



Plant-Powered Promotions: Marketing Strategies for Plant-Based Menus

April 16, 2024

1:30 PM - 2:00 PM

**Professional Standards Learning Codes: 1100, 2100,
3200, 4100**



Meet Your Host



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HEALTH AND NUTRITION SERVICES SPECIALIST

Welcome!



upLIFT was designed specifically for child nutrition professionals like you. It offers resources to help you LEARN about nutrition, get INSPIRED on meal choices for your participants, FEED students healthy meals, and TEACH others in your community about your programs.

You can look forward to materials and monthly webinars featuring unique upLIFT content showcasing Arizona child nutrition professionals, and providing ongoing inspiration throughout the year. This will empower you to upLIFT your programs in your own unique way!

Overview

1. Benefits of Serving Plant-Based Meals
2. Perceptions of Plant-Based
3. Marketing Strategies for Plant-Based

Poll Question

Have you served a plant-based meal before?

- A. Absolutely!
- B. Not this year.
- C. Not sure what “plant-based” truly means.



Benefits of Serving Plant-Based Meals

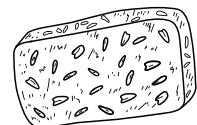
Introduction

What is “Plant-Based?”

From the Lunchbox.org, a recipe is considered plant-based when it:

- Is completely free of animal protein
- Is vegetarian
- Is a traditional meat-based recipe where some of the meat has been replaced with plant-based proteins that credit to the meal pattern

Quick examples of plant-based proteins include tofu and soy products, quinoa, tempeh, nuts, seeds, legumes, etc.

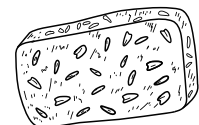
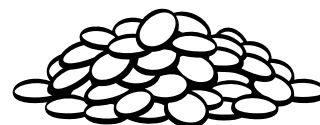


Introduction

What is “Plant-Forward?”

Meals that prioritize whole and/or plant foods and contain minimally processed ingredients and animal products. Serving plant-forward meals can be environmentally friendly and may be associated with several health benefits.

Consistently serving meals containing plant-based recipes, may make an impact on school finances, student health, and the environment.

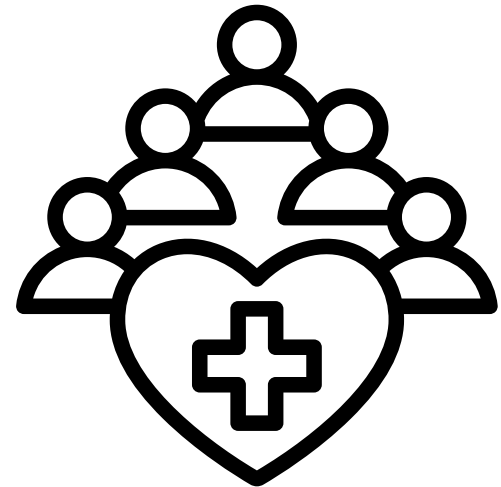


Benefits of Plant-Based

Student Health

Plant-based or plant-forward meals focus on **fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and proteins from plants rather than from meat**, and introduce students to a healthy diet at a young age.

- Prevent disease
- Reduced consumption of processed foods
- Encourage the addition of healthy foods vs total elimination of “unhealthy” foods for optimal health



Benefits of Plant-Based

Environmental Impact

Meals focused on plant foods can be better for the environment because plants **take fewer resources** to produce than meat.

- Water conservation
- Less emission of carbon dioxide/greenhouse gasses
- Less food waste from animal products contributing to greenhouse gas production

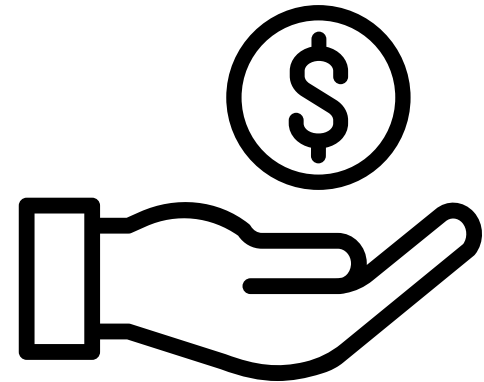


Benefits of Plant-Based

Financial Impact

Proteins that come from a plant-based source are **generally less expensive** than meat, depending on where it is sourced.

