



United States Department of Agriculture

Summer Meals Summer Fun

ACTIVITY GUIDE **FOR FAMILIES**



Your Guide to Summer Fruits and Vegetables

Help keep your family healthy and happy by eating summer fruits and vegetables at meals and snacks.



Look inside for:

- Ways to get kids asking for more fruits & veggies
- Money-saving tips for any budget
- A fun and motivating family challenge



SUMMER
FOOD
SUMMER
MOVES



Turn Your Kitchen Into a Fruit & Veggie Paradise



Little nudges can make a big difference. Just like grocery stores keep last-minute snacks in the checkout line and restaurants offer samples to tempt you, you can use those same ideas to get your kids to choose fruits and vegetables more often. Try them out to make your home a place where kids eat fruits and vegetables at meals and snacks.



Put fruits and vegetables on display, like in a fruit bowl on the counter. Keep less healthy snacks out of sight or, better yet, buy them less often.



Make fruits and vegetables easy for kids to reach and eat. Cut them up and keep them in bags or reusable plastic containers in the fridge.



Let them be produce pickers! Ask your kids which vegetables and fruits they'd like to try. Ask them to help you make the shopping list. Use words like *fresh*, *juicy*, *tasty*, *sweet*, and *crisp* to describe fruits and vegetables.

4 Ways to Eat More Fruits & Veggies

Eating fruits and vegetables can save you money if you make some smart buying choices.

1. Buy in season. Fruits and vegetables are usually cheaper and taste better when they are in season. This is the time of year when the fruit or vegetable ripens and is picked. You can find seasonal produce in the grocery store. Or, try visiting a farmers market — your kids will love sampling fruits and vegetables and meeting farmers. Go to <http://search.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets> to find a farmers market near you.

2. Try frozen or canned. Frozen and canned produce are just as nutritious as fresh, and often cost less. Try frozen fruit in smoothies, or sauté frozen vegetables before adding them to pasta sauce. Look for vegetables that say “no salt added” or “low sodium.” Look for fruits canned in 100% fruit juice or water.



Look on the back page to see what's ripe and ready in summer!



3. Use your benefits. If you receive food assistance benefits, use your Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card to purchase fruits and vegetables, as well as seeds or plants for growing your own food. Plant lettuce or radish seeds for quick results.

4. Bring your kids to a summer meal site. Your child can enjoy a healthy meal with friends at a summer meal site.* Some sites also offer fun games, crafts, and activities. Kids and teens age 18 and under eat free. Call **1-866-348-6479**, or visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks> to find a site near you.

*In areas where at least 50 percent of children are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals, based on local school or census data.



Why Do Fruits and Veggies Matter?

Kids need fruits and vegetables for growing, learning, being active, and helping to stay healthy. *But...*

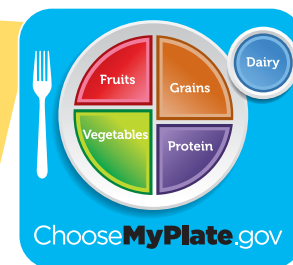
- Only 40% of kids ages 2-18 eat the recommended amount of fruit.¹
- Only 7% eat enough vegetables!¹

Fruits and vegetables provide many important nutrients including:

- Vitamin A
- Vitamin C
- Potassium
- Folate (a B vitamin)
- Fiber



1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Vital Signs: Fruit and Vegetable Intake Among Children — United States, 2003-2010. March 2014. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/fruit-vegetables>



The **MyPlate** icon reminds us to make half our plates fruits and vegetables. Try to follow this advice to make sure your family is eating enough. Also, fruits and veggies make great snacks! Find out exactly how many cups of fruits and vegetables everyone in your family needs each day by visiting <https://www.supertracker.usda.gov>.

GET HEALTHY AS A FAMILY!

FAMILY CHALLENGE:

Summer Fruit & Veggie Bingo

Want your kids to reach for a healthy snack? Work together as a family to complete the bingo challenge, and watch your kids learn healthy habits along the way! It's simple: just check off the fruits and vegetables as you try them over the summer.

These fruits & veggies are in season and are harvested during the summer.

