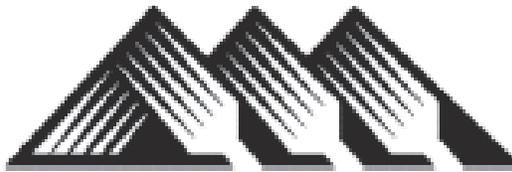


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EAT RIGHT MONTANA

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August 2007

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to the 8th issue of our 2007 campaign on ***Eating Together, Playing Together***. This issue is all about **fruits, vegetables, and agriculture**. Our fitness handout focuses on **supporting farmers and ranchers**, while our nutrition handout is about **fruits, veggies, and kids**.

Recognizing the connections between healthy people and healthy land, nutrition professionals are increasingly involved in local food systems. These trends, and suggestions for emerging roles, are covered in the American Dietetic Association's (ADA) Sustainable Food System Task report at: [www.eatright.org:80/ada/files/Sustainable Primer.pdf](http://www.eatright.org:80/ada/files/Sustainable_Primer.pdf)

One of the many ways to support family farms and ranches, as well as rural communities, is the concept of *agritourism* (and the closely related *agritainment*). According to Bill Bryan of The Rural Landscape Institute in Bozeman, Montana (www.rurallandscapeinstitute.org/), agritourism is based on attracting guests to enjoy, learn, recreate, and experience one or more farm and ranch activities, such as crop and livestock production, hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing). These activities then become a significant opportunity for family-scale farmers and ranchers to diversify their revenue streams and sustain their operations.

Here are a few of many sites with additional information and databases:

Rural Landscape Institute

Inventory of agritourism opportunities in MT, WY, ID, ND, SD, CO and UT
www.rurallandscapeinstitute.org/farrrc_inventory.pdf

Small Farm Center, UC-Davis

Research, guides and databases for California agritourism
www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/agritourism/agritour.html

Vermont Farms!

Farm stays, tours, and a calendar of local activities
www.vtfarms.org/

Wisconsin Farm Options

Extensive list of opportunities for family farms to explore in agritourism
www.uwex.edu/ces/agmarkets/ideas/prod.cfm?SubRef=9

Healthy Families packets are made possible with generous support from agencies, organizations, and individuals. Please join us in thanking the 2007 sponsors listed on the left. If you use this packet and can make a donation to support positive, practical messages for families, please contact ERM Chair Katie Bark at 406-994-5641 or kbark@mt.gov

Crystelle Fogle 406-947-2344

Katie Bark 406-994-5641

Mary Ann Harris 406-994-5397

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Five Fun Ways to Actively Support Local Agriculture

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It's fun and educational to connect with the family farmers and ranchers who grow delicious, healthful food for Americans to enjoy. Fortunately, there are more and more ways to support local agriculture and to enjoy some fun physical activity at the same time.

★ Stroll through your local Farmers' Market.

It's easy to get excited about eating fruits and vegetables when you see farm-fresh produce – and get to talk to the people who grew it. Farmers' markets may also offer local meats, poultry, grains, baked goods and honey. For a bit more activity, park several blocks away or play at a nearby park before going home.

★ Pick your own fruits or veggies on the farm.

U-pick is a perfect way to get some delicious, fresh produce and physical activity at the same time. It's also an easy way to learn a little about farm life in a short amount of time. Check your local newspaper for orchard or pumpkin patch ads. Ask farmers' market vendors if they have any U-pick opportunities available.

★ Lose (and find) your family in a farm maze.

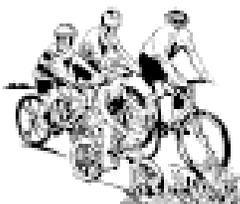
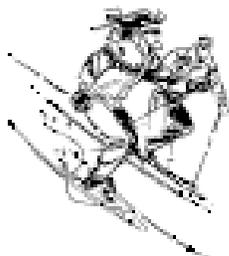
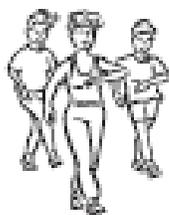
Farm mazes, in corn or hay fields, are a very popular form of agritainment – and for good reason. In addition to the maze fun, many farms and ranches have other activities to enjoy, such as playgrounds, tours, and petting pastures. Find a maze at 180+ worldwide locations at www.cornfieldmaze.com/site_list.html

★ Walk your family around a farm or ranch tour.

Another active and popular form of agritourism is a tour of a working farm or ranch. Tours are a great combination of recreation and education – with some outdoor activity as an added benefit. How to find a tour? Check with folks at the farmers' market, farm stand, or maze – or just do an online search yourself.

★ Take your family on a farm or ranch vacation.

Have a bit more time and want to know more about farm or ranch life? Consider spending all or part of your family's vacation on a working farm or ranch. At some, you can be part of the daily work; at others, you can enjoy horseback riding, walking, or biking. Either way, you'll have fun while helping to improve the incomes and economic viability of small farms and rural communities.



