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Volume 31, Issue 1
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October 2016
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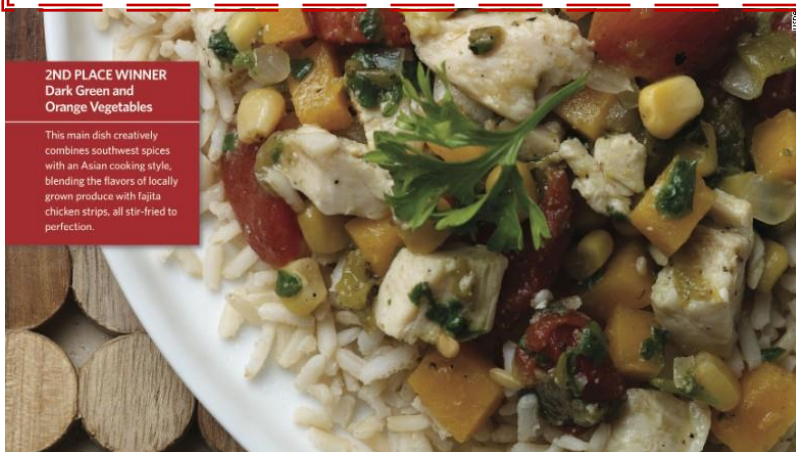
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Stir-fry Fajita Chicken, Squash, and Corn

(picture below, recipe on page 2 of this newsletter)

Second Place winner from "Recipes for Healthy Kids Cookbook for Homes" provided by the USDA's Team Nutrition. This is a perfect recipe to start integrating local foods into your childcare meals! Created by kids to help kids across the country to enjoy healthy foods!



Workshops for October

Saturday, October 22, 2016

Farmers Branch, TX 10a-12p

New Food Program Meal Patterns
 Farmers Branch Manske Library
 13613 Webb Chapel Rd 75234
 Directions: 972-247-2511

Please RSVP to 214-679-9257 Wend'e by Oct 19th!

NOTE**This counts for 2017 training** Get it now and be complete for all of the next year!

Workshops for November

Thursday, November 3, 2016

Farmers Branch, TX 7-8:30p

New Food Program Meal Patterns
 Wend'e Pittmon's home
 3007 Harlee Dr 75234

Please RSVP to 214-679-9257 Wend'e by Oct 19th!

NOTE**This counts for 2017 training** Get it now and be complete for all of the next year!

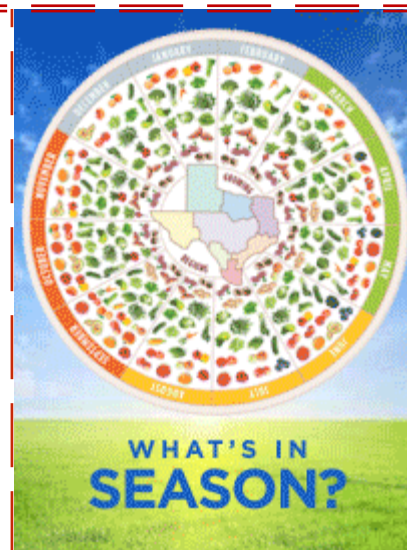
October is Farm to School Month!

Every fruit and vegetable has a season, the time of the year when locally grown options are easier to find and when fresh flavors are at their peak. Purchasing locally grown fruits and vegetables is good for Texans and good for local agriculture.

Use this tool from the Texas Department of Agriculture to identify the seasons and growing regions that match your favorite fruits and vegetables! Sort by fruit/vegetable or month to see what is available. Also click on regions of Texas to see what is unique about each area.

Copy and paste the link below into your web browser to explore this handy meal planning tool!

<http://www.squaremeals.org/FandNResources/TexasFarmFresh/ProduceAvailability.aspx>



RE-ENROLLMENT

is due with your October claim. If you have any questions please call or email the main office.

Please have it to the office by November 3rd.

Thank you!

Roasted Pumpkin Seeds

1 1/2 cups pumpkin seeds
2 teaspoons melted butter or oil (olive oil or vegetable oil work well)
salt
garlic powder (optional)
cayenne pepper (optional)
seasoning salt (optional)
cajun seasoning (optional)

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 300 degrees F.
- While it's OK to leave some strings and pulp on your seeds (it adds flavor) clean off any major chunks.
- Toss pumpkin seeds in a bowl with the melted butter or oil and seasonings of your choice.
- Spread pumpkin seeds in a single layer on baking sheet.
- Bake for about 45 minutes, stirring occasionally, until golden brown.



MYSTERY PROVIDER

EACH MONTH IN THIS NEWSLETTER WE PUT THE PROVIDER ID OF ONE MYSTERY PROVIDER. THE MYSTERY PROVIDER WINS A FUN CHILDREN'S BOOK TO SHARE WITH THEIR KIDDOS. IF YOU FIND YOUR ID SOMEWHERE IN THE NEWSLETTER CALL THE OFFICE AT 1-800-369-9082 AND CLAIM YOUR PRIZE!

