



Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program  
A joint project of Texas AgriLife Extension,  
Texas Department of Human Services,

TEXAS A&M  
**AGRI LIFE**  
EXTENSION

Swisher County  
310 West Broadway  
Tulia, Texas 79088

October 2015

## Fall Fun Food

### 10 Tips to Eat More Fruits

Looking to eat more fruits? There are many different types and forms of fruits that you can eat daily: fresh, frozen, canned and dried.



1. Keep fruits accessible. Keep a bowl on the table or your counter. Keep cut-up fruit in an easy-to-reach container in your refrigerator.
  2. Make it easy! Have pre-cut fruits available at work. Make the healthy choice the easy choice.
  3. For a flavor, color, or texture “kick,” add fruits to dishes such as mandarin oranges to a tossed salad or pineapple to a pizza.
  4. Use fruit for your dessert choice. A juicy orange makes a great ending to a meal as does a baked apple during the winter.
  5. For the original fast food, choose fruits as snacks. Apples and oranges travel well and can be eaten “on the run.” Dried fruit is another “on the go” fruit choice.
  6. Looking to get your children to eat more fruit? Have them choose fruits at the grocery store. They can be involved in preparing them at home.
  7. Make it fun! Cut up fruit and put it on a stick for fun and appealing fruit kabobs. A fruit smoothie is a fun and refreshing drink for adults and kids.
  8. Top it off with fruit - use fruit as a topping for pancakes, waffles, cereal, or ice cream.
  9. Try canned fruits in water or light juice. Also look for unsweetened frozen fruits.
- Visit your local farmer’s market to get good buys. You might learn about some new fruits you haven’t tried!

### Farmers' Markets: A great way to stock up on fruits and vegetables

Cities and towns, parking lots and country lanes; it seems as if farmers’ markets are springing up on every corner in America. That is not just good news for farmers; it’s good news for you too! Farmers’ markets provide easier access to fresh, nutritious foods that are often locally grown, particularly fruits and vegetables.



In addition, farmers’ markets that offer locally grown foods provide a venue for local farmers to sell their products. Depending on how the food is grown and transported, it may also be a way to reduce the carbon footprint.

What you will find at your local farmers’ market will vary by a state’s geography and climate, but virtually every state has seen an increase in popularity of farmers’ markets and the wide variety of produce available at these markets.

Farmers’ markets are a great place to buy bulk produce for home food preservation. When produce is fresh and plentiful, buy a little extra to freeze or can. If strawberries or blueberries are in season, you may want to buy extra and freeze some as well as eating some fresh. If your family likes green beans, you may want to buy and can some beans for later. When peas are in season, buy extra to freeze for the winter months. Contact your local extension office for guidelines as to how to safely can or freeze. Home preserved foods will allow your family to enjoy fruits and vegetables during the off-season.

Most fruits and vegetables are good sources of vitamins, minerals and other nutrients. A diet rich in fruits and vegetables can help maintain a healthy weight and may help reduce the risk of some chronic diseases. Fruits and vegetables from your local farmers’ markets: good for you, good for farmers, good for communities, and good for the environment.

## Rethink Your Drink

Choosing healthy beverages is a great first step to an overall healthy diet. Americans are drinking more soft drinks than ever. Per capita soft-drink consumption has increased almost 500 percent over the past 50 years. There is enough regular soda produced to supply every American with more than 14 ounces of soda every day. One reason for the steady rise in soft drink consumption is larger portion sizes; fountain drinks can range in size from 22 to 64 ounces. Children start drinking soda at a remarkably young age, and consumption increases through young adulthood.



People who drink soft drinks take in more calories than those who do not. Drinking sugar-sweetened beverages has been associated with weight gain, overweight, obesity, and type 2 diabetes. A 12-ounce can of soda has 150 calories and 10 teaspoons of sugar in the form of high fructose corn syrup. If these calories are added to the typical diet without cutting back on something else, one soda a day could lead to a weight gain of 15 pounds in one year.

Sports drinks, another popular soft drink, are for athletes who participate in high-intensity, aerobic exercise for at least 90 minutes. Most kids are not this active. The added sugar and sodium in sports drinks are unnecessary for children and youth. Sports drinks offer little advantage over water for kids.

### Try these tips to help you and your family re-think your drink:

- Help children learn to enjoy water as the thirst quencher of choice.
- Make soft drinks a “sometimes” beverage to be enjoyed in moderate amounts. Remember that soft drinks include fruitades, fruit drinks, lemonade, energy drinks, sweet tea, and sports drinks.
- Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator for easy access.
- Add lemon, lime, other fruit, or a splash of juice to water.

### Should Children Drink Diet Drinks?

Because of their size and relatively high fluid intakes, children consume more beverages per pound of body weight than adults. For this reason, it is important to be aware of what they eat and drink. Not only should you be aware of possible safety issues, but also if drinks they consume provide nutrients they need to grow.



Much of the concern about dangers of diet drinks has come from articles on the Internet. To determine if these concerns are valid, it is important to consider the results of well-controlled studies conducted by reputable scientists. Many studies have shown that popular sweeteners are safe. Aspartame is a well-studied sweetener and is marketed under brand names such as Equal® and NutraSweet®. Despite what you might read on the internet, laboratory testing, animal studies, population studies and human clinical trials have found no credible link between consumption of aspartame at levels found in the human diet and conditions related to the nervous system and behavior, nor any other symptoms or illness, including cancer. Based on these and other studies, the Food and Drug Administration has determined that the sweeteners in beverages currently sold are safe for adults and children.

