



This newsletter is produced by the *Nutrition Education Network of Washington*, to enhance communication and coordination among those who educate Washington families about nutrition and food. *Energize* shares brief information about programs and materials that support healthful and enjoyable eating.

Tell Us What's New...

What's new with your organization? To submit news to *Energize*, call Martha Marino 206-817-1466, e-mail martha_marino@yahoo.com.

Deadline for submission is the last day of each month.

Subscription Information

Energize can be sent to you electronically each month. There is no charge.

To order or unsubscribe contact: Christa Albice, WSU Puyallup, 253-445-4541. Fax 253-445-4621, e-mail albice@wsu.edu.

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For more information about the *Nutrition Education Network of Washington* or to access past issues of this newsletter, see <http://nutrition.wsu.edu>.



ENERGIZE YOUR LIFE!
EAT HEALTHY-BE ACTIVE

Information provided by Washington State University Extension's NEN of WA. This material was funded in part by USDA's Food Stamp Program. The Food Stamp Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your local DSHS Community Service Office.

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This Month's Focus:

Farm Bill and Washington's Food Programs

On October 1, a new Farm Bill goes into effect. Covering more than farms, this bill changes some food assistance programs so low resource individuals and families will have more access to food. The Farm Bill increases deductions and minimum benefit levels for the Food Stamp Program (called Basic Food in Washington), increases funding for the school Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, initiates funding for school gardening programs, and, provides more funding for the Emergency Food Assistance Program. This issue of *Energize* for Nutrition Educators highlights some of these changes.

The Old and the New Compared – How does a nutrition educator pour through the voluminous new Farm Bill to figure out what is changed in food-related programs? For a side-by-side comparison of the nutrition provisions in the 2008 Farm Bill and previous legislation, go to

www.ers.usda.gov/FarmBill/2008/Titles/TitleIVNutrition.htm



Food Stamps Renamed – Nationally, the Farm Bill changed the name of the Food Stamp Program to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) beginning in October 2008. In Washington State, the program will continue to be called the Basic Food Program.

Notable Nutrition Provisions in Washington State – Basic Food helps individuals and families who meet income guidelines afford a nutritious diet. Eligible people get an electronic benefits card (EBT card) to use at participating grocery stores.

- For Basic Food eligibility, the deduction of \$175/month cap on childcare (\$200 per month if child is under two) has been lifted for working parents.
- Certification for Basic Food automatically enrolls children in the School Nutrition Program to receive free meals at school.
- People certified for Basic Food are also eligible for a reduced phone rate through the Washington Telephone Assistance Program. Basic Food recipients can call 1-888-700-8800 for more information.

Certification for Basic Food meets the income test for the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program. Recipients may take the award letter or EBT card to the WIC clinic.

Farm Bill Buys Local Specialty Crops –The Farm Bill breaks new ground with strong support for specialty crop block grants to the Washington State Department of Agriculture, which will then provide grants to local organizations for research and promotion of local products. According to Lee Faulkner with Washington

Department of Agriculture, Washington ranks third in the nation in specialty crops including apples, raspberries, vegetables, and potatoes – virtually every crop in the state except wheat. Farm Bill funding for specialty crops is also awarded to universities, and Washington State University will be a recipient. Although the exact amount of funding isn't known yet, estimates are \$250,000 for the first year, ramping up to \$3,000,000 through 2012. (Source: Lee Faulconer, Policy Assistant to the Director, Washington State Department of Agriculture, 360-902-1804, L.Faulconer@agr.wa.gov)

