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Eat Right for Life



A Nutrition Education Curriculum

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IFAS Cooperative Extension

Vision

The Vision for the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) is to increase and strengthen the knowledge base and technology for:

- Expanding the profitability of global competitiveness and sustainability of the food, fiber, and agricultural industries of Florida.
- Protecting and sustaining natural resource and environmental systems.
- Enhancing the development of human resources.
- Improving the quality of human life.

Mission

The Mission of UF/IFAS is to develop knowledge in agricultural, human and natural resources and to make that knowledge accessible to sustain and enhance the quality of human life.





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This publication was funded by the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program and University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service.

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Eat Right for Life

Introduction

About the Curriculum

Eat Right for Life was designed by UF/IFAS Cooperative Extension and the USDA's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program. It is a series of 20 stand-alone, self-contained lessons. The lessons are targeted to limited-resource, adult audiences. However, some activities and lessons may be adapted for younger audiences. The lesson topics were determined according to the needs of the Florida Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and the USDA's MyPyramid, based on the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. We created this curriculum to be easily adaptable to a variety of time and resource constraints.

- The lessons do not have to be presented in numerical order.
- Each lesson takes about 30 minutes to teach, but can be adapted to be longer or shorter as needed.
- Some lessons may be combined with others.
- A variety of teaching aids such as transparencies, PowerPoint shows, and flip charts.
- A variety of activities and recipes requiring different amounts of time, space, and kitchen equipment.

1. MyPyramid
2. Getting Your Grains
3. Vary Your Vegetables
4. Focus on Fruits
5. Get Your Calcium
6. Go Lean on Protein
7. Know Your Fats
8. Discretionary Calories: Use Extra Calories Wisely
9. Be Active
10. Fresh Produce: From Farm to Table
11. Reading Labels for Better Nutrition
12. Meal Planning for Good Nutrition
13. Saving Money on Meals
14. Eating Breakfast: The Best Way to Start the Day!
15. Snack Smart
16. Keep Food Safe
17. Feeding Infants
18. Feeding Young Children
19. Eating for Healthy Mom and Baby
20. Disaster Food Safety



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Educational Theory & Framework

Experiential Learning

The following principles can be inferred from Carl Rogers' work with psychology and experiential learning.

1. Information presented must be relevant to the learner.
2. The goal of experiential learning is personal change and growth.
3. Experiential learning focuses on the needs and wants of the learner through applied knowledge.
4. Applied knowledge is an act or behavior the teacher wishes the student to implement.
5. Learners must participate in the learning process.
6. The role of the teacher is to facilitate learning.

The goal of teaching nutrition is applied knowledge – eating better and exercising for a healthy life. Therefore, we used experiential learning as the basis of our curriculum. Using the above principles, we incorporated several distinct aspects into our curriculum:

1. Discussion Questions: Discussion questions are designed to encourage active participation and to have participants think about and share what they are currently doing and how they are currently eating. By beginning with the needs of the participant, the curriculum is able to convey relevance of the material to the learners' current situations.
2. Group Activities: Group activities are

designed so that the learner may participate in the learning process. The activities reinforce the concepts that the curriculum presents.

3. Food Demonstrations: Food demonstrations are used to apply the concepts that the participants learn throughout the lessons.
4. Inclusive Language: Throughout the curriculum, we purposely used first person plural for the material that is aimed at the learner. This conveys camaraderie between the Nutrition Educator and the student. In this way, the learner does not feel admonished to eat better and exercise. Rather, the learner is encouraged to apply the knowledge with helpful suggestions. When the Nutrition Educator refers to what "we" need to do, or what "our" diets are like, the participant is more at ease and feels less singled out. Further, the participant does not feel alone in her quest for better health; she feels "hey, there is someone out there struggling with the same things I am struggling with."

"Experience is, for me, the highest authority. The touchstone of validity is my own experience. No other person's ideas, and none of my own ideas, are as authoritative as my experience. It is to experience that I must return again and again, to discover a closer approximation to truth as it is in the process of becoming in me."

—Carl Rogers



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Found in Translation

Spanish Language Materials

In Florida, nearly one-third of the food stamp population is of Hispanic descent. Many of these individuals speak only Spanish or speak Spanish at home. Therefore, it was extremely important to us to have a curriculum that was not only culturally-relevant to this audience, but also to be in the Spanish language.

As anyone who has studied Spanish in a formal setting understands, Spanish is not the same throughout the world. Spaniards, Mexicans, Cubans, Colombians, Puerto Ricans, and all other countries each have their own set of vocabulary and idioms that are distinct from the others. In light of this, we had an important decision to make about our translation. Which cultural language would guide or translation? Each language variant can at times be as different as two separate languages. And what may offend in one region is perfectly acceptable in another.

