



ENERGIZE

a NEWSLETTER for NUTRITION EDUCATORS

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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* shares brief information about programs and materials that support healthful and enjoyable eating.

Energize is intended to...

- ☛ take just five minutes to read.
- ☛ focus on foods from five food groups.
- ☛ appear on the fifth of each month.

Tell Us What's New...

What's new with your organization? To submit news to *Energize*, call Martha Marino 206-817-1466, e-mail martha_marino@yahoo.com.

Deadline for submission is the last day of each month.

Subscription Information

Energize can be sent to you by fax or e-mail on the fifth day of each month. There is no charge.

To order or unsubscribe contact: Christa Albice, WSU Puyallup, 253-445-4541. Fax 253-445-4621, e-mail albice@wsu.edu.

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ENERGIZE YOUR LIFE!
EAT HEALTHY-BE ACTIVE

This Month's Focus: *Aw, Nuts! ...and Seeds*

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans encourage the consumption of nutrient-dense foods, and that includes nuts and seeds. Touted for their heart-healthy benefits, nuts and seeds are rich with unsaturated fats, vitamin E, and other substances that have many other health-promoting properties.



Source: Facebook - FireplaceMall.com

In this December issue of the *Energize* Newsletter for Nutrition Educators, whether you are roasting chestnuts on an open fire or not, you can read about the role of nuts and seeds in the diet and the value of encouraging your clients to include these nutritious foods in their meals and snacks.

Nuts vs Seeds: What's the Difference? – Nuts and seeds are often lumped together because their nutrient

composition is similar. Nuts are fruits, usually surrounded by a thin and slightly bitter "skin," and a hard shell. On the other hand, a seed is a small plant enclosed in the seed coat, surrounded by all the food it needs to grow once it gets planted in soil. The seed coat or husk is usually removed, but not always. For example, sesame and poppy seeds can be eaten with the shell on. Peanuts, while technically a legume, are lumped into the nuts category because Americans eat them in much the same way as nuts, rather than in cooked dishes the way that legumes (beans and peas) are prepared. Nuts and seeds generally consumed by Americans, and used in the database for the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) include: almonds, almond butter, almond paste, Brazil nuts, cashews, cashew butter, chestnuts, flax seeds, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, peanut butter, peanut flour, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, pumpkin seeds, squash seeds, sesame butter (tahini), sesame seeds, sesame paste, sunflower seeds, and walnuts. (Source: SA Bowman et al, "Food patterns equivalents database 2009-10; Methodology and user guide, 2013.)

Health Benefits of Nuts and Seeds – Eating patterns that include nuts and seeds are associated with improved nutrient intake and diet quality. Specifically, nuts and seeds may promote cardiovascular health. They are also associated with decreased obesity, metabolic syndrome, and diabetes, as well as a healthy brain and supple skin.

Nut and Seed Consumption – About 4 in 10 American adults ate nuts or seeds on a given day in a study, according to a study published by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). Non-Hispanic white adults consumed more (43.6%) than Hispanics (25.5%) or Blacks (23.7%). Nuts and seeds were overwhelmingly consumed (80%) as a nut butter or as a single-item food, such as a snack rather than an ingredient in candy, breads, cakes, cookies, cereals, or other mixed dishes. Interestingly, about 7% of nuts and seeds were consumed as part of a grain-based dish, which suggests that nutrition educators might offer recipes with this combination. The study adds that 63.3% of men and 60.5% of women did not consume any nuts or seeds at all, while 14.4% of men and 11.8% of women consumed more than 1.5 ounces that day. (Source: SJ Nielsen et al, “Nut consumption among US adults, 2009-2010, NCHS Data Brief No. 176, December 2014, accessed at www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db176.pdf.)



Source: National Center for Health Statistics

Recommended Amounts of Nuts and Seeds – Although a specific amount isn't noted in the Dietary Guidelines, one ounce of peanut butter or ½ ounce of nuts or seeds counts as a one-ounce equivalent in the Protein Foods group. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) suggests that 1.5 ounces per day (roughly a small handful) may reduce heart disease. In 2003, the FDA approved a qualified health claim that, “Scientific evidence suggests, but does not prove, that eating 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease.” (Source: FDA. Qualified health claims: Letter of enforcement discretion: Nuts and coronary heart disease (Docket No 02P-0505), 2003. Accessed at www.fda.gov/Food/IngredientsPackagingLabeling/LabelingNutrition/ucm072926.htm.)