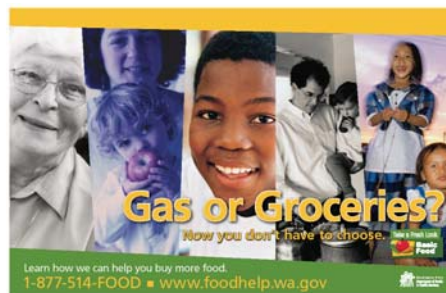
News You Can Use

More Washingtonians Eligible for Food Assistance – Although not related to the Farm Bill, October 1 marks an important date for hungry Washingtonians. About 23,000 of Washington's working poor will begin receiving Basic Food for a total of \$15-16 million per year in new food stamp benefits. The federal government allows states to expand eligibility by increasing the gross income level for applicants, which allows for high living expenses such as housing, transportation and childcare. The new eligibility standards for Basic Food will increase to 200% of poverty from 130%. The feds provide funding for food stamp benefits, but individual states must share the cost of administering the program, including staffing. After the legislature and Governor Gregoire approved this, a state hiring freeze went into effect. The state is moving forward with the program anyway. Energize readers who work with low-resource clients can help get the word out about the change: although many more households will be eligible for the program, only a small portion are anticipated to apply and receive benefits. People can apply now to get pre-approved for benefits beginning October 1. Although the federal Food Stamp Program is limited to U.S. citizens who meet specific program rules, Washington State does pay for Basic Food benefits for legal immigrants who may not meet federal citizenship rules. Undocumented immigrants are not eligible. The Anti-Hunger and Nutrition Coalition was the major energy behind these changes. (Contact: John Camp, Lead Analyst for Food Assistance Programs, Community Services Division, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, 360-759-2913 or 360-725-4616, campjx@dshs.wa.gov and Linda Stone, Children's Alliance, 509-747-7205, Linda@childrensalliance.org)

2010 Dietary Guidelines Are Off and Running – The first meeting of the 2010 Dietary Guidelines Committee may take place as early as this month. This fall, nutrition experts on the committee will be examining new evidence-based research to determine whether changes in recommendations would be warranted. This is a long process: the final version is anticipated for release Fall 2010. The first Dietary Guidelines were released in 1980, and have been updated every five years. For a timeline, see www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/DietaryGuidelines/2010/DietaryGuidelinesTimetable.pdf and for current and past guidelines, see www.cnpp.usda.gov/Dietaryguidelines.htm

Tools of the Trade

Outreach Materials for Basic Food – To spread the word that more people will qualify for food assistance in Washington State, the Department of Social and Health Services has begun a marketing campaign called "Take a Fresh Look: Basic Food." In Pierce and King counties, bus signs promote the expanded eligibility limits. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Washington State Dairy Council are sponsoring public service announcements for local radio stations to provide information about the change and promote the toll-free number and website. Nutrition educators, community-based organizations, and others working with vulnerable populations may download outreach materials such as brochures, bookmarks, fact sheets, and a question-and-answer document, at www.foodhelp.wa.gov (For hard copies, contact John Camp below.) Eligibility questions may be answered at 877-514-FOOD in English and Spanish, with translators available for other languages. People may apply at a local office, online at www.foodhelp.wa.gov, through a local contractor; or a phone interview may be used if an applicant cannot do so in person. (Contact: John Camp, Lead Analyst for Food Assistance Programs, Community Services Division, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, 360-759-2913 or 360-725-4616, campjx@dshs.wa.gov)



Washington Grown

Fresh this month – This summer's weather has been more cool and damp than the past few years, resulting in a delay in harvesting some crops, such as corn and tomatoes. On the other hand, it has extended the season for some berries into late August. A sampling of vegetables harvested this month includes beets, bok choy, broccoli, carrots, cucumbers and pickling cucumbers, green beans, lettuces, squash blossoms. Stone fruits are available in abundance: apricots, peaches, Italian prune plums, peaches, pluots, and plums. A wide variety of apples and pears are on display at local farmers' markets. You can also forage for plump and juicy blackberries – just make sure they haven't been sprayed.

OUR MISSION: The Nutrition Education Network coordinates nutrition education efforts to communicate consistent, positive and relevant messages to increase awareness of healthful and enjoyable eating among low-income families. *Energize* is one way that the Network shares information and resources to accomplish this mission.

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