

Lesson 6: Healthy Eating and Harvesting, Garden Cleanup

Nutrition topic: Healthy Eating Habits; end-of-year review

Gardening topic: harvest, storage, and garden clean-up

Recommended recipe demo: spaghetti squash and sausage; apple crisp

Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Recognize the benefits of creating healthy eating patterns at all ages.
- Understand the reasons why proper fall clean-up and sanitation are important in the garden.
- Understand the importance of crop rotation.

Recommended handouts: Reduce added sugar

Based on what you're planting, pull any remaining veggie handouts from the Fruit and Vegetable Handouts

Nutrition topic: Healthy Eating Habits, End of Year Review

Dietary Guidelines for Americans: Healthy Eating Patterns

Top health and nutrition experts in the country update the Dietary Guidelines for Americans every five years. They are intended for healthy children and adults throughout the life cycle, from infancy to adulthood.

Each set of guidelines has a key focus. The focus of the 2020–2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans includes the following:

- Follow a healthy eating pattern throughout life.
- Customize and enjoy nutrient-dense foods and beverages that align with your cultural traditions and personal preferences and fit within your food budget.
- Limit calories from added sugars, saturated and trans fats, and reduce sodium intake.
- Focus on meeting food group recommendations with nutrient-dense foods and beverages that do not exceed your caloric needs.

Follow a healthy eating pattern at all stages of life.

Healthy eating is important for all ages, starting in infancy.

- Infants and children that establish a healthy eating pattern at a young age are more likely to have a healthy diet during adulthood.
- Follow the MyPlate messages to ensure you are eating all of the foods that will help you feel and be your best:
 - Choose a variety of colors of vegetables and fruits.
 - Choose whole fruits over fruit juice.
 - Make at least half of your grains whole grains.
 - Choose low-fat or fat-free milk and dairy products.
 - Opt for lean protein choices including beans, lean meats, eggs, nuts, seeds, and seafood.
 - Limit the amount of saturated fat, trans fat, added sugar, and sodium in your diet.

Focus on Variety, Nutrient Density, and Amount

Most foods can fit into a healthy eating pattern based on the MyPlate recommendations:

- Choose a variety of minimally processed whole foods
 - Non-processed whole foods, like those encouraged in MyPlate, are considered nutrient-dense.

- o Nutrient-dense foods contain a lot of nutrients, including vitamins, minerals, and fibers.
- o The opposite of nutrient-dense is calorie-dense. Calorie-dense foods contain a lot of calories but not many nutrients.
- Choose proper amounts of food that will keep you within your daily calorie needs:
 - o Being aware of portion sizes will help you fit the foods you enjoy into a healthy diet.
 - o Use MyPlate serving size information to stay within your daily needs.
 - o Use serving size recommendations on the nutrition facts panel to be aware of how many calories you are consuming from packaged items.
 - o Participants can go to myplate.gov for a free estimation of their calorie needs and the best way to meet their needs using MyPlate guidelines.

Limit Calories from Added Sugars, Saturated and Trans Fats, and Reduce Sodium Intake

Limiting foods that are high in added sugar, sodium, and saturated or trans fat is easier if you are choosing mostly whole foods.

End of Year Review

Discussion Starter, “What is something you have done to create better health over the past few weeks?”

You don’t have to have a large food budget or a gym membership to lead a healthy life. Making small improvements in your diet, choosing a variety of foods encouraged by MyPlate, and moving your body more can help you create better health.

Gardening topic: Harvest and Storage, Garden Clean Up

- Review storage table to show how to store and for how long different vegetables. *We have a pamphlet about food preservation - could include that?*
 - o *Please refer to the [Pocket Gardener](#) for further information on harvesting: each vegetable listed has a link to the USU fact sheet regarding that vegetable and will give harvest information. Alternatively, see the seed packet or plant tag for harvest information.*
 - *pocketgardener.usu.edu*
- Garden clean up:
 - o To avoid the spread of disease and reduce overwintering sites for insects, it is important to remove all plants from the garden. If diseased, do not compost plant materials
 - o Adding a compost to the soil and tilling or turning into the soil can help to improve soil for the following spring
- Take a photo before tearing out:
 - o This will help you remember where things were planted and will facilitate crop rotation for next year.
 - o Crop rotation is important to reduce the build up of pests and diseases in the garden soil.
 - o Rotate crops by groups:
 - Rooting crops (carrots, radishes, turnips, beets, rutabaga, parsnip, etc.)
 - Fruiting crops (tomato, pepper, eggplant, melons, cucumbers, squash, and potatoes—they are an anomaly here but should be included)
 - Greens and brassicas (lettuce, spinach, kale, chard, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, etc.)
 - Legumes (beans and peas)

- o Crops should be rotated, when possible, so that they are not in the same place for 3–4 years.

Recipe Sample

Allow time for participants to taste the sample.

Encourage participants to give their feedback on the recipe, including what they would do differently.