Source: Thinkstock

Yes, They Have Fat and Calories, But There's More – As much as 80% of the calories in nuts comes from fat. Although it's considered a healthy fat, like most foods they should be consumed in moderation. The nutrient composition of nuts and seeds varies from one to the next, however this group of foods overall averages about 240 calories per 1.5 ounce portion. Nuts and seeds fall into the Protein Foods group in MyPlate. Besides being packed with protein, most nuts and seeds have at least some of these naturally occurring healthful substances: monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, omega-3 fatty acids, dietary fiber, vitamin E, plant sterols (help to lower cholesterol), and L-arginine (promotes flexibility in artery walls, making them less prone to blood clots that can block blood flow). Since different nuts and seeds boast their own distinctive nutritional benefits, consuming a variety is best. (Sources: www.choosemyplate.gov/protein-foods and “Nuts and your heart: Eating nuts for heart health,” Mayo Clinic, at www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/heart-disease/in-depth/nuts/art-20046635.)

IN THE MEDIA

Where Are the Dietary Guidelines? – The 2015 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* are still expected to be released in the year for which they are named. Nutrition educators and many others are eagerly anticipating that any week now, the US Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Department of Agriculture (USDA) will release their combined recommendations. These are used to establish federal nutrition policy and programs, and to provide a critical framework for local, state, and national health promotion and disease prevention strategies. The Dietary Guidelines also hold sway in other sectors, such as the food industry, retailers, business, and educators. The Scientific Report of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC) was published January 28, 2015. In that report, the DGAC made recommendations for environmental sustainability of food production. The Secretaries of DHHS and USDA announced that these will not appear in the final guidelines. (Sources: <http://blogs.usda.gov/2015/10/06/2015-dietary-guidelines-giving-you-the-tools-you-need-to-make-healthy-choices/> and *Scientific Report of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee*, accessed at <http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015-scientific-report/pdfs/scientific-report-of-the-2015-dietary-guidelines-advisory-committee.pdf>.)

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

Ways to Use Nuts and Seeds – Since nuts and seeds don't need refrigeration, they're a perfectly portable snack at work, in the car, and on-the-go. Toasted nuts add crunch and texture to salads and as toppings on chicken and fish. Because of their high oil content, they can go rancid if not stored properly. Store nuts and seeds in an airtight container up to three months, or freeze in a zip-close bag up to a year. For tips to tell your clients about adding nuts to meals and snacks, see these suggestions from the Produce for Better Health Foundation at www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/top-ten-ways-to-enjoy-nuts.

WASHINGTON GROWN

Fresh This Month – Hazelnuts are a key nut crop here in the Pacific Northwest, particularly in Oregon. Although hazelnut orchardists have been declining in Washington State, we still have one large producer, Holmquist Hazelnuts in Lynden. Oregon State University conducts extensive research on hazelnuts, supporting the many growers in that state who produce about 98% of the hazelnuts grown in the US. (Sources: Oregon Hazelnuts www.oregonhazelnuts.org and Holmquist Hazelnuts www.holmquisthazelnuts.com.)



Source: Wikipedia

DID YOU KNOW?

Filbert Folklore – Why are hazelnuts also called filberts? The most widely accepted explanation is that this beloved nut is named after St Philibert of Jumieges, a French saint whose feast day is August 20. That's about the time when hazelnuts are at their peak harvest in England, so it is believed that his name was applied to the nuts in season on his feast day. (Sources: www.seriousseats.com/2012/08/how-come-hazelnuts-are-also-called-filberts.html and www.oregonhazelnuts.org/about-us/fun-facts.)



EAT TOGETHER EAT BETTER – Family Meals Focus

Because our readers have told us that Family Meals is a hot topic, in the May 2011 issue we began a small section on recent news relating to this topic and our long-standing signature program, Eat Together, Eat Better.

Eating Together on the Job – Co-workers can be a “family” of sorts, since many American adults have more contact with people on the job than they do at home with their families. Researchers at Cornell University conducted research in firehouses in a large city to explore the role that interacting over food might have for the performance of the work group. They found that firefighter platoons who prepare and eat meals together during their shifts have better group job performance compared with firefighter teams who dine solo. The firefighters reported that eating together is a central component of keeping their teams operating effectively, and it makes the team feel like a family. The researchers suggest that leaders at work can enhance their team's performance by leveraging the powerful act of eating together. (Source: KM Kniffin et al, “Eating together at the firehouse: How workplace commensality relates to the performance of firefighters.” *Human Performance*, 28(4):281-306, 2015, accessed at www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/08959285.2015.1021049.)

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