EAT RIGHT MONTANA

Five Easy Ways to Get More Fruits and Veggies in Kids

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Although fresh fruits and veggies are always a tasty treat, they are just one of the five delicious ways to serve produce to children. All of the fabulous fruit and vegetable forms – fresh, frozen, dried, canned, and 100% juice – are packed with nutritious goodness.

1. Introduce fruits and veggies early and often.

Savvy parents know that eating habits are established early – which is why they introduce kids to a wide variety of fruits and veggies during the first years of life. However, don't expect kids to enjoy new items the first time you serve them. It actually takes up to 7 to 15 exposures to a new food before kids want to eat it.

2. Be a fruit and veggie role model for your kids.

Children take food cues from the adults around them. They will try – and eat – more fruits and veggies when their parents, grandparents, babysitters, and teachers are enthusiastically enjoying them. Pressuring or forcing kids to eat fruits and veggies will have the opposite effect; they will actually eat less.

3. Always keep fruits and veggies handy for snacks.

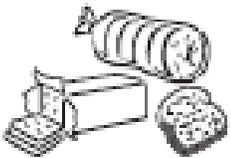
Bite-sized fruit and veggie munchies are perfect for on-the-go snacks. Low in calories, high in nutrients, there are fun options for every age. Kids love treats like small boxes of raisins, bags of dried fruit trail mix, celery sticks with peanut butter, cherry tomatoes, canned pineapple tidbits, and frozen 100% fruit bars.

4. Allow kids to choose fruits and veggies themselves.

Children like to have a choice, especially when it comes to food. They love to pick out their own fruit and vegetables at farmer's markets or in the supermarket produce department. Make it a game (*each person gets to choose a green veggie today*) or a family project (*everyone gets to choose an item for the fruit salad*).

5. Explore fruit and veggie options for everyone.

Having trouble finding fruits and veggies that suit everyone's tastes? Visit www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org for great serving suggestions, tips and information on all your family's produce favorites, plus inspiring ideas for fruits and veggies you've always wanted to try, but never knew how to make!



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: Crystelle Fogle, MBA, RD 406.947.2344
MT Department of Public Health & Human Services

EATING TOGETHER, PLAYING TOGETHER
Celebrating Healthy Families 2007

August 1, 2007

Closing Your Family's Fruit and Vegetable Gap

There's a serious nutrition crisis building on the plates of American families, especially those with young children. According to the Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH), families are at the forefront of those consuming the least amounts of fruits and veggies. In fact, 96 percent of children (2 to 12 years), along with 90 percent of adults, fall short of the current produce recommendations. These distressing facts are one of the many reasons why the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other government agencies launched a new public health initiative this year.

"Most Montana families are only eating half of the fruit and vegetable servings recommended by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*," says Lynn Hellenga, RD (registered dietitian), with the Montana Nutrition and Physical Activity Program (NAPA). "Fortunately, harvest time is the best time to get into a fruit and veggie habit – and to start closing your family's produce gap. Local farmer's markets offer lots of fresh Montana-grown items while supermarkets feature specials on seasonal fruit and veggies from all over the country. It is truly a produce bonanza for your family!"

There is a long list of reasons to eat more produce, which is why the national initiative led by CDC and PBH is called **Fruits & Veggies – More Matters™**. The benefits of eating fruits and veggies have been confirmed by hundreds of studies, showing reduced risk of diseases like heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. Getting enough fruits and veggies is especially important for young children. The nutrients in produce help build the strong bodies and smart brains that kids need to be healthy today. Developing smart eating habits early in their lives also helps to ensure healthy futures.

According to Hellenga, **Fruits & Veggies – More Matters™** is user-friendly and family-focused. "The two new websites offer just about everything Montana families need to know about closing the fruit and vegetable gap," she notes. "I have two young children and I love the easy access to information, tips, and deliciously simple recipes designed for moms like me." On the CDC website, www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/, you can search a huge recipe collection and quickly calculate the recommended cups of fruits and veggies for anyone by age, sex, and activity level. The PBH site, www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org, is packed with family-friendly features, including:

- **Quick ideas for easy meals-on-the-go and kid-pleasing snacks from celebrity chefs**
- **Recipes for every fruit and vegetable, including those you didn't know how to cook**
- **Tips on shopping and storing produce items to prevent spoilage and waste**
- **Ways to involve kids with coloring sheets, games, puzzles and super-simple recipes**
- **Mom2Mom chats and message boards for answers to all your feeding questions**

"It's important to remember that all forms of fruits and veggies matter. Frozen, canned, dried, and 100% juice options all count toward your daily servings – and may often be your least expensive choices," says Hellenga. "However, late summer and early fall are the best times to enjoy the tasty bounty of fresh and local produce." To find a Farmers' Market in your neighborhood – or anywhere across the US for your vacation route, visit www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/map.htm

Past and current issues of Eat Right Montana's monthly packets can be downloaded free at www.eatrightmontana.org/eatrighthealthyfamilies.htm