![MyPyramid.gov STEPS TO A HEALTHIER YOU]

Jazz Up Your Menu With Fruits
for Healthier School Meals

KEY ISSUES:

- **People who eat a variety of fruits as part of a healthy diet are likely to have a reduced risk of some chronic diseases.**

- **The *2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommend that we eat two cups of fruit every day (based on a 2,000 calorie meal plan).**

- **Remember, fruits:**
  - **provide nutrients that we need for good health, such as potassium, fiber, vitamin C, and folate.**
  - **are naturally low in fat, sodium, and calories.**
  - **have no cholesterol.**

- **Offer a variety of fruits every week.**

- **Contact local farmers to start a farm-to-school program to obtain high quality fresh produce. To get started, go to: www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Guidance.**

We eat with our eyes—then our mouths. If it looks good, we'll taste it. If it tastes good, we'll eat it. Because fruits are colorful and delicious, they have built-in kid appeal. And because they are available in so many forms—fresh, frozen, canned, dried, or juice—they give you a quick and easy way to boost the nutrition of your school meals and snacks.

Easy ways to follow the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

Recipe for Success

Boost the nutritional value

- **Go easy on juice.** Offer most fruit whole or cut up to get more dietary fiber.

- **Vary fruit choices.** Offer fruits with more potassium often, such as bananas, prunes, dried peaches and apricots, cantaloupe, and honeydew melon.

- **Select fruit canned in 100 percent** fruit juice or water, rather than syrup.

- **Cut the fat with fruit!** Try applesauce as a fat-free substitute for some of the oil when baking cookies and cakes.
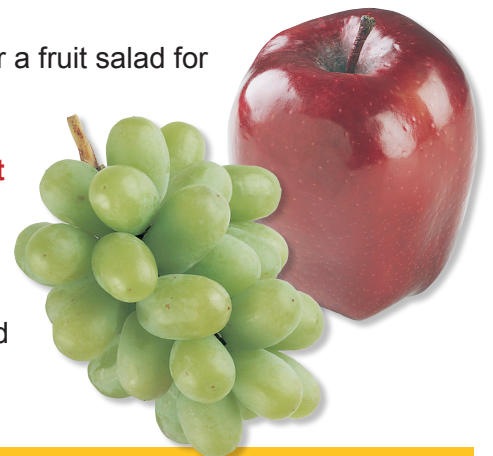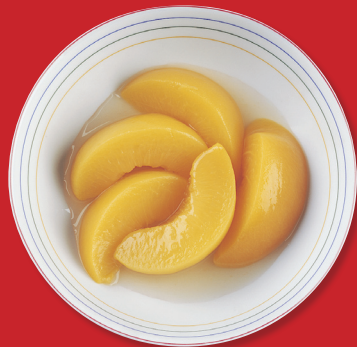
Add fruit to meals and snacks

- **Buy fresh fruits in season** when they may be less expensive and at their peak flavor; seasonal fruits like tangerines, bananas, or grapes are great on a salad bar.

- **Add crushed** pineapple, mandarin oranges, fresh apples, or grapes to your favorite salad mix or coleslaw.

- **Offer baked** apples, fruit cobbler, or a fruit salad for a dessert treat!

Make fruit look good and easy to eat

- **Choose a variety** of fruits with contrasting colors and shapes to catch kids' attention.

- **Cut up fruits,** especially apples and oranges, to make them kid-friendly and easy to eat.

USDA Commodity Food Program

You can stretch your food budget and insure high quality by ordering a wide variety of fruits through USDA's Commodity Food Program and the Department of Defense. Check out the list of available fruits at www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/schcnp/ and www.dscp.dla.mil/subs/produce/index.asp.

- **Serve low-fat** yogurt as a dip for fruits.
- **Try a fruit smoothie** at breakfast! Blend fat-free or low-fat milk or yogurt with fresh or frozen fruit like bananas, peaches, or berries.
- **For fresh fruit salads,** mix apples, bananas, or pears with acidic fruits like oranges, pineapple, or lemon juice to keep them from turning brown.
- **Serve individual containers** of fruits like peaches or applesauce as part of a grab-and-go lunch or snack.

Did You Know?

- It's best to wash all fruits (including melons and oranges) before cutting, preparing, or eating them. Under clean, running water, rub fruits briskly with your hands or a brush to remove dirt and surface microorganisms. Dry after washing.
- Remember to keep fruits separate from raw meat, poultry, and seafood while receiving, storing, or preparing.

Messages for Students

- Cut-up fruit makes a great snack. Or, try whole fresh berries or grapes.
- Dried fruits also make a tasty portable snack. Try dried apricots, apples, pineapple, bananas, cherries, figs, dates, cranberries, blueberries, prunes (dried plums), and raisins (dried grapes).
- When you're craving something sweet, think fruit. It tastes delicious—with no added sugar.

For more information:

www.MyPyramid.gov

www.teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/fv_galore.html

http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/schoolmeals/Recipes/recipefinder.php

www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/index.html