



ENERGIZE YOUR LIFE!
EAT HEALTHY-BE ACTIVE

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 Newsletter for Nutrition Educators* shares brief information about programs and materials that support healthful and enjoyable eating.

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SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Energize Newsletter for Nutrition Educators can be sent to you electronically each month. There is no charge. To subscribe or unsubscribe, contact Christa Albice, WSU Puyallup, 253-445-4541, e-mail albice@wsu.edu.

To access past issues, go to
<http://nutrition.wsu.edu/take5/index.html>.

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This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. SNAP. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (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: <http://foodhelp.wa.gov> or the Basic Food Program at: 1 877 501 2233.

We value your opinions - please fill out our short questionnaire!

Please take a few minutes to provide your input. We conduct a survey of our readers biennially to assure the *Energize Newsletter* is meeting both your needs and ours.

All information is confidential.

Please click on the following link to complete this short survey:

<http://surveygoldcloud.com/s/B1E6BC6A5BAA4BEC/41.htm>

This Month's Focus- *Community Kitchens*

What is a community kitchen? It's as varied as the community itself. In general, a community kitchen is a public space where groups of people cook on a regular basis offering the opportunity for participants to share and learn cooking skills. Most are created in partnership with several agencies, often with support from NGOs and businesses, to collectively meet a local need. Community kitchens (also called



Photo Courtesy of SPU Community Kitchen

collective kitchens) are a useful venue for classes about how to reduce food costs and how to eat more healthful diets. These kitchens can serve as demonstration areas or provide stations for hands-on workshops and interactive classes. Some kitchen may have institutional equipment for preparing quantity foods for off-site soup kitchens or social service agencies. Others provide job skills training in culinary fields, particularly for disadvantaged individuals or others in transition. Some serve as "culinary business incubators" for small food-based businesses that do not have the equipment or facilities for production. In this issue of the *Energize Newsletter for Nutrition Educators*, we will describe a few examples of community kitchens in our state, along with advice for those who might want to start one.

New Kitchen at Second Harvest – Second Harvest in Spokane will soon open its doors to a new kitchen and a host of opportunities for nutrition education and food production. Its dream is being realized to create a place to teach cooking skills, particularly scratch cooking, and nutrition literacy. 2nd Harvest serves people in Eastern Washington who are struggling financially by providing food and resources to move them from hunger to health. Its 1,700 square-foot kitchen is being built in the distribution center where it receives food, then transports it to food banks/pantries. Still under construction, the kitchen will serve as a place for hands-on classes to create delicious, nutritious, lower-cost meals prepared with fresh and perishable regionally grown donated food products. Drew Meuer, Director of Kitchen Programs, tells that the

culinary classroom will include 12 prep and cooking carts complete with an appliance storage and power, so that two people can use a blender, crock pot, and other kitchen equipment to practice new skills. Although original plans were for food bank clients to take classes at the kitchen (there will still be programming for clients), it has evolved into a train-the-trainer venue where instructors such as staff from WSU *Food \$ense*, chefs, and dietetic interns can teach. For seminar-style classes, the cooking carts can be wheeled away and replaced with chairs. Adjacent to the classroom is a small production kitchen with institutional equipment. Drew says that this will be used to prepare sample frozen meals from fresh donated foods using recipes developed on-site. The sample meals, recipes, and ingredients given to clients at food distribution sites will encourage them to cook healthy, low-budget foods on their own. To learn more, see www.2-harvest.org/landing/kitchen (Contact: Drew Meuer, Director of Kitchen Programs, Second Harvest, 509-252-6284, DMeuer@2-Harvest.org). (Contact for *Food \$ense* partner involvement and nutrition education: Terry Perry, *Food \$ense*/EFNEP Manager, WSU Spokane County Extension, 509-477-2194, TPerry@spokanecounty.org)

PSE (Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change) in Action – The community kitchen at Second Harvest is an effective example of PSE concepts at work, particularly as an Environmental support as a location for core education. Drew Meuer says that the first and most important step for others to consider when embarking on a similar endeavor is to identify the stakeholders. Through conversations with key individuals, needs of the community emerge. From the beginning, a key aim of Second Harvest was to address the paradox of hunger and obesity among its clients, and the chronic conditions resulting from unhealthful diets. Stakeholders agreed that a hub for teaching cooking skills, nutrition education, and recipe development would help low-income families in the community become healthier and more self-sufficient. After identifying the potential partners, Drew held community brainstorming sessions with key leaders from WSU Extension, WSU Riverpoint Health Services, Gonzaga University, Spokane County Head Start, Spokane Regional Health District, Spokane Community College, and other community organizations. The partners have a shared focus on nutrition literacy and cooking skills in order to create a culture of healthy eating for people in poverty. “It’s a process, not a project,” says Drew. He continues to be excited about the opportunities for partnership with this new community asset, as the stakeholders will continue to be involved by participating in the use of the facility.