Answers to September quiz

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1. true | 6. true |
| 2. optional | 7. unflavored |
| 3. true | 8. true |
| 4. each | 9. sugars |
| 5. two | 10. seasonal |

Stir-fry Fajita Chicken, Squash, and Corn

1 3/4 cups brown rice, long-grain, regular, dry
1 1/2 tsp salt-free, chili-lime seasoning blend
1/4 tsp granulated garlic
1 Tbsp fresh cilantro, chopped
2 Tbsp canola oil
1 cup fresh onions, peeled, diced
4 cups cooked fajita chicken strips (16 oz)
3 1/2 cups fresh butternut squash, peeled, seeded, diced 1/2 inch
1/2 cup fresh red bell peppers, seeded, diced
1 cup frozen corn, thawed
1/2 cup canned diced green chilies
1/2 cup canned low-sodium diced tomatoes
1/2 tsp ground black pepper
3/4 tsp ground cumin
1/4 tsp garlic powder

Directions:

- Combine brown rice and 4 1/2 cups water in a large pot and bring to a rolling boil. Turn heat down to low, over and cook until water is absorbed, about 30-40 minutes. Sprinkle with 1/2 tsp salt-free seasoning blend, granulated garlic, and cilantro. Mix well. Keep warm. (A rice cooker may be used with the same quantity of brown rice and water.)
- Heat canola oil in a large skillet or a wok. Cook onions for 2 minutes or until translucent.
- Add chicken, squash, and remaining salt-free seasoning blend. Stir-fry over high heat for 10 minutes or until squash is tender.
- Add red peppers, corn, green chilies, tomatoes, pepper, cumin, and garlic powder. Stir-fry over medium-high heat for no longer than 2 minutes so vegetables will remain crunchy. Do not overcook. Reduce heat to low and let simmer 2 minutes. Serve hot.



<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/stirfryfajita-cc.pdf>

Farm Fresh Fridays

Celebrating Texas Agriculture and Local Products in Schools

Texas agriculture touches the lives of every Texan every day. Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller launched Farm Fresh as a way to connect Texas farmers and ranchers, schools, child care providers and local communities with the tools and resources available through the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA). The goal of Farm Fresh is to increase Texans' awareness of the vital role agriculture plays in our lives, as agriculture is the key to improving the wellness of Texas communities.

FARM TO SCHOOL isn't just for K-12 institutions; an increasing number of early child care and education providers are engaging in farm to preschool activities. The term "farm to preschool" encompasses efforts to serve local or regionally produced foods in early child care and education settings; provide hands-on learning activities such as gardening, farm visits, and culinary activities; and integrate food-related education into the curriculum.

Why Farm to Preschool? Serving local foods and offering related hands-on activities can increase children's willingness to try new foods. In fact, farm to preschool is recognized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as an opportunity to increase access to healthy environments for improved early eating habits and obesity prevention in early care and education. With daily opportunities to serve local products through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), farm to preschool benefits local and regional farmers, ranchers, and fisherman, as well as food processors, manufacturers, and distributors by providing another market for their products. Incorporating seasonal and locally produced foods is included as a best practice in the CACFP meal pattern final rule.

Buying Local in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Sourcing local foods Local foods span the entire meal tray, from produce to dairy, grains, meat, eggs, and beans. CACFP providers can define "local" however they choose. Definitions vary widely depending on the unique geography and climate, as well as the abundance of local food producers, in the region. CACFP operators can find local products through the same sources that K-12 schools use to source locally: directly from producers, or through food hubs, distributors or a food service management company. In many preschool settings, purchasing volumes are small, opening the door to purchasing seasonally from farmers' markets, community supported agriculture programs, or local producers that may not have the volume to meet the needs of a typical school district. Preschools may also be able to grow enough in a garden to meet some of their food needs.

Tips for Growing Your Program

Start small Special events are a great way to start serving local foods. Consider starting with one local item each month and grow from there. Create a monthly newsletter to celebrate the harvest and share with children, parents, and caregivers.

Tap into parents With robust parental involvement during the early child care years, tap into parents to help model healthy eating at meal time, lead an activity, or organize a garden to enhance your farm to preschool program.

Invest in an edible garden CACFP funds can be used to purchase items for gardens such as seeds, fertilizer, watering cans, rakes, and more as long as the produce grown in the garden will be used as part of the reimbursable meal and for nutrition education activities. Centers using garden produce in their CACFP reimbursable meals should document the weight and/or volume of the produce.

Dig into menu planning Find out what grows in your region and allow flexibility in the regular menu cycle to spotlight seasonal items and incorporate them into healthy recipes. When you serve local foods, be sure to highlight them on your menu for parents to see! Reach out to your local cooperative extension agency or department of agriculture for help with synching your menu with seasonal availability.

Learn More We're here to help! Visit USDA's Office of Community Food System's Farm to Preschool page to learn more about farm to preschool policies and FNS and partner resources that will help you bring the farm to preschool. The National Farm to School Network (NFSN) supports the work of local farm to preschool programs all over the country by providing free training and technical assistance, information services, networking, and support for policy, media and marketing activities. NFSN's Farm to Preschool page features facts sheets and links to farm to preschool e-news and archives.

*<http://www.texasagriculture.gov/Home/HealthyLiving/FarmFreshFridays.aspx>

*<http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmentoschool/farm-preschool>



OCTOBER

						1 World Vegetarian Day
	3 Send In Claim!	4	5 011288	6	7	8 
9	10 Columbus Day	Roasted Pumpkin Seed Recipe on page 2 of this newsletter!			14	15
16 World Food Day	17	18	19	20	21	22 Farmer's Branch Workshop
23 				27	28	29
30 Diwali	31 Halloween					

Spooky Mummy Pizza

2 whole wheat bagels (3 1/2 inch/) cut in half

4 tablespoons pizza sauce

4 mozzarella string cheese sticks

8 black olive slices

*seevanessacraft.com



Ice Cube Tray Spiders

- Freeze plastic spiders in ice cube trays and serve in water
- Alternatively freeze them in a naturally red juice like apple/beet or white grape/cranberry