- Especially in larger schools, even serving plant-based proteins one day a week can have a large financial impact
- Purchasing locally-grown food supports the community

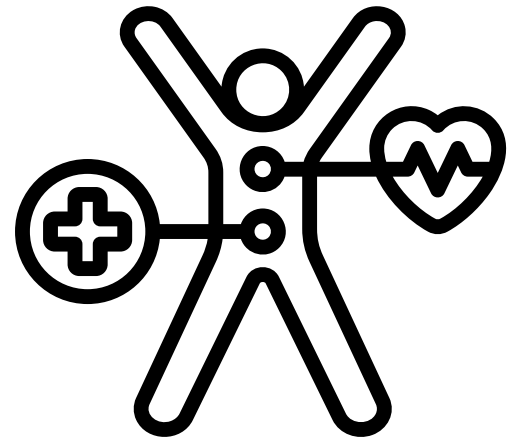


Benefits of Plant-Based

Nutritional Benefits of Plant-Based

Plant-based foods are rich in **fiber, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants** that can boost children's health.

This leads to the formation of healthy habits at a young age that can combat the development of chronic diseases later in life such as diabetes, high blood pressure and cholesterol, and heart disease.



Introduction

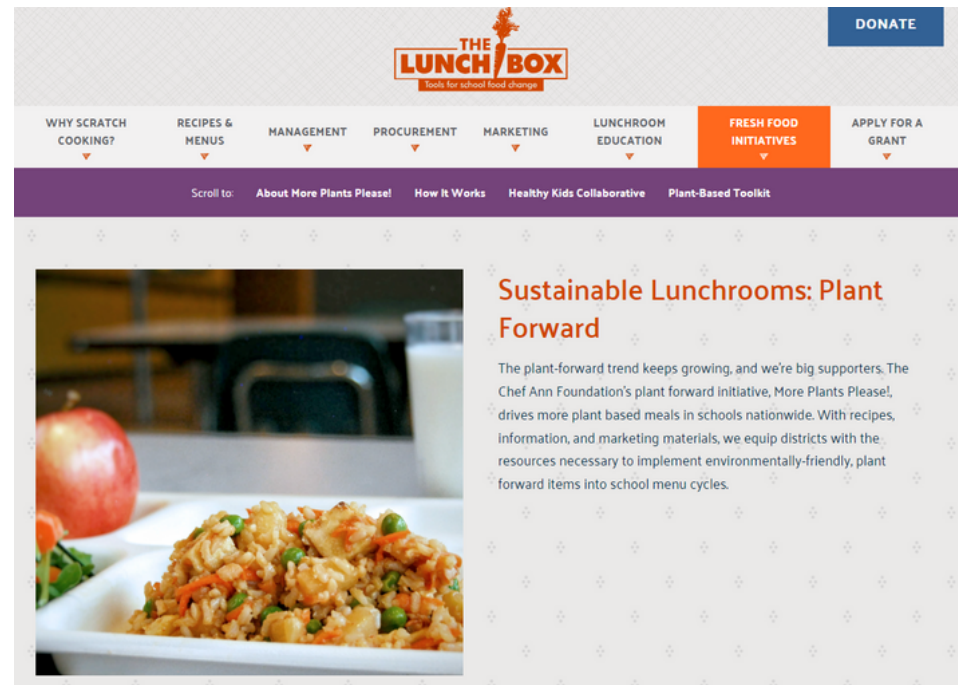
Examples of Whole Foods

- **Fruits:** berries, citrus fruits, pears, peaches, pineapple, bananas, etc.
- **Vegetables:** kale, spinach, tomatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, asparagus, peppers, potatoes, sweet potatoes, butternut squash, etc.
- **Whole grains:** brown rice, rolled oats, farro, quinoa, brown rice pasta, barley, etc.
- **Healthy fats:** avocados, olive oil, unsweetened coconut, etc.
- **Legumes:** peas, chickpeas, lentils, peanuts, black beans, etc.
- **Seeds, nuts, and nut butters:** almonds, cashews, macadamia nuts, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, peanut butter, tahini, etc.
- **Plant-based protein:** tofu, tempeh, plant-based protein sources or powders with no added sugar or artificial ingredients

Resource Initiative

More Plants Please!

Visit [The Lunchbox](#) for recipes and marketing materials to help you start serving more plant-based meals and start making your way to a plant-forward cycle!