Nutrition Students’ Community Kitchen – The Community Kitchen at Seattle Pacific University brings together people of diverse economic, social, and ethnic backgrounds to cook together. SPU students studying food and nutrition plan and facilitate on-campus kitchens for low-income neighbors, where everyone cooks alongside each other, with no division between the student team and community members. Daniela Gevela, professor at SPU, says that nutrition education comes as a side effect of being together for three hours cooking easy, inexpensive, delicious food. Cooking skills just happen in the course of the evening as participants see how to cut into a butternut squash or eggplant, or how to dice an onion. “I eat more vegetables because I know what to do with them,” is a typical comment. For nutrition educators or others wishing to start a community kitchen Daniela says, “It’s important to know – and as a dietitian I didn’t realize this at first – that it’s not about the food, it’s about community. Don’t fret the details.” See www.facebook.com/spukitchen and <http://spukitchen.blogspot.com> (Contact: Daniela Gevela, PhD, RD, Associate Professor of Food and Nutrition, SPU, dgevela@sup.edu)



Photo Courtesy of SPU Community Kitchen

IN THE MEDIA

Consumers Want Positive Nutrition Messages– Americans would much rather hear what they should eat rather than what they should not eat. That’s one of the findings in the 2015 survey by the International Food Information Council (IFIC). The desire for more positive messages has increased in recent years, and the implications are clear for nutrition educators. What may not be clear, however, is what will be effective in motivating adults to eat more healthfully. To meet weight management goals, a key barrier that they cite is lack of time (31%) for activities such as exercising, keeping track of their diets, and cooking. Yet, when asked if they suddenly had an extra four hours every week, their top choices for spending that time were relaxing, sleeping, reading, using electronic devices, and watching TV. They also cite money (26%) as a barrier to taking action on healthfulness, but if they had an extra \$100 to spend each month, most instead would save, invest, pay off debt, make home repairs, or pay for household expenses. Lower income Americans are more likely to spend the extra money on groceries than those with a higher income. IFIC’s conclusions are that Americans have complex priorities that compete with their goals for nutritional health, and that they want positive, actionable guidance to help healthful behaviors rise to the top of their “to do” list. (Source: IFIC Food & Health Survey 2015, Executive Summary, accessed at <http://www.foodinsight.org/2015-food-health-survey-consumer-research>)

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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TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Guidelines for Starting a Community Kitchen – For organizations considering a community kitchen but wondering where to start, a helpful 60-page downloadable publication can help. Although developed for use in Canada, the suggestions are helpful for nutrition educators on this side of the border looking to start a community kitchen (also called collective kitchens) where small groups of people come together to prepare meals and take food home to their families. The guide embraces nutrition education and cooking skills as well as the benefits of social supports. It tells how to identify a group to serve, find a coordinator, seek funding, and structure the cooking sessions. *Community Kitchen Best Practice Tool Kit* was developed by the Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador, in collaboration with the Poverty Reduction Division, Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment and the Health Promotion & Wellness Division, Department of Health and Community Services. Available at www.foodsecuritynews.com/Publications/Community_Kitchen_Best_Practices_Toolkit.pdf

Changes in WIC Foods – Starting July 1st, the Washington State WIC Nutrition Program will implement changes in foods available to its clients. Potatoes will be an approved fresh fruit and vegetable option. Tofu will be approved in a 16-ounce size only. For certain categories of foods, specific brands and types of products are allowed, instead of choosing any brand. Handouts about the changes are available in five languages at www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/WIC/WICFoods#changes

And, Speaking of WIC... – It appears that the WIC Nutrition Program benefits not just the clients, but others who shop in the same stores. WIC-authorized retail food stores are required to stock minimum varieties and quantities of WIC foods. These foods are nutrient-rich, approved for the program because they help meet the nutritional needs of WIC's target population. Recently published research shows that WIC impacts nonparticipants by increasing the availability of nutritious foods at small food stores, such as convenience stores and non-chain grocery stores. Researchers say that increased local access to healthy foods could have beneficial long-term impacts on diet quality and health among WIC clients as well as the entire community, and all income levels. Cathy Franklin, Nutrition Coordinator for the Washington State WIC Program, says, "We were hoping that one of the effects of the change in WIC foods would be to impact on the availability of healthier foods in smaller stores. It's great to see it happening, and hopefully making these foods more of the norm." (Source: V Oliveira and E Frazao, "Painting a more complete picture of WIC: How WIC impacts nonparticipants," USDA Economic Research Service, April 6, 2015, accessed at: www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2015-april/painting-a-more-complete-picture-of-wic-how-wic-impacts-nonparticipants.aspx#.VYt2bEaznWM) (Contact: Cathy Franklin, MS, RD, Nutrition Coordinator, Department of Health, Washington State WIC Nutrition Program, 800-841-1410 x 3648, Cathy.Franklin@doh.wa.gov)

WASHINGTON GROWN

Fresh This Month – It seems that every crop is early this year! Weather that Washington typically has in July and August has already arrived, setting the stage for possible record-breaking heat for the month of June. Strawberries are well underway, with raspberries, tayberries, boysenberries already at farmers markets. Green beans, snap peas, snow peas, bok choy, and a wide variety of lettuces are being harvested. It's a great time to buy local produce! To find out which farmers markets are licensed to accept SNAP benefits, click on the chart at www.fns.usda.gov/eat/learn-about-snap-benefits-farmers-markets.



Photo Courtesy of
Washington State University

A "Berry" Good Year – The blueberry harvest in the Northwest will be the most prolific ever in 2015. Growers anticipate that a bumper crop of 110 million pounds of blueberries will be harvested in Washington State, plus another 100 million pounds in Oregon. Why so many? More acres have been planted and in more varieties, extending the season from its usual start the first week of July to early fall. Our mild winter without snow or frost, and sunny late spring have contributed great weather for a healthy crop. Containing very few calories, blueberries provide vitamin C, manganese, fiber, and anthocyanins, a pigment responsible for the berry's indigo color. For recipes and nutrition information, see USDA's SNAP-Ed site, <http://snap.nal.usda.gov/nutrition-through-seasons/seasonal-produce/blueberries>

DID YOU KNOW?

The website for the *Energize Newsletter for Nutrition Educators* has had a facelift! If you haven't seen it yet, check it out at <http://nutrition.wsu.edu/energize-newsletter>. In our last survey, readers asked for this addition, and we listened.

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