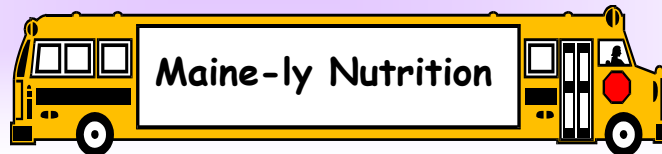


Maine-ly Teachers

Middle School
Edition



Spring 2005



News and Ideas for Maine-ly Nutrition Teachers



Local School Wellness Policies

What do schools need to know?

Part of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 contains a local school wellness policy provision. It is hoped that this new provision will help address obesity and promote physical activity through changes in school environments. Every school district that participates in the federal school meals program must have a policy in place by the first day of the 2006-07 school year. This includes all Maine's public elementary and middle schools as well as most high schools.

What do schools need to do?

- ◆ This year, districts should be putting together committees or workgroups that will develop the wellness policy. (Already existing groups like a wellness team or a Changing the Scene team could take this on!)
- ◆ The committee must involve: parents, students, school food service, the school board, administrators, and the public.
- ◆ Policies should be developed during the 2005-06 school year so they are ready to put in place on the first day of school of the 2006-07 school year.

What should the policies include?

- ◆ Goals for nutrition education
- ◆ Goals for physical activity
- ◆ Nutrition guidelines for all food available at school
- ◆ Goals for other school activities that promote student wellness
- ◆ Plans for evaluation of the policy once it is in place



Resources:

www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org Examples of policies.
www.frac.org (Click on January 11, 2005 under "What's New") Wellness policy information and links.
www.schoolnutrition.org Information for districts.

Curious about the *NEW Food Guide Pyramid*?

Log on to: www.mypyramid.gov
for information about the new pyramid, which was released on April 19, 2005. We will feature an article about the new pyramid in the Summer edition of our newsletter.

Maine-ly Nutrition "Housekeeping" Items:

1. Time and Expense Documentation

Yes, it's that time again! Time to start thinking about putting together your nutrition education documentation. All timesheets, expense sheets and receipts are due by June 30, 2005.

- ◆ Your timesheet needs to clearly show that you spent at least 25 hours on nutrition education this school year. (Remember, we cannot count any time spent before October 1, 2004.)
- ◆ Expense sheets should clearly show how your \$100.00 resource check was spent. Please attach receipts for all purchases made. If receipts are missing or if you did not spend all funds, please send a check made out to "USM" for the difference.
- ◆ For teachers who committed to more than 25 hours of nutrition education and received extra funds, please remember to document those extra hours and include receipts for purchases made with the extra funds.



If you need copies of the time and expense sheets, you can download them from our website at :

www.maine-nutrition.org/schoolprog.htm#resources

2. Maine-ly Nutrition Teacher Survey

All teachers participating in the Maine-ly Nutrition program will receive a Teacher Survey during the month of May. Please take a moment and give us your thoughts—this survey is very valuable to us! We use the information to improve and expand our program each year.

Also, if you are planning on attending the Wellness Conference at Sugarloaf this June, you may want to come to our Maine-ly Nutrition focus group. We will provide breakfast and give participating teachers a chance to express their thoughts about the Maine-ly Nutrition project in a neutral setting. (The facilitator for this session is not affiliated with our program.) If you are attending the Wellness Conference, you will be invited to join us for this focus group. We hope to see you there!

SPRING

Some useful websites:

www.kidsgardening.com—All kinds of information on gardening with kids. Perfect for Spring!
www.fightbac.org—Even though cold & flu season is almost over, food safety is still important (especially with summer outdoor cooking right around the corner)!
www.maine-nutrition.org—School-wide Event forms, a list of eligible schools, information on programs available through the Maine Nutrition Network, our book list, helpful links and much more.



New study links vegetables with healthier weight in girls

A study published in the September 2004 issue of *Obesity Research* by the Children's Nutrition Research Center found that the strongest link between diet and healthy body weight in girls was the amount of vegetables eaten each day. The more vegetables (other than French fries!) the girls ate each day, the more likely they were to be at a healthy body weight. Other studies have shown similar relationships between healthy weights in children and fruit intakes. The researchers concluded that fruits and vegetables are high in fiber, which makes them "filling," and they tend to be low in calories.