Plant-Forward Recipes

More Plants Please: Recipes

These recipes have been tried and tested and meet all USDA standards and components. They can be scaled to fit your needs!

More Plants Please! Recipes

Check out three of our favorite plant forward recipes. Click [here](#) to see more in the recipe section.



BI BIM BAP BOWL

[For K-8](#)

[For 9-12](#)



QUINOA BURGER



VEGETABLE LASAGNA

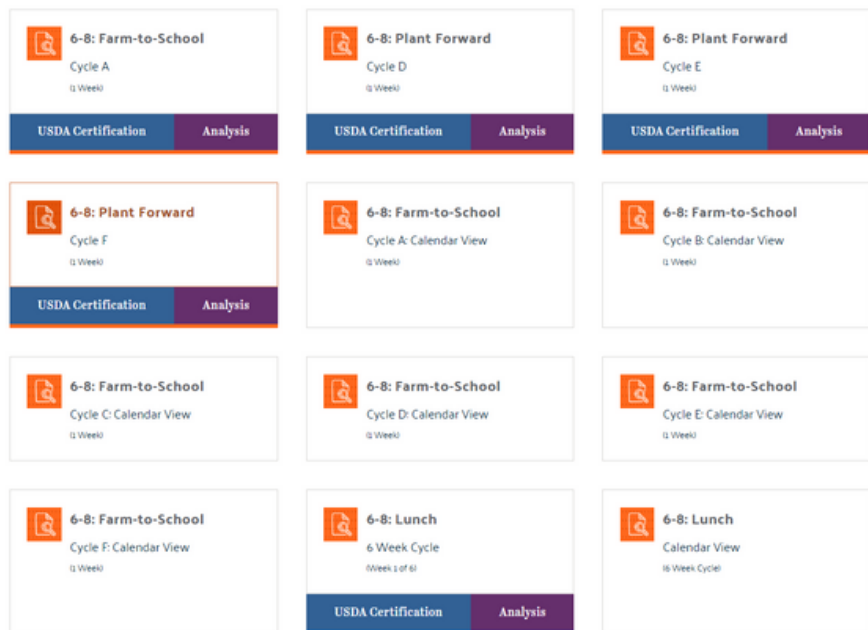
[For K-8](#)

[For 9-12](#)

Plant-Forward Menu Cycles

More Plants Please: Menu Cycles

Plant-based recipes have been combined to create one-week plant-forward menu cycles that include meat-based options but are focused on offering more fruits and vegetables, whole grains and plant-based proteins.



Promotional Materials

More Plants Please: Marketing Materials

Find materials and flyers that encourage students to eat more plants, explain to families and staff what plant-forward means, why it's healthier, and how to eat more plant-based meals.

Sustainable Lunchrooms: Tools & Resources

Here are all of the tools and resources from this section in one convenient place.

Poster & Flyers

You can download and print these files, or share with your local print shop for larger formats. Marketing materials can be an easy way to promote the health and environmental benefits, as well as an easy introduction to plant forward meals.



WATER CONSUMPTION IMPACT



Water Consumption - Elementary Ages (24 x 36)

This poster is designed to show students how much water it takes to produce a meat-based lunch versus a plant forward one.

Plant-Based Toolkit

More Plants Please: Toolkit

This plant-based toolkit provides all the necessary resources to set you up for success

- examples of kid-approved recipes
- tips on sampling new menu items marketing tools



