Growing Healthy Families

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VERMONT FARM TO FAMILY PROGRAM

Farm to Family: Healthy choices for baby and me with vegetables and fruits

The Vermont Farm to Family Program provides WIC participants with coupons for fresh, delicious, local vegetables and fruits from participating farmers' markets around the state through the summer months.

Vegetables and fruits are part of a healthy diet, providing vitamins, minerals and dietary fiber, important for all ages, and especially during pregnancy. Aim for at least five servings of vegetables and fruits each day.

Eating "for baby and me" means making healthy choices for your baby before, during and after pregnancy. Vegetables and fruits provide vitamins including folic acid, vitamins A and C, and minerals including iron, calcium, potassium and zinc. These nutrients are important for your own health and the healthy development of your baby.

The healthy choices you make after your baby is born are just as important. Choose a variety of vegetables and fruits. If you breastfeed your baby, you are introducing your baby to a variety of new tastes through breast milk. Vegetables and fruits are naturally packed with nutrition without being loaded with calories or fat which is helpful if you are trying to lose weight after your baby is born.

Around 6 months of age, when your baby shows signs of being ready to eat solids, you can begin by feeding her iron-fortified infant cereal. Once your baby is around 7 to 8 months, you can begin to introduce her to vegetables and fruits. You can make your own baby food using fresh vegetables and fruits you get at the farmers' market. Some good choices include peas, broccoli and winter squashes.

As your child grows, continue to introduce her to new vegetables and fruits. Farm to Family makes it easy and fun to make healthy choices for you and your children.

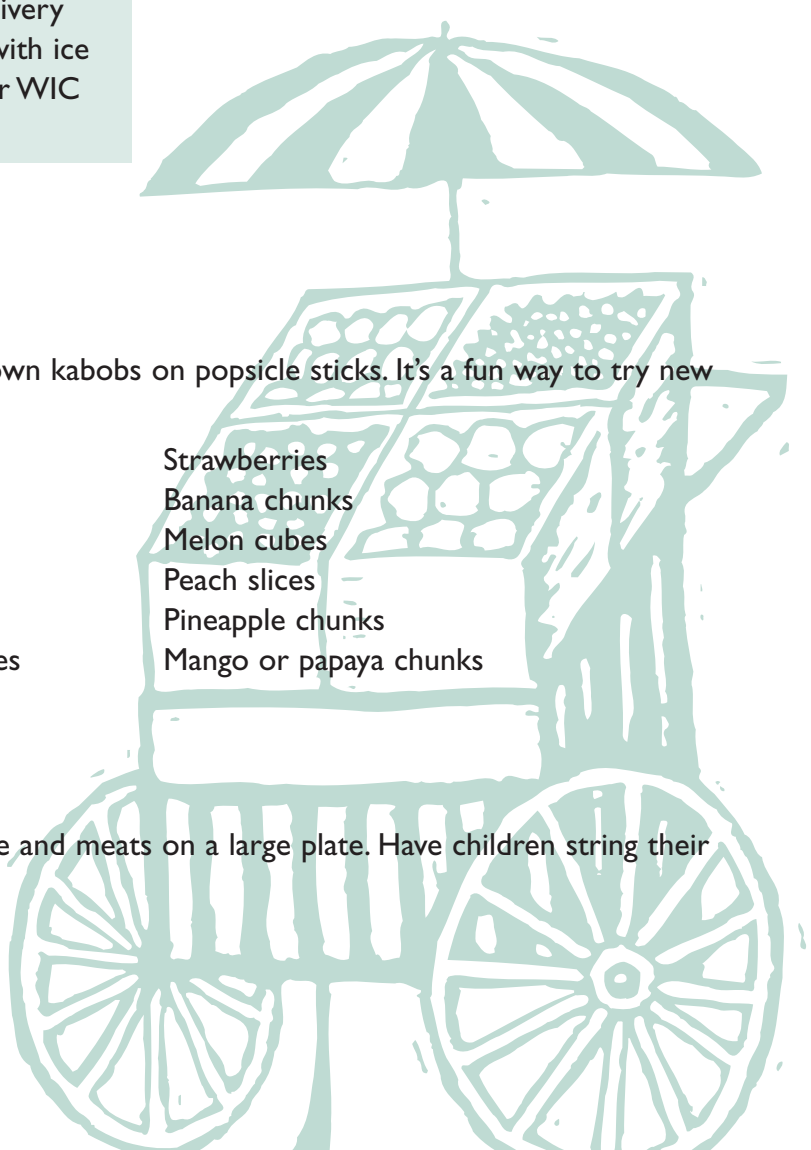
The traveling cooler

Pack a safe and healthy cooler this summer.

