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Vegetable Group: Vary Your Veggies [Facilitator's Guide]

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NEP-203FG

VEGETABLE GROUP

Vary Your Veggies

Lesson Goals

After this lesson, participants will:

- Understand why vegetables are an important part of the daily diet.
- Know how many cups of vegetables should be eaten to meet daily needs.
- Know how many cups of dark green, orange, and starchy vegetables and legumes should be eaten each week.
- Identify recommended serving sizes for vegetables.
- Identify vegetable sources of vitamins A and C.
- Identify vegetable sources of minerals.
- Name at least one way to stretch the food dollar when purchasing vegetables.
- Describe and practice ways to store, prepare, and cook vegetables to conserve nutrients.
- Try a new method of cooking or serving a vegetable.
- Serve vegetables high in vitamins A and C, minerals, and fiber to meet the family's needs.

Before Teaching the Lesson

1. Read carefully:
 - *Vary Your Veggies* (NEP-203)
 - *Add Variety* (NEP-203A)
 - *Guide to Fresh Vegetables* (NEP-203B)
2. Check the homemaker's "24-Hour Food Recall Record."
 - Does she eat a variety of vegetables, including ones high in vitamins A and C?
 - Does she prepare and serve vegetables in a variety of ways?
3. Check the homemaker's *MyPyramid Worksheet* (NEP-201C). If she has not completed one, prepare to help her complete one.
4. Collect food models, nutrient comparison cards, and food labels to show the homemaker how to select vegetables high in vitamins A and C.

5. Check local grocery store prices for good buys on vegetables. Clip food ads to use in teaching.
6. Check to see if the homemaker has ever grown a garden and which vegetables she planted. If timely, come prepared to encourage her to grow a garden or to include a new vegetable in her garden.
7. Plan how you will teach the lesson.

Teaching Tools

For homemakers:

- *Vary Your Veggies* (NEP-203)
- *Add Variety* (NEP-203A)
- *Guide to Fresh Vegetables* (NEP-203B)
- "MyPyramid, Steps to a Healthier You" mini-poster (USDA CNPP-15)
- *MyPyramid Worksheet* (NEP-201C)
- *Dr. Richter's Fresh Produce Guide*
- *Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky* (ID-128)
- *Vegetable Preparation for the Family* (FCS3-106)
- "24-Hour Food Recall Record"
- Food models
- Nutrient comparison cards
- Food labels and packages, include a variety of canned and frozen vegetables
- Newspaper food ads
- NEP recipes for vegetables
- FSHE-1 through FSHE-18, Cooperative Extension Service publications about Kentucky produce



- Gardening resources on University of Kentucky Family and Consumer Sciences Web site
- Cookbook
- Food and nutrition calendar
- PowerPoint® presentation “Vegetables” or flip chart

For youth:

- LEAP for Health (3-5 year olds)
- Five A Day video
- The Organwise Guys:
 - Organ Annie (3-5 year olds, K-3rd grades)
 - “How to Be Smart from the Inside Out” (3rd-5th grades)
 - “Basic Training for Better Health” (3rd-5th grades)
 - “Heart Healthy Challenge” (3rd-5th grades)
- Fantastic Foods 4-H Curriculum
 - “Tasty Tidbits” (5th-6th grades)
 - “You’re the Chef” (7th-8th grades)
 - “Foodworks” (9th-12th grades)

Lesson Points to Stress

1. Vegetables are an important part of the diet. They provide vitamins and minerals, fiber, and phytochemicals, and are relatively low in calories. They add a variety of textures, flavors, shapes, and colors to meals.
2. Vegetables provide other bonuses for good health. They are naturally low in fat and have no cholesterol. Most fresh vegetables contain only a small amount of sodium.
3. Many Americans do not eat enough vegetables or they do not eat a variety of vegetables. The USDA’s Dietary Guidelines recommend that vegetables provide a large percentage of the daily calories.
4. The key nutrients that vegetables provide are vitamins A and C and fiber.
5. Vitamin A helps eyes adjust to dim light, keeps skin smooth, promotes growth, and keeps the lining of the mouth, throat, nose, and digestive tract resistant to infection.
6. Vitamin A is found in dark green or yellow-orange vegetables, such as broccoli, greens, sweet potatoes, and carrots.
7. Vitamin C helps hold body cells together, strengthens the walls of blood vessels, maintains healthy gums, helps the body fight infection and heal wounds, and aids in tooth and bone formation.