Culinary Inspired
PLANT-BASED TOOLKIT
for k-12 Schools

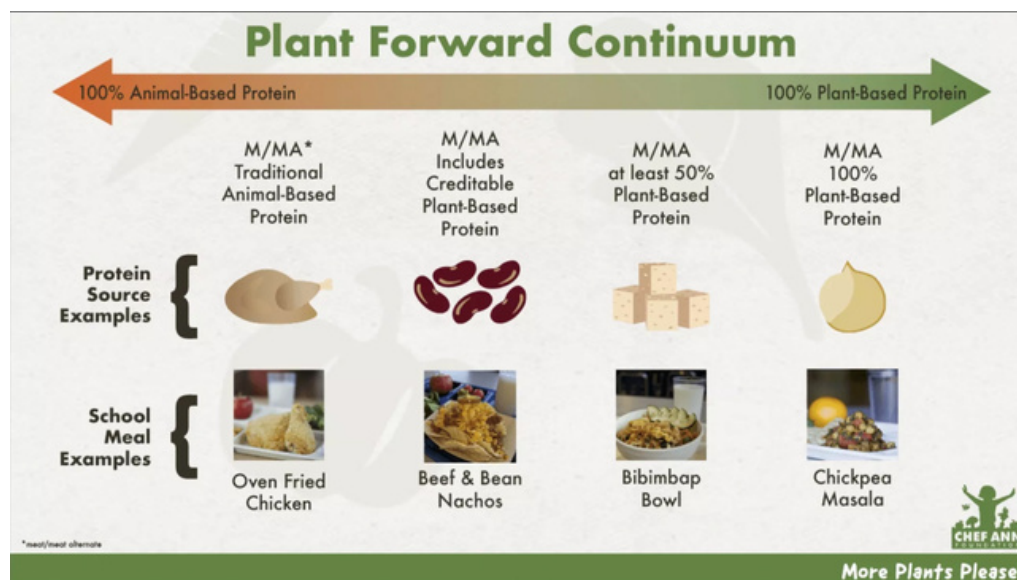


Plant-Forward Continuum

Starting with Plant-Based

Schools can start slowly!

- Begin by reflecting on your current menu
- Strategically add or adjust recipes that move your overall menu along the “continuum”



Perceptions of Plant- Based

Perceptions of Plant-Based

Quick Facts



Students and parents are actually more in favor of serving vegetarian and vegan meals than we think!



Research shows that providing options and consistent exposure to plant-based recipes can lead to behavior change



Plant-based eating is becoming trendy...lean into the trend!



Plant-forward menus may accommodate religious and cultural preferences of your students



Serving plant-based dishes aligns really well with local purchasing

Perceptions of Plant-Based

Full list of motivators for purchasing decisions

Delicious	0.71	Strong Positive	Novel	0.24	Weak Positive (continued)
Appealing	0.69		Sustainable	0.23	
Tasty	0.64		Affordable	0.21	
Satisfying	0.61		Ethical	0.20	
Familiar	0.61		Humane	0.16	
Traditional	0.60	Moderate Positive	Low-salt	0.13	Very Weak Positive
Indulgent	0.58		Environmentally friendly	0.12	
Comfort food	0.56		Dairy-free	0.11	
Quality	0.56		Non-GMO	0.11	
Socially acceptable	0.55		High-protein	0.09	
Exciting	0.54		Meatless	0.09	
Interesting	0.48		High-fiber	0.09	
Safe	0.47		Low-fat	0.08	
Filling	0.47		Processed	0.06	
Simple	0.43		Masculine	0.05	
Fresh	0.40	Weak Positive	Egg-free	0.05	Very Weak Negative
Clean-label	0.37		Low-calorie	0.04	
Easy to prepare	0.36		Low-sugar	0.03	
Nutritious	0.34		Organic	0.02	
Innovative	0.34		Plant-based	-0.02	
Artisan	0.32		Vegan	-0.06	Weak Negative
Feminine	0.29		Fake	-0.13	
Healthy	0.28		Vegetarian	-0.13	
Natural	0.24		Bland	-0.17	
			Disgusting	-0.25	
			Strange	-0.35	

Note: Shades of green indicate an attribute's positive association with purchasing decisions, the darker greens showing stronger associations. Light pink indicates a very weak negative association with purchasing decisions.

Mindlab Study of Implicit Perceptions of the Plant-Based Category

Menu Marketing

The Power of Plant Messaging

Aim to focus on the **plant** characteristics of plant-based recipes.

Examples include: Plant protein, plant-based, veggie, 100% plant-based, 100% plants

Research shows that words such as: vegan, meat-free, meatless, vegetarian, and beef-less, may trigger negative associations when it comes to marketing.

Marketing Strategies for Plant-Based

Why Promote Plant-Based?

