

# Lesson Plan F

**Course:** Fruits and Vegetables Galore – Helping Kids Eat More

**Module I:** Meal Appeal –Attracting Customers

**Lesson E:** Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

**Lesson Length:** 60 minutes

## Lesson Equipment and Materials

### Equipment

Overhead projector or Power Point

### Visual Aids

V-I1 *The 5P's*

V-F2 Cover of the 5 A Day Quantity Recipe Cookbook

V-F3 Menu Promotional Ideas

V-F4 Promotional Partners

V-F5 Make it Fun!

### Supplies

-Marker for flip chart

-small jar with lid filled with a known number of dry beans, black-eyed peas or raisins, cherry tomatoes

-Meal Appeal book

-2-page copy of 5 A Day Family Size Recipes to show as examples

### Participant Materials

H-F1 *Let's Get Descriptive*

H-F2 *Menus Good Enough to Eat*

H-F3 *Letter to Parents*

H-F4 *Recipe Letter to Parents*

H-F5 *Letter to Teachers*

HF6 *Promotion Planning Worksheet*

HF-7 *Events Calendar/Seasonal Fruits and Vegetables*

H-B6 *Increasing Fruits and Vegetables in Meals—A Plan for My School*

## Lesson Preparation

1. Read the entire Lesson Plan F. Read *Meal Appeal, Promoting Fruits and Vegetables*, pp. 18-31.
2. Reproduce all Participant Materials for Lesson F.
3. Post performance standards for Lesson E. Use flip chart or blank transparency.
4. The term School Nutrition Program (SNP) will be used for school foodservice or Child Nutrition Program.

## Lesson Outcome

On completion of the lesson, the learner will become actively involved in ensuring that the school cafeteria promotes increased offering of fruits and vegetables based on the following **performance standards**:

- Learner will be able to recognize and choose adjectives that can be used on SNP menus to attract students.
- Learner will be aware of fun activities that can be used to create excitement for fruits and vegetables and for increasing participation in school meals.
- Learner will identify and name target audiences for promotions including students, parents, teachers/school staff and the community.

## Lesson Instruction

### ◆ **Setting the Stage**

Focus learner's attention.

- ▷ Fruits and vegetables are a requirement of the meal pattern, contribute to good health, and are beautiful and tasty! **Show VA1 and reveal the 5 P's down to the last P-Promotion.** You have learned about why eating fruits and vegetables is important, how to purchase, store and serve them safely and attractively, and present them in a way that's appealing and stimulates the appetite. Now we're going to learn how you can **promote** the goodness of fruits and vegetables to help motivate your customers to take and eat the fruits and vegetables you've worked so hard to choose and serve.

### ◆ **Relate to Past Experience**

- ▷ We all know that fruits and vegetables are good for health; children do too, but knowing does not necessarily mean that you will do the thing that is best for you. **Can you think of a time you passed right by the vegetables at a buffet and headed right toward the dessert bar?** Kids will do the same thing. Promoting and creating excitement about fruits and vegetables will help kids choose and eat fruits and vegetables at school. To start us off, here is an activity that you could use to promote fruit and vegetable items you serve on your menu. **Guessing Game Activity (5-7 minutes)** Display the small lidded jar filled with a known number of dry beans, black-eyed peas, frozen peas, grape-sized tomatoes or raisins. Have participants guess the number of pieces and write their guess on a slip of paper. Award the one who guessed the closest a fruit or vegetable prize. This activity can be done at school. Encourage the participants to "dress up" the container with gift wrap, ribbons, or cloth on the lid. Place the container on the serving line or in dining room. Provide slips of paper for students to write their guesses and a box or container to hold the paper slips. *If time, Ask:* Which other fruits/vegetables this could work with? When might be a good time to hold this guessing game? Brainstorm ideas for prizes (