Packing Healthy Lunches

September brings change. Summer and its carefree days are over. Families head back to school, to after school activities and begin full work schedules again. Healthy lunches are an important part of the day for you and your family. Eating a healthy lunch gives you energy to work or study during the afternoon and helps to give your brain a boost. A healthy lunch should contain vegetables, fruit, whole grains and lean protein.

Vegetables are easy to add to a lunch. Eat cherry tomatoes, baby carrots, sliced bell peppers or sliced cucumbers with a little of your favorite salad dressing or with hummus, add lettuce and tomato to sandwiches or eat soup full of vegetables.

Fruit is a natural addition to lunch. Fresh, canned in its’ own juice, frozen or dried, all fruit is portable and adds a little sweetness to your meal.

Whole grains provide your brain with energy and help you to think clearly during the afternoon. Whole grains are easier to include than you might think – whole wheat bread, pitas or tortillas make excellent wraps for sandwiches, whole grain crackers pair well with soup, light popcorn adds crunch and fiber to your lunch and whole grain pastas are easy to use in pasta salads. Brown rice makes a great addition to soup or added to last night’s left over vegetables.

Lean protein comes in many forms other than deli meats. Try legumes like black beans, kidney beans or chick peas, hummus, nut butters, nuts, sunflower seeds, refried beans, tuna and other fish or seafood and eggs. Many of these lean protein sources may be less expensive than deli meats, so try something new.

And don’t forget to include water, 1% or fat free milk to drink with your meal.

In Season This Month: Lots of Fruits and Vegetables

September is a bountiful month at the farmers’ market and produce is plentiful. New this month is Brussels sprouts, kale, grapes and watermelon. You will also find apples, peaches, pears, plums, green and yellow beans, beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower. collard greens, corn, cucumbers, herbs, onions, peppers, potatoes, Swiss chard, summer squashes and tomatoes. Don’t forget to use your Farmers’ Market Nutrition coupons, your WIC fruit and vegetable check or EBT card at many markets and farm stands.
It’s back to school time and kids come home from school ready for a snack! With your help, let your kids make this healthy snack.

**Apple Cinnamon Wrap and Roll**

Serving size: 1/2 tortilla  
Serves 8

**Ingredients:**
3 tablespoons sugar  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
2 apples (2 cups chopped)  
1/3 cup low-fat vanilla yogurt  
4 medium (6-inch) four tortillas  
3 teaspoons vegetable oil

**Directions:**
1. Mix sugar and cinnamon in a small bowl.  
2. Pour 1 teaspoon of oil on a saucer.  
3. Wash and chop apples into small pieces. Place in medium bowl.  
4. Add yogurt to apples, stirring to combine.  
5. Lay tortilla flat on plate. Use fingers to lightly coat top side with oil. Sprinkle it with a spoonful of cinnamon sugar mixture.  
6. Turn tortilla over so un-oiled side is up. Put 1/4 cup of the apple mixture, on half of the tortilla, folding the other tortilla half over the mixture.  
7. Heat 2 teaspoons oil in frying pan on medium.  
8. Place folded tortilla in pan and cook about 1 minute, or until lightly browned. Flip to cook second side. (If oil starts to smoke, remove pan from burner for a minute and then continue.)  
9. Remove from pan and cut in half.  
10. Repeat with remaining tortillas.

Source: GET FRESH! Division of Nutritional Sciences, Cornell University and Cornell Cooperative Extension 2001

*Nutrition Facts: Serving Size – 1/2 filled tortilla, 113 Calories, 3g Total Fat, 0g Saturated Fat, 0g Trans Fat, 0mg Cholesterol, 83mg Sodium, 20g Total Carbohydrate, 1g Dietary Fiber, 10g Sugars, 2g Protein, 0% vitamin A, 2% vitamin C, 4% calcium, 4% iron