The real problem with diet drinks for children is that they provide no nutrition and are not good for teeth. Children need calcium and vitamin D found in milk for healthy bones and teeth. They need vitamins found in 100% fruit juices for good health. Even when they do drink enough milk and get their vitamins from fruit and juices, soft drinks are still not recommended. According to the American Dental Association, even sugar-free soft drinks may increase the chance of tooth decay because they are acidic and cause teeth to erode. So, always use soft drinks (regular and diet) sparingly.

Extension programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status.

The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

## Home Safety in the Kitchen: Burn and Fall Prevention

Have you ever had an accident in the kitchen? Two common kitchen accidents are falls and burns. There are a number of things we can do to prevent these accidental injuries in the kitchen. The following are ideas to help burn and fall prevention in the kitchen.



### Burn Prevention

- Make certain the range is located so that curtains cannot fall onto the burner.
- Don't hang towels on oven handles close to a burner.
- Oven controls should be located on the front or side of the oven, so that you don't have to reach over burners.
- When you cook:
  - Turn pan handles away from other burners and the edge of the range.
  - Do not wear garments with long, loose sleeves. Roll back your sleeves or use a rubber band to keep sleeves from dropping down onto hot surface or flame.
  - Do not store cooking utensils above the range, as you will have to reach over the flame to retrieve them.
- Keep hot pads and pan holders near the range.
- Use a safety hook to slide the baking rack out in order to retrieve hot foods without

burning yourself.

- Use a microwave for food preparation, whenever possible. Only operate the microwave when there is food in it.
- Unplug small appliances when not in use.
- Keep a fire extinguisher near the stove. Make certain that you know how to use it and that it is properly charged.
- Cover any exposed hot water pipes under the sink.
- Smoke alarms should be present in your home and in working order. To help remember to keep fresh batteries, dates on your calendar yearly. Many people change batteries during daylight savings time.

### Fall Prevention

- Light switches should be located near the entrance of the kitchen. Turn the light on before you enter — never enter a dark room.
- The floor surface should not be slippery and should be non-glare.
- Keep frequently used items within reach, so that you don't have to use a step stool.
- If you must stand on something in order to reach an item, do not use a chair.
  - Use a sturdy, stable step stool with handrails, so that you can hold on while standing on the top step.
  - Make certain that the step stool is fully opened and stable before you climb on top.
  - Make certain all screws and braces are tight.
  - Do not step near the edge on the steps, step in the center of the step.
  - Never use a stool with broken or missing parts.
- Keep drawers and cabinet doors closed when not in use.
- Eliminate all throw rugs. If you do use rugs, they should have a non-skid backing and should not be placed in traffic areas.
- Wipe up all grease or liquid spills immediately.

### Freezing Onions

**If you like cooking with fresh onions, but frequently toss an unused portion, try freezing it! The following method works for fully mature onions:**

1. Wash, peel and chop raw, fully mature onions into about 1/2" pieces. There is no need to blanch onions.
2. Bag and freeze in freezer bags for best quality and odor protection. Package -- flat -- in freezer bags to hasten freezing and make it easier to break off sections as needed. Express out the air and place bags on cookie sheets or metal pans until onions are frozen. Then, restack bags to take up less room.
3. Use in cooked products, such as soups and stews, ground meat mixtures, casseroles, etc. For most dishes, frozen onions may be used with little or no thawing. (Will keep 3-6 months.)

**Freezing chopped raw onions helps you avoid food wastes and save money on groceries**

## Healthy Recipes

### High Energy Oatmeal

Total Servings (Yield): 40 cups (total servings)

Serving Size: 1 cup

Ingredients:

- 8 cups rolled oats (not quick or instant oats)
- 1/3 cup unsalted sunflower seeds
- 1/3 cup oat bran
- 1/3 cup toasted wheat germ
- 1/3 cup cracked wheat
- 1/3 cup ground flax seed (if using whole flax seeds, grind it just before adding to bag)
- 1/3 cup millet

——To make dry oatmeal mixture-----

- Add ingredients to bag in any combination
- Shake the bag to mix thoroughly
- Store in the refrigerator.
- Use within a month's time because the flax seed can become rancid if kept too long.

Directions:

1. Take 1/4 Cup of High Energy Oats mixture
2. Add 1/2 cup fat-free milk
3. Add tablespoon of walnuts
4. Add tablespoon of dried blueberries
5. Microwave on high for 2 minutes 35 seconds
6. Allow oatmeal to stand a few minutes before eating

### Cabbage Fruit Salad

Total Servings (Yield): 6 servings

Serving Size: 1 cup

Fruits make wonderful toppings for salads. For a salad in a hurry, top spinach with sliced apples, celery, walnuts, and a vinaigrette dressing. To really wow your friends, try this eye-appealing Cabbage recipe.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups cabbage, shredded
- 2 oranges, peeled, sectioned and seeded
- 1/2 cup crushed pineapple, drained
- 2 medium apples, chopped
- 4 tablespoons plain low fat yogurt
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 2 tablespoons chopped peanuts and/or raisins (optional)

Directions:

1. Wash your hands and clean your cooking area.
2. Wash and prepare cabbage, oranges, and apples as directed.
3. Mix all ingredients.
4. Top with peanuts and/or raisins.



Fall Fun Food Facts Newsletter is produced by the Swisher County Office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

Sincerely,



Calley Runnels  
CEA-FCS Swisher County

#### Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

#### MONTHLY Educational Programs

##### PROGRAMS

##### Fresh Start to a Healthier You Class

October 21, 2015

11:00 a.m. Mid Tule Village Activity Room

##### Car Seat Class

##### Wednesday

October 21 & 28, 2015

Safe Riders Car Seat Distribution Program

at 2:00 p.m. in Annex Meeting Room

Pre-Registration Required

Call 995-3726