

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MyPlate is The New Guide in Town

If you are like me, you grew up learning about the USDA's Food Pyramid. That has been replaced with MyPlate. You might be wondering - what is MyPlate? Instead of a pyramid of foods to eat during the day, MyPlate simplifies eating healthy; it provides a guide or map for what we should eat at each meal, taking out some of the guesswork.

Picture a plate that is divided into four sections. Each section of the plate has its own food group. One quarter for fruit, one for vegetables, one for grains, and one for protein foods. Using MyPlate as a template for your meals makes it easier to eat healthy every day. You can find a link to their website on our [EFNEP/SNAP Ed page](#) on the Wildcat Extension District's website, or go to www.MyPlate.gov. MyPlate even has an app for smartphones and tablets.

Make half of your plate fruits and vegetables – Use frozen, canned, or fresh. Frozen fruits and vegetables last longer than fresh produce, making them a good buy when trying to stretch food dollars. Choose low sodium and no added sugar frozen options and look for key phrases like '*low sodium*' or '*packed in juice*' on the labels of canned goods. Look for what is in season when you buy fresh to get the most

Make half your grains whole – Use brown rice, whole grain bread and pasta, oats, quinoa, barley, and more. Eating whole grain bread is the easiest way for me to make half my grains whole. When you get breads, check the ingredients list by the nutrition label. It should say "100% Whole Grain" as the first ingredient. Whole grains have fiber, which make us feel full longer, and helps to lower the risk of type 2 diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and other chronic illnesses.

Vary your protein food choices - Use lean protein choices like 93% lean ground beef, pork loin, and chicken breasts with the skin removed. Pick seafood options that have the beneficial fatty acids and lower levels of mercury, such as salmon, trout, and anchovies. If you are vegetarian, this food group includes protein from plants, such as: peas, beans, lentils, nuts, seeds, and soy products.

MyPlate provides a template for your meals so that you can make healthier, more informed choices. Next time someone asks you the age old question of, “How many vegetable servings do I need in a day?”, you will have the answer! Remember, go to the [EFNEP/SNAP Ed page](#) on the District website, or www.MyPlate.gov to learn more.

My challenge to you this month is to use the MyPlate method of meal planning for at least one meal a day – try to imagine your plate is divided up and put in the right food groups. Add a serving of low-fat dairy or dairy alternative on the side

If you want to sign up for FREE nutrition classes based on some of the information above, please contact Lacy O’Malley, lacyo@ksu.edu, or call 620-308-2970.

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