This study gives us another reason to increase fruit and vegetable intake as recommended by the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, released in January. Following the recommendations of the Guidelines and monitoring portion size can help combat the widely recognized problem of childhood obesity.



Nutrition Book Corner
A delicious reading treat!

Title: Quick and Healthy Volume II

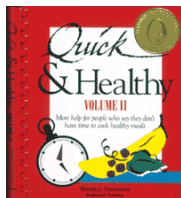
Author: Brenda J. Ponichtera R.D.

Audience: General

Description: Great-tasting, fast, healthy menus and recipes for people who have very little time to cook but want to eat healthy food.

Information: Price~ 16.95 Published by~ ScaleDown
ISBN: 0-9629160-1-3

Available at local bookstores or order online



Think Spring — Think School Gardens!

How do you begin planning a school garden?

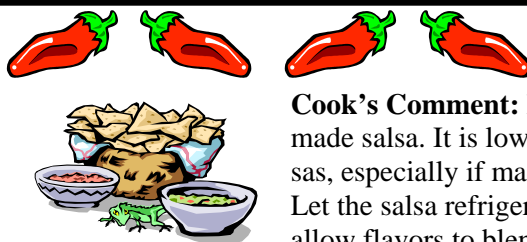
- ◆ **Get official permission from the administration.** Ask what space is available. (You might get ideas from the school custodian!)
- ◆ **Identify volunteers.** Master gardeners are volunteers trained by the Maine Cooperative Extension Service who provide advice to home gardeners. Many enjoy working with students.
- ◆ **Start Small.** You will not be overwhelmed and it gives you time to build your support system of volunteers and resources. You might even want to start a small indoor garden. Another good idea is to use a small plastic wading pool, fill it with soil, and start your school garden with a few easy to grow salad vegetables such as radishes, lettuce, and spinach. Maintenance is minimal.
- ◆ **Get Ideas.** Contact other schools that have gardens and find out how they got started. Ask about the financial and local resources they utilized.
- ◆ **Identify financial resources.** A little creative "scrounging" can help to start a school garden.

Tip: Solicit donations from parents, PTA, and/or local businesses. Ask for mulch, seed, soil amendments, fertilizer, tools, and supplies. Be sure to have your students send thank you notes, updates, and/or pictures to show appreciation and encourage future assistance

Tip: Some seed companies will donate last year's seeds to schools.

The Maine School Garden Network is another good resource. For more information contact Mary Bird at 581-2434 or email at mary.bird@umit.maine.edu

Homemade Salsa



Makes 8 servings

1 cup finely chopped, peeled tomato
1/2 cup tomato sauce
1/4 cup yellow or red onion
1/4 cup finely chopped green pepper
2 tablespoons vinegar
2 cloves garlic, minced
1-3 jalapeno peppers, seeded and chopped (use caution; wear rubber gloves and do not rub your eyes when chopping peppers)
1/2 cup fresh cilantro, chopped (optional)

Directions

Mix all ingredients in a glass bowl. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Source: Courtesy of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 5 A Day Fruits and Vegetables of the Month at: www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/5aday/month

Cook's Comment: Enjoy the fresh ingredients in this homemade salsa. It is lower in sodium than many commercial salsas, especially if made with a no-salt-added tomato sauce. Let the salsa refrigerate for an hour or so before serving to allow flavors to blend.

Cook's Tips:

- * You might consider using lemon or lime juice in place of vinegar.
- * To reduce the sodium content further, use a no-salt-added tomato sauce. These frequently are available in the canned tomato section of your grocery store or in a health food store. Serve with unsalted tortilla chips.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories: 14; Total Fat: 0.12 g; Saturated Fat: 0 g; Carbohydrates: 3.3 g; Protein: 0.5 g; Cholesterol: 0 mg; Fiber: 0.7 g; Sodium: 95 mg; Carbohydrates: 80%; Protein: 13%; Fat: 7%



Maine-ly Nutrition is a project of the Maine Nutrition Network
You can contact us at: MNN, 295 Water Street, Augusta, ME 04330
You can visit our website: www.maine-nutrition.org