Marketing Matters

1. Let families that have a cultural, health, or religious preference towards vegetarian meals, that you are meeting their needs
2. Promote new menu items that you might not have thought about before; encourages creativity!
3. Combat any negative stigma with education and positive messaging surrounding plant-based meals

Promoting to Students

Best Practices

- Make **flavor** the primary message and priority
- Integrate plant-based entrees with **familiar and/or traditional** entrees and sides
 - Make common dishes and utilize plant-based foods as part of familiar meals. For example, pair plant-based meatballs with marinara sauce and spaghetti.
 - Plant-based burgers that look similar to the real thing
- Add twists when marketing for novelty (ex. try our new magic burger.. made only with plants!)
- Older students may be drawn to the environmental impact of plant-based recipes

Promoting to Parents

Best Practices

- Make the fact that you are serving **plant-based** the primary message
- Emphasize **protein content and good quality** (Plant protein is associated with good health)
- Positive framing - Talk about what your food offers (made from plants, plant-powered) instead of what it doesn't contain (meatless, reduced meat)
- Pointing out positive nutritional content (high protein, high fiber) is more effective than describing low levels of negative things (low sugar, low fat)

Marketing in Schools

Strategies for Success

- Invest in promotion - Use tools to make videos and materials all about YOUR dishes
- Use school events to be a sounding board for your plans of adding or eliminating foods from your menu - it is easy to find information about the benefits of plant-based to use to educate
- Start marketing on the webpage
- Takes time - it may be a slow start at first, but interest will pick back up with consistent exposure
- Offset high costs of plant-based products by purchasing heavily subsidized USDA Foods produce

Marketing in Cafeteria

Strategies for Success

- Get your team excited about plant-based! Train your staff on how to market plant-based dishes and describe the nutritional and sustainability advantages
- Promote Plant-Based on the menu, especially when you are just starting out (Veggie Tuesdays, Meatless Mondays, Plant-Powered Friday)
- Hold promotions/events!
 - Rainbow day, chef demos, art contests, field trips to farms or farmers markets, food festivals for the community showcasing new, exciting food items

Successes and Challenges

Best Practices

1. Beyond Meat Items - Are typically more expensive
 - a. Limit and Serve these less often
 - b. Higher cost is worth the benefits it provides to the students and the environment.
2. Unfamiliarity and apprehension to trying meatless dishes
 - a. Hold taste tests! If trying a new plant-based option from a vendor, get enough to try to hold some sort of event
3. Financial reservations
 - a. Starting out with familiar foods with a meatless twist will ensure you are still getting the participation
 - b. Use your USDA entitlement!!
4. Have a menu mix (serve your veggie option with a well-known, well-liked dish)
 - a. Even if the veggie option does not do well, the well-liked options will. Exposure is the goal

Promotional Materials

More Plants Please! Now Serving: Plant Forward Meals!

We are bringing some new recipes to the lunchroom! These recipes are part of a plant forward initiative to bring more plant-based foods into our school meals for students and staff.

What is Plant Forward?

- These meals emphasize plants as foundational to a healthy diet that consists of whole, fresh foods.
- Plant forward is inclusive, which means adding more plants into meals, rather than eliminating foods.

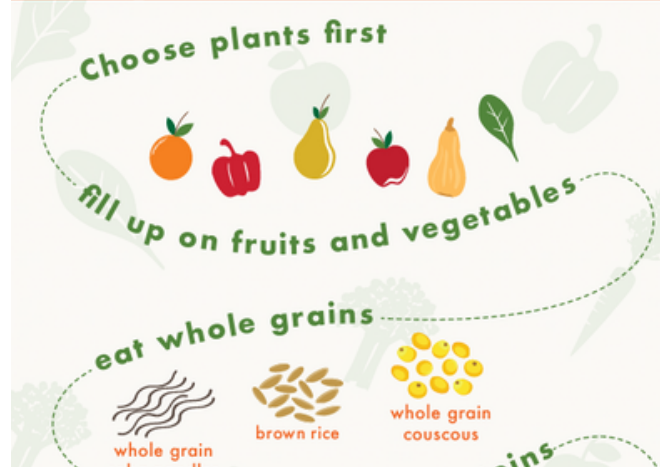
How to Eat Plant Forward?

- Eat ONE meal per week that is made entirely from plants.
- Fill half your plate with plants first. Choose from whole grains, fruits, and vegetables.
- Eat the rainbow by getting as many colors onto your plate as

Why Eat Plant Forward?

- Plant forward meals help cultivate life long eating habits that can prevent disease.
- Plant forward meals have little or no processed ingredients because they start with fresh whole foods.
- Filling our plates with more foods that come directly from plants

More Plants Please! Eat Your Way to Health



More Plants Please! Choices with Impact: Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

What is the impact of meat production on the quality of our air?

Each serving of beef produces 4.5 lbs of carbon dioxide equivalents, but what does that really mean?