8. Vitamin C is found in broccoli, green peppers, cabbage, greens, tomatoes, brussels sprouts, and potatoes.
9. Vegetables also contain fiber (sometimes called roughage). Fiber prevents constipation, helps us to feel full, protects against bowel disorders, helps regulate blood sugar, and reduces blood cholesterol. People with diets low in fiber may have problems with constipation. Eating raw vegetables, drinking plenty of water, and getting adequate rest and exercise can help reduce this problem. Beans are an exceptionally good source of fiber.
10. Proper storage, preparation, and cooking conserve the vitamins and minerals in fresh vegetables. Exposure to moisture and warm temperatures and breaking the skin of vegetables will hasten spoilage. Vitamins and minerals may be destroyed by exposure to light, air, and heat. Water may wash vitamins and minerals out of vegetables.

Supplemental Points to Stress (NEP-203A)

1. Save money on vegetables by buying fresh vegetables in season, watching for store specials, and comparing prices of store brands and national brands.
2. Families who grow a vegetable garden can improve their diets and save on grocery bills.
3. Vegetables can be served in a variety of ways – as snacks, salads, casseroles, and soups. You can eat vegetables raw or steamed, stir-fried, baked, boiled, microwaved, grilled, slow-cooked, or broiled.
4. For variety, try different combinations of vegetables, such as corn and lima beans or eggplant and tomatoes. Season with herbs and spices to cut down on added fat, salt, and sugar.

Ideas for Teaching the Lesson

1. Before teaching the lesson, review what you taught the homemaker on your last visit.
 - What information has been used?
 - What new things have been tried?
2. Review the homemaker’s “24-Hour Food Recall Record” and have her identify the vegetables she ate. Have her identify any vegetable sources of vitamins A and C, minerals, and fiber.
3. Use the nutrient comparison cards to identify vegetables that are good sources of vitamins A and C, minerals, and fiber.

4. Help the homemaker complete *MyPyramid Worksheet* (NEP 201C). Determine the number of cups of vegetables she should eat daily. Reinforce the amount of dark green, orange, and starchy vegetables and legumes she should eat each week. Discuss any diet changes indicated by this exercise.
 5. Use food models to demonstrate what a serving of vegetables looks like.
 6. Show the homemaker pictures of different vegetables. Ask her which ones she already uses. Briefly describe some vegetables that she has not tried and how she could use them. Stress good sources of vitamins A and C, minerals, and fiber.
 7. Ask the homemaker if she has difficulty getting her family to eat vegetables. Talk about ways to solve the problem.
 8. Use newspaper ads to identify best buys in vegetables.
 9. Visit the produce section of the grocery store or a farmer's market. Discuss how to choose high-quality fresh vegetables. Compare the prices of fresh produce against canned or frozen produce, loose vegetables against packaged vegetables, and store brands against national brands.
 10. Plan several days' menus using a variety of vegetables. Identify the vegetables rich in vitamins A and C, minerals, and fiber. Count the colors included in the menus.
 11. Demonstrate the proper way to prepare and cook a fresh vegetable that is in season.
5. Use audiovisuals or make a large flip chart to illustrate "points to stress." Review the lesson (NEP-203) and the supplements (NEP-203A, NEP-203B) with the homemakers. Use the PowerPoint® presentation "Vegetables."
 6. During summer and fall months, encourage homemakers to visit their local farmer's market.

How to Tell What the Homemaker(s) Learned

Immediately following the lesson:

- Ask each homemaker to name at least one vegetable that provides vitamins A and C or have her choose good sources of vitamins A and C from a variety of food models.
- Ask the homemaker to identify the amounts of vegetables she should be eating daily. How many cups of dark green, orange, and starchy vegetables should she eat each week? How many cups of legumes?
- Ask each homemaker to give reasons why vegetables are important for good health.
- Ask each homemaker to identify the best buys: fresh, canned, or frozen vegetables; fresh vegetables that are in season or ones that are out of season; generic, store, or national brands of canned vegetables.

At a later visit:

- Review the homemaker's food recalls. Has she included more vegetables?
- From her "24-Hour Food Recall Record," have the homemaker circle vegetables rich in vitamins A and C, minerals, and fiber.
- Ask the homemaker if she has tried new vegetables, cooking methods, recipes, or seasonings or different combinations of vegetables.
- Ask the homemaker to show how she prepares and cooks a vegetable from her garden or a fresh vegetable that is in season. Does she follow the recommended practices to conserve nutrients?

Ideas for Teaching Small Groups

1. Demonstrate a new method of vegetable cookery (e.g., stir-frying, baking, steaming, or braising, etc.).
2. Demonstrate the proper way to cook vegetables – cooking for a short period of time in a small amount of water. Demonstrate with vegetables of different colors (white, green, yellow, orange, red, etc.).
3. Take examples of several vegetables the homemakers may not be using such as rutabaga, parsnips, acorn squash, broccoli, brussels sprouts, or cauliflower. Have a tasting party to encourage them to try new vegetables.
4. Check prices at the local grocery stores. Record and compare prices of vegetables purchased in different forms – fresh, canned, or frozen. Compare packaged vegetables against loose vegetables and national brands against store brands.

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