- Make ice packs. Save your empty plastic milk, juice or water bottles. Freeze water in bottles. Frozen bottles of water will not melt as quickly as ice cubes.
- Pack food in air-tight containers. Food will stay cold and dry. Put foods that will be eaten first on top in your cooler.
- Keep your cooler away from direct sun or heat. When traveling, keep your cooler in your car (rather than in the trunk where it gets warmer) and cover with blanket. Park in the shade.
- Keep your cooler closed as much as possible. Close the lid completely after using.
- Clean your cooler. Scrub the cooler with hot soapy water when you get home. Rinse and dry your cooler before putting it away.

WIC food vendor corner

If you will not be home to receive your WIC food delivery this summer, leave out a clean, empty, labeled cooler with ice (try the ice pack suggestion listed above) to keep your WIC foods from spoiling.



Kabob party

Young children can make their own kabobs on popsicle sticks. It's a fun way to try new vegetables and fruits.

Cherry tomatoes
Cooked carrot slices
Broccoli flowers
Cucumber slices
Bell pepper chunks
Zucchini or summer squash slices

Strawberries
Banana chunks
Melon cubes
Peach slices
Pineapple chunks
Mango or papaya chunks

Cheese cubes
Cooked turkey or ham cubes
Firm tofu cubes

Arrange vegetables, fruits, cheese and meats on a large plate. Have children string their choices on popsicle sticks.

Angel hair with tomatoes

Serves 4

A simple pasta dish that everyone will love. Angel hair pasta is a very thin spaghetti that cooks quickly.

2 cups cooked angel hair pasta (or spaghetti)
2 tablespoons olive oil (or other vegetable oil)
1-2 cloves fresh minced garlic
(or 1 teaspoon garlic powder)
1/2 cup sliced zucchini or summer squash
2 large tomatoes, chopped
1/4 cup fresh chopped basil (or 2 tablespoons dried basil)
1/4 cup shredded parmesan cheese

Heat oil in saucepan over medium heat. Add garlic and zucchini and cook for 3 minutes. Add tomatoes and basil. Cook for 5 more minutes to make a sauce. Add cooked pasta to sauce. Toss together. Serve sprinkled with parmesan cheese.

Nutrition analysis per serving: Calories 210, Protein 7 grams, Carbohydrates 24 grams, Fat 10 grams, Sodium 90 milligrams

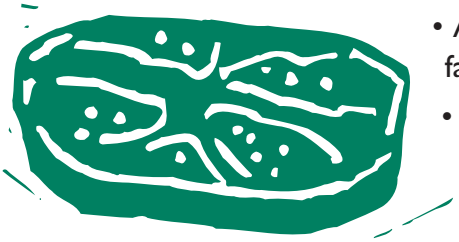
clip & save recipe!

Taste of tomatoes

Tomatoes bring the delicious taste of summer to the table. Nothing tastes quite as good as tomatoes fresh from the garden. You can even smell the flavor!

Tomatoes are a very nutritious vegetable. They have lots of vitamins A and C. Enjoy tomatoes by serving them in a variety of ways:

- Make fresh tomato salsa. Serve with low fat corn chips for a summer snack.
- Tomato slices or wedges can be eaten for a quick side dish at meals. Just rinse, slice and serve.



- Add tomato slices to your favorite sandwich, salad or pizza.
- Fresh tomatoes, cherry tomatoes or grape tomatoes cut in half make fun finger foods.

World Breastfeeding Week August 1–7, 2004

WIC recognizes moms who have breastfed or are planning to breastfeed their babies. Breastfeeding is a healthy choice for feeding your baby for at least the first year of life and exclusive breastfeeding is strongly recommended for the first six months. Breastfeeding benefits moms, babies and families. Give a breastfeeding mom your Loving Support©.

loving support© makes breastfeeding work

WIC is an equal opportunity program. If you believe you have been discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability, immediately contact USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD).

Food stamps are good for you and good for Vermont!

Are you among the thousands of Vermont WIC participants who are passing up an important nutrition benefit? Food stamps let you buy more food to keep your family healthy, and free up your money to pay other bills. Monthly food stamp benefits average about $150 per household in Vermont, and tend to be higher for families with children.

You have privacy when you shop with food stamps — benefits come on a card that looks and works like an ATM card at the grocery store. Using the program boosts your food budget AND pumps federal tax dollars into the state economy to help farmers, grocers, and local businesses.

If you work, have dependent children, and get the Vermont Earned Income Tax Credit, you are eligible for food stamps. Getting food stamps makes you automatically eligible when you apply for free school meals, help with telephone costs from the Lifeline and Link Up Programs, home weatherization, and other programs.

Want to learn more? Visit www.vermontfoodhelp.com to see if you may qualify. Pick up an application form at WIC clinic sites, or call the Department of PATH — toll-free at 800-287-0589 — to have one mailed to you. If you need help, contact your local PATH office or Community Action Agency. Bon appetit.

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