We decided to use a team of translators, led by someone who has formally studied the Spanish language. Jessica RA Caicedo, BA in Spanish from the Department of Romance Languages and Literature at the University of Florida, agreed to lead our team. Jessica also holds a minor in Family, Youth, and Community Sciences. This was essential in the selection process. Not only does she have a firm academic understanding of the language, she is also familiar with the IFAS mission and knowledgeable about the limited income audience we serve in EFNEP. Jessica also serves on her church's translation team. In this capacity, she contemporaneously translates the sermon as the pastor delivers it.

Because this curriculum is primarily intended for use in Florida, we decided to have our team of translators have their origins in the Caribbean and South America. Our four translators are from Colombia, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela. This allows us to better reach all audiences with appropriate language choices.

Please note that if you are using the Spanish translation, some of the words may not be what you would have chosen to use. This is because of the care with which we crafted our words to reflect all regions of the Hispanic culture to better reach these important members of our society.



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Acknowledgements

Nutrition Essentials (2002) served as the basis of and starting point for Eat Right for Life. Special acknowledgements to Jennifer Hillan and Isabel Valentin-Oquendo, writers of the Nutrition Essentials curriculum.



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Teaching Tips for Presenters

Teaching Tips for Presenters

- Read the entire lesson well in advance of your scheduled presentation. Familiarize yourself with the objectives, activities, lesson content, handouts, and visuals. Gather any additional resources you feel are appropriate for your audience.
- A few days before the presentation, collect the necessary teaching materials for the lesson and activities. Make copies of recipes and handouts, as needed.
- Arrive early at the lesson site to set up. Begin and end as scheduled.
- Promote an open learning environment and put the group at ease by having each participant introduce themselves before beginning the lesson. You may also decide to complete a short icebreaker before starting the lesson.
- If you are giving a series of lessons, explain how the current lesson ties in with others in the series. Also ask them if they have changed their eating habits or done anything differently as a result of the previous lesson(s).
- Promote audience participation by asking questions during the lesson and allowing short group discussions. Encourage them to ask questions if they do not understand something and assure them that no question is too dumb to ask.
- Use your judgment in scheduling a break, if needed. Watch the audience's attentiveness—if they appear tired or inattentive, have a quick stretching break.
- Always read the instructions for activities aloud. Read fact sheets aloud if time permits. Don't assume everyone in the group is able to read.
- At the end of the lesson, restate the key points. Ask the group what they plan to do as a result of taking part in the lesson. You may also ask the participants to make a statement of commitment after each lesson.



Teaching Tips for the Food Demonstration

The food demonstration is an optional teaching tool. The main purpose of the food demonstration is to reinforce the nutrition message of the lesson by having the participants practice what they just learned. In other instances, food demonstrations offer participants an opportunity to try new foods/recipes. It's important **not** to use food demonstrations as incentives for attendance or as treats.

- Test the recipe by preparing it a few days or a week before presenting the lesson. (Cut the ingredients in half to save on food cost.) You know your audience and could make minor adjustments to a recipe to make it more appropriate for them, such as substituting locally-grown produce. Keep in mind that adjustments should not substantially alter the recipe.
- The day before the demonstration, gather all the ingredients and equipment you will need, including mixing bowls, measuring cups, eating utensils, and serving plates.
- Always practice food safety principles during pre-preparation, preparation, and serving. If you plan to make the recipe after presenting the lesson, be sure to keep perishable foods cold while you are presenting the lesson. If you do some of the pre-preparation in the County Extension office kitchen or at home, make sure to tell your audience about the food safety practices you followed during pre-preparation.
- If desired, get your audience involved in making and serving the recipe. For example, one person could chop produce while another person measures liquid. Use your best judgment in deciding how much the audience will get involved.
- Make enough of the recipe for your audience to sample. Keep in mind that you are only serving enough for them to taste the food and you are not feeding them an entire meal. By serving smaller portions, you will have more money available for future food demonstrations.



(Continued on page I-9)



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Food Demonstrations

Teaching Tips for the Food Demonstration

(Continued from page 1-8)

- Talk about the recipe with the audience as you are preparing it. Talking points include:
 - the nutritional value of various ingredients
 - the cost of the recipe (Highlight items that could be expensive, but that last a long time, like spices. Suggest less expensive substitutions when applicable.)
 - the source of food, whether it's available at a discount store, can be bought with food stamps or WIC vouchers, or is available through Food Commodities
 - food safety tips relevant to the recipe, such as avoiding cross contamination or cooking to the recommended internal temperature
 - possible foods to serve with the recipe to make a balanced meal
- When the demonstration is complete and everyone has had an opportunity to try the recipe, ask participants for comments about it. Did they like it? Would they try making it at home? Do they think their family will like it or try it? What adjustments could they make so the recipe would be more appealing to their family (without affecting the nutritional value of the recipe)?
- Thank participants for trying the recipe and distribute copies of the recipe.