1 Serving of Beef = Driving 5 mi



10 Servings of Beef = Driving 10 mi



1,000 Servings of Beef = Driving 5,003 mi

More Plants Please – at home!

1: Pick your favorite vegetables



2: Put them over whole grains



3: Top off with protein



Bowls! Bowls! Bowls!

Asian	Southwest	Mediterranean
soba noodles	brown rice	couscous
carrots	onions	onions
celery	tomatoes	tomato
onions	peppers	cucumber
broccoli	black beans	beef
tofu	cilantro	oregano
soy sauce	sour cream	greek yogurt
rice wine vinegar	lime juice	red wine vinegar

More Plants Please! Eat Your Way to Health

Can You Grow it...



Put It On Your Tray

More Plants Please! Choices with Impact: Save Water

How Much Water Did You EAT Today?

It takes roughly 312 gallons of water to produce a 2 oz beef patty.



It takes roughly 46 gallons of water to produce a serving of chickpeas.



Swap beef for chickpeas just once a week and save roughly 266 gallons of water!

More Plants Please! Choices with Impact: Save Water

It Takes...



To Grow Corn and Other Crops



To Feed a Cow



To Make Your Burger Patty

VS.



To Grow the Chickpeas



To Make Your Chickpea Dish

Popular Dishes

Try these recipes!

Examples of entrees that might be most successful as plant-based: Tacos, nachos, chow mein, plant-based cheeseburgers, spaghetti and plant-based meat sauce, plant-based crispy chicken. and plant-based meatball subs with marinara.

- SPINACH LENTIL RICE BOWL
- NACHO SEASONED LENTIL CRUMBLES
- QUINOA BURGER
- VEGETABLE LASAGNA

Resources

Whole Food Profile

Learn the basics to start cooking with this nutritious, whole food!

PINTO BEANS

Pinto beans are characterized by flattened, oblong seed shapes. They have a light brown background color overlain by a mottled pattern of darker brown splotches. Pinto beans contain the most fiber of all beans and are the most popular bean in the US.

How to Select and Store PINTO BEANS:

Selection
PLUMP SMOOTH INTACT

When selecting dried pinto beans, avoid packages containing broken, shriveled, or crushed beans. Reject beans that contain tiny pinholes, an indicator of bug infestation.

If consuming canned pinto beans, ensure the can is void of any dents to avoid possible contamination.

Storage
Dried and canned pinto beans can keep in an airtight storage container in a cool, dark, dry place out of direct sunlight for up to three years.

Open canned beans will last for three to four days in the refrigerator and one to two months in the freezer in an airtight container.

Nutrition Facts

1/2 cup (125g) of cooked beans	
Total Fat	0.5g
Sodium	1g
Total Carb	20g
Fiber	7g
Sugars	0g
Protein	7g
Calories	120

Tips for Preparing and Cooking:

Preparation
Soak dry beans overnight. Rinse and simmer in water. Check beans starting at 1 hour and every 15 minutes after that until tender. Add more liquid to the pot as needed, to keep the beans submerged. Season as desired.

Try PINTO BEANS...
Refried Heat beans as normal. Mash at least half of the beans until mostly incorporated. Add desired spices, salt, pepper, and enjoy.

Plant Based Protein
Use them as a fantastic vegetarian base in tacos, burritos, and soups. Incorporate dried beans and desired toppings for a protein and fiber rich taco option. Serve with a side of rice and enjoy!

Did you know?
Pinto Beans get their name from the Spanish word 'pinto,' meaning speckled or painted due to their dark spots!

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Whole Food Profile

How to Use Whole Foods

Innovative ideas for using real, whole foods in delicious ways!

PINTO BEANS

Pinto Beans are a staple of the Southwest. They are an excellent source of vegetable protein and minerals such as iron, magnesium, and zinc. Great news, they are also available year-round!

Examples:

Nachos with Diced Chicken

Vegetable Chili Boat

Taco Pie

Bean Tostada

Tofu Huevos Rancheros

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TIP!
Consider using Beans Pinto Low Sodium - 600mg Can 1 LB CS 100365 through USDA Foodst!

How to Use Whole Foods

Research Rundown

Article: Influence of an Educational Intervention on Eating Habits in School-Aged Children

What did this study examine?

The aim of this study was to evaluate the influence of an educational intervention in the modification of nutritional habits and healthy diets in school-aged children. The hypothesis was that an educational intervention on healthy lifestyle habits in school-aged children will allow them to diverge their unhealthy habits regarding their diets and incorporate healthier options daily.

What were the study methods and design?

An educational intervention with measurements made pre and post implementing nutrition education during in-home visits, competitions, informative videos, and educational workshops.

Key findings:

Increased Variety of Foods
All school children increased the variety and consumption of healthy foods, such as vegetables, meats, and fruits. Specifically, foods that children included previously considered 'less' in their diet.

Improved Eating Habits
After the educational intervention, there was a significant reduction in the intake of bread, oil, and sugary foods, in order to increase the consumption of fruit and vegetables.

Put it into practice!

Keep the nutrition education results in mind! Work with your administration to implement more immersive activities for their nutrition education. If you need motivation to collaborate, check out the *America's Healthiest School* award!

Consider the variety component! Incorporate nutrition education components in the cafeteria via handouts and table tents. Use it as the time to market all new and exciting menu items, provide information on produce items, and generate excitement over meal service!

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Research Rundown

Plant-Based Protein

Learn about these six powerful plant-based protein options that optimize your health, and delight your taste buds!

Edamame

- Young soybeans that are harvested before ripened
- Often enjoyed steamed and lightly salted
- Rich in protein, fiber, various vitamins and minerals

When the beans are outside of the pod, the term *edamame* is also sometimes used.

Legumes

- Encompasses all beans, peas, and lentils
- Versatile and nutritious, is a suitable meat substitute
- Rich in fiber, and beneficial for digestive health

Legumes can be used in a variety of dishes, from soups and stews to salads and dips.

Seeds

- Some popular edible seeds include chia seeds, flaxseeds, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, and sesame seeds
- Rich in essential nutrients like protein, fiber, healthy fats, vitamins, and minerals

Great sprinkled on top of salads, blended into smoothies, or used in baking recipes.

Nut Butter

- Nutritious source of healthy fats, protein, and essential vitamins and minerals
- Suitable for baking, adding richness and moisture to recipes like cookies, muffins, and energy bars

Can be added to smoothies, oatmeal, or yogurt to enhance flavor and provide a creamy texture.

Quinoa

- A whole grain that is a great source of folate, magnesium, zinc, and iron
- Considered a complete protein, containing all nine essential amino acids, making it an excellent source of protein for vegetarians

It is gluten-free, making it a suitable option for those with gluten sensitivities or celiac disease.

Tofu

- Considered a blank canvas for flavors, easily absorbing the seasonings and sauces
- Can be used in both savory and sweet dishes, from stir-fries and salads to desserts and smoothies

Available in different textures, such as silken, soft, firm, and extra firm.

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Nutrition Knowledge Fact Sheet

<https://www.azed.gov/hns/nslp/uplift/>

Reminder

upLIFT Your Voice!

Remember to tell us how YOU upLIFT'ed your voice this month! ADE wants to spotlight your marketing and promotional efforts! Email Ashley.Kennedy@azed.gov with any stories, photos, examples or anything you are excited about!



Looking Ahead

Join us next month!

Summer Edition: upLIFT Your Summer Meal Program!

May 21, 2024

1:30 pm to 2:00 pm

Be sure to attend our inaugural Summer Edition upLIFT Webinar! We will explore effective strategies for promoting your Summer Meal Programs and gain insights from a marketing expert on boosting participation in your summer programs. School Food Authorities and Community Organizations are encouraged to attend. Summer operators, this webinar is not to be missed!



Thank you!

Any questions?
Please type them into the Q&A now.

If you are attending the live webinar, you will receive an email once attendance has been completed. Once you have received this email, your training certificate will be available in Arizona Professional Learning Development (APLD).

If you are watching the recorded webinar, you can access the survey link and certificate of completion at the end of the webinar slides.



Congratulations!

You have completed the recorded webinar: [Plant-Powered Promotions: Marketing Strategies for Plant-Based Menus](#)

To request a certificate, please go to the next slide.

In order to count this training toward your Professional Standards training hours, the training content must align with your job duties.

Information to include when documenting this training for Professional Standards:

- Training Title: [Recorded Webinar: Plant-Powered Promotions: Marketing Strategies for Plant-Based Menus](#)
- Length: [0.5 hour](#)

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<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/upliftrecordedwebinar>

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2. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. email:

Program.Intake@usda.gov

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