:** Carefully rinsing canned beans under cold water reduces their sodium content substantially. Rinsing also gets rid of raffinose, sugars that lead to gas in some people. Rinsing soaked beans several times also helps wash away the gas-causing compounds.
3. **Learn about lentils:** Dal (lentils) is a staple of India cuisine. Give them a try and you will also appreciate their variety and versatility – in green, red, brown, or black colors. Like dried peas, lentils cook quickly and are perfect in spicy combinations of garlic, onion, veggies, and curry.

Eat Right Montana, a statewide coalition promoting healthful eating and active lifestyles, urges Montanans to take advantage of the nutrition power in dried beans, peas, and lentils.

“Meeting your weekly quota of legumes can be a snap,” says Fogle. “It’s as simple as sprinkling some chickpeas onto your plate at the salad bar – or making a pot of lentil soup to reheat for lunch.”

ATTACHED: Enjoying LEGUMES and STRETCHING for Fitness: 3 steps for success

Enjoying LEGUMES: 3 steps for success

1. Enjoy dried beans, peas, and lentils for better health.

There are many good reasons why dried beans, peas, and lentils (legumes) are the only items included in two different food groups. According to the latest nutrition guidance, beans can count in both the vegetable group and the meat and beans group.

Like other veggies, legumes are rich in antioxidants, folic acid, and B-vitamins, as well as low in fat and cholesterol-free. They are also one of the best sources of fiber. Like meats, legumes provide an excellent source of protein, along with iron and zinc.

2. Enjoy adding more legumes to your weekly menus.

Nutrition experts recommend at least three cups of cooked legumes per week. Beans and peas can be enjoyed in many ways: as entrees (beef and bean tacos), side dishes (baked pintos), soups (lentil or split pea), and salads (three or four bean combos).

Recipes can be prepared from dried beans (soaked, rinsed and cooked) or quickly from canned beans (rinsed to removed excess sodium). Thorough rinsing is also the most effective way to remove the gas-producing sugar (raffinose) found in legumes.

3. Enjoy a variety of dried beans, peas, and lentils.

For maximum taste and nutrition, explore the wide variety of legumes available in grocery stores and restaurants today. Many ethnic cuisines, especially from Asia, India, and Central/South America, have delicious, traditional bean dishes to offer.

For tempting bean recipes, check your favorite cookbook or go online for everything from appetizers to desserts at www.americanbean.org/. Many companies also offer quick and tasty recipes on packages and cans of beans, peas, and lentils.

What will you do for a healthier YOU?

- I will add at least ½ cup of legumes to my usual weekly intake.
- I will try at least one new bean, pea, or lentil product a month.
- I will try at least one new dried bean, pea, or lentil recipe a month.
- I will _____



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**Celebrating
Healthy
Families 2005**

STRETCHING for Fitness: 3 steps for success

1. Stretch often for health and wellbeing.

Stretching is really the simplest of all physical activities – and it may be one of the most essential in our sedentary, cramped lives. Regular stretching reduces stress, fatigue, and muscle tension – while improving circulation and mental alertness.

NOTE: Gentle stretches, like reaching up with your arms or flexing your toes back-and-forth, are safe for most people. If you have any muscle or joint problems or a repetitive strain injury, consult your health provider about the best stretches for you.

2. Stretch everywhere for maximum flexibility.

Think about where you spend “down” time – like talking on the phone, working at the computer, or watching TV. All of these usually sedentary times can easily become an opportunity to improve your flexibility, while energizing your body and mind.

Just adding 5 to 10 minutes of gentle stretching to your daily routine can make a big difference. While stretching, always breathe easily and relax into the stretch, without bouncing. Focus on the muscles or joints being stretched – and listen to your body.

3. Stretch seriously with professional assistance.

If you really want to increase your flexibility or recover from a serious injury, consult a fitness professional. While improper stretching can cause pain or further injury, the right stretches can help to speed healing and increase strength, especially as we age.

You can learn proper stretching techniques from books, videos, or professionals, like a physical therapist or certified fitness trainer/instructor. A yoga, tai chi, or Pilates class is a great way to learn deep stretching techniques that you can practice at home.

What will you do for a healthier YOU?

- I will take a few minutes to stretch my arms and legs several times a day.
- I will stretch while I talk on the phone, watch TV, or sit at the computer.
- I will take a class or use a video to learn some deeper stretches.
- I will _____



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**Celebrating
Healthy
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Healthy Families 2005

A Healthier YOU: Three steps for success!

Topics:

- **Simple Guidelines ... for a Healthier YOU**
- **Reading Food Labels ... for a Healthier YOU**
- **The “New Pyramid” ... for a Healthier YOU**
- **Fruits ... for a Healthier YOU**
- **Vegetables ... for a Healthier YOU**
- **Nuts, Seeds, and Beans ... for a Healthier YOU**
- **Grains ... for a Healthier YOU**
- **Dairy Foods ... for a Healthier YOU**
- **Meats ... for a Healthier YOU**
- **Poultry and Seafood ... for a Healthier YOU**



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A coalition promoting healthy eating and active lifestyles

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