



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.

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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>.



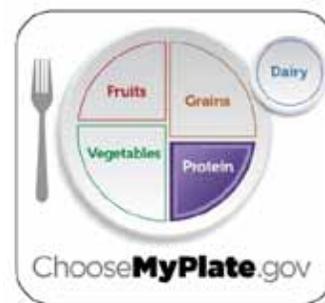
**ENERGIZE YOUR LIFE!**  
**EAT HEALTHY-BE ACTIVE**

Information provided by Washington State University Extension's NEN of WA. This material was funded in part by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP 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: Protein Foods***

For the first time, the 2010 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC) looked at the relationship between protein and health outcomes. The committee had not done so in the past because average intake in the US has been fine. Because the 2010 guidelines were intended for a population that is largely overweight, it warranted a look at protein. In recent years, research has focused on the benefits of high-quality protein throughout the day for weight loss and satiety, the importance of protein at breakfast, and the role of protein in body composition. In the 2010 guidelines, eating patterns include protein from a variety of sources; the USDA Food Pattern, DASH Diet, and Mediterranean Diet all include plant and animal sources. The guidelines also include a lacto-ovo vegetarian plan and a vegan plan as healthful ways to meet dietary recommendations. With the current interest in protein in the diet, this issue of *Energize for Nutrition Educators* focuses on protein recommendations, new research on protein foods, and tools to use in your nutrition education efforts.



**PROTEIN FOODS**

**Protein and Health –**  
The DGAC did not find any strong evidence linking animal protein with health problems. The health

problems result rather in consuming portions that are too large (and with consequently too many calories) and charring or overcooking meat (which can be linked to certain cancers). Likewise, the DGAC did not find significant health benefits of plant proteins. Plant protein was linked to lower blood pressure, but that could be due to other components in plant foods, such as fiber. When consuming plant foods that have incomplete proteins, the missing amino acids should be consumed the same day.

(Source: <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/DietaryGuidelines/2010/DGAC/Report/D-4-Protein.pdf>).

**Name Change but No Identity Crisis –** With the release of the 2010 Dietary Guidelines, the Meat & Beans food group was renamed Protein Foods. This group includes seafood, meat, poultry, eggs, beans and peas, soy products, nuts, and seeds. The new guidelines specifically recommend consuming 8 or more ounces of seafood per week to prevent heart disease (due to the EPA and DHA content in seafood). This can be accomplished by replacing meat or

poultry with seafood twice a week. Current consumption of seafood is about 3½ ounces per week. Certain tree nuts (such as almonds, pistachios and walnuts) also reduce risk for heart disease and should be consumed as part of the recommendation for the Protein Foods group. (Source: Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010, pages 38-39, [www.cnpp.usda.gov/DGAs2010-PolicyDocument.htm](http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/DGAs2010-PolicyDocument.htm)).

**Beans, Peas, and Other Pulses** – Dried beans and peas have long been recognized as being good sources of protein, dietary fiber, iron, and zinc. They are also rich sources of certain phytochemicals which may reduce the risk of certain cancers. Dried beans are easy to prepare by soaking overnight, then cooking.. A variety of beans is also available in cans, ready to heat and serve. The 2010 Dietary Guidelines recommends increasing our consumption of beans and peas, and classifies them in two food groups, Protein Foods and Vegetables. For interesting recipes using legumes, try these resources:

- Delightfully illustrated and popular for years, the Bean Book by Washington WIC Nutrition Program remains a favorite for low-cost recipes: [www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Sharing\\_Center/WA\\_beanbook.pdf](http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Sharing_Center/WA_beanbook.pdf)
- USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council (represents legumes grown in the Palouse in Washington State and Idaho), [www.pea-lentil.com/recipes](http://www.pea-lentil.com/recipes)
- The Northern Pulse Growers Association in North Dakota has information for food professionals including a downloadable booklet, “Pulses: The heart of healthy food” at [www.northernpulse.com/products](http://www.northernpulse.com/products)

**Lower Cooked Temperature for Pork** – USDA’s new recommendation for cooking whole cuts of meat is heating to 145 degrees (Fahrenheit) as measured by a food thermometer placed in the thickest part of the meat, then allowing it to rest for three minutes before carving or consuming. The previous recommendation for cuts of pork had been 160 degrees. The safe temperature for cuts of beef, veal, and lamb is unchanged at 145 degrees, but USDA has added a three-minute rest time to those recommendations. The safe temperature remains at 160 degrees for ground meats and 165 degrees for chicken. USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service found that it is just as safe to cook cuts of pork to 145 degrees with a three-minute rest time as it is to cook them to 160 degrees. Consumers typically think that the color pink is a sign of undercooked meat. No so. If raw pork is cooked to 145 degrees and allowed to sit for three minutes, it might be pink but it’s still safe. The key is using a meat thermometer instead of the eye to judge whether meat is safe to eat. (Sources: [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/NR\\_052411\\_01/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/NR_052411_01/index.asp) and [www.fsis.usda.gov/factsheets/Pork\\_From\\_Farm\\_to\\_Table/index.asp#19](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/factsheets/Pork_From_Farm_to_Table/index.asp#19) )

**Goat Meat on the Rise** – With the influx of immigrants whose traditional food ways include goat meat, the popularity of this protein food is on the rise. Goat is a popular meat around the world, estimated at 63% of all meat consumed internationally . Capitalizing on the growing interest in goat meat, some restaurants offer goat dishes on their menus. According to the USDA, meat goats in the US totaled more than three million head in 2010. Meat from goats can be referred to as *chevon* and *cabrito*. Although goat meat is rarely available in mainstream supermarkets, it can be found in ethnic grocery stores, including those that offer foods for people from North Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean and Mexico. It’s a lean meat, lower in calories, total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol than chicken, beef, or pork. Because of its low fat content and minimal marbling, goat should be cooked with moisture, such as braising and stewing. For background about goat meat, see [www.agmrc.org/commodities\\_products/livestock/goats/meat\\_goats.cfm](http://www.agmrc.org/commodities_products/livestock/goats/meat_goats.cfm). For nutrition information, see [www.aces.edu/pubs/docs/U/UNP-0061](http://www.aces.edu/pubs/docs/U/UNP-0061)



Photo courtesy of Marketing Resource Center, Iowa State University and USDA

**The “Smiling Nut”: Pistachios** – Take a look at a pistachio in the shell and you can see why it looks like it’s cracking a smile. For more than 9,000 years, the pistachio has been consumed, and in 1970 the first pistachio orchard was planted in the US. Since its first commercial harvest in California, the pistachio has grown in popularity in this country. As a snack, pistachios in the shell contribute fewer calories than unshelled pistachios. Why? It takes longer to individually open the shell, so people eat fewer of them! For nutrition information, recipes, and background information, go to [www.pistachiohealth.com](http://www.pistachiohealth.com)

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**Meat and Cancer** – Red meat and processed meat are considered by some to be linked to an increased risk of certain types of cancer, particularly colorectal cancer. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association and National Pork Board offer a lengthy report that goes into great detail on the epidemiologic studies on red meat and processed meat, and the strength of the evidence linking these foods to cancer. After looking at hundreds of studies, the author could not find a cause-and-effect relationship between red meat or processed meat and cancer, and recommends these sources of protein as part of an overall balanced diet. The downloadable report for health professionals is available at [www.porkandhealth.org/NutritionMaterials/99/RedMeatandProcessedMeatConsumptionandCancer.aspx](http://www.porkandhealth.org/NutritionMaterials/99/RedMeatandProcessedMeatConsumptionandCancer.aspx)

**Vegetarian Diets and Weight Management** – Using data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) 1999-2004, researchers found that the lacto-ovo vegetarian dietary pattern is more nutrient-dense than that of non-vegetarians. Kilocalorie for kilocalorie, vegetarians had higher intakes of fiber, vitamins A, C, and E, thiamin, riboflavin, folate, calcium, magnesium, iron, and potassium than non-vegetarians. The higher mean calcium intake was due to higher dairy consumption. Vegetarians in the study consumed 363 fewer kcal/day than non-vegetarians. Authors concluded that a vegetarian diet can be a nutrient-dense, lower-energy weight management eating pattern. (Source: Farmer B, BT Larson, VL Fulgoni, AJ Rainville, and GU Liepa, "A vegetarian dietary pattern as a nutrient-dense approach to weight management: An analysis of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 1999-2004." *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 111(6):819-826, June 2011.)

## IN THE MEDIA

**Witnesses to Hunger Project** – Using their own digital photographs, 40 low-income women in Philadelphia give first-person accounts showing their struggle to provide food for their children for a project called "Witnesses to Hunger." It is a graphic record of what it is like to live in poor conditions and have little food to feed their children. See [www.witnessestohunger.org](http://www.witnessestohunger.org)

## WASHINGTON GROWN

**Fresh This Month** – Mmmmm! Nothing like a ripe tomato from a backyard garden, right? Well, this summer has been a long time coming in the Pacific Northwest, but recent sunshine has brought out the best in home-grown tomatoes and those at farmers' markets. Look for beefsteak, Roma, grape tomatoes in both red and yellow, and try a bulbous heirloom variety. August is a good month for sweet corn, eggplant, peppers, and summer squash. At farm stands and farm markets, some vendors will offer a taste of their stone fruit: apricots, nectarines in either white or yellow, peaches, plums, Italian prune plums. If you see a sign for a pluot or aprium, know that both are crosses between apricots and plums.



Photo courtesy of Washington State Department of Health, WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program.

## DID YOU KNOW?

What is a "pulse" if it's not something you check when you're exercising or in the doctor's office? A pulse is the dried seed of any legume. So then, what's a legume (pronounced lehg-YOOM or LEHG-yoom)? It can be thousands of plant species that have seed pods that split along both sides when ripe. Just a few examples of legumes that we eat are chickpeas, kidney beans, cannellini beans, pinto beans, lentils, and soybeans. Other legumes, such as clover and alfalfa, are used as animal feed. High-protein pulses are used as a staple around the world, in part because they store well and are highly nutritious. (Source: Herbst, ST, *Food Lover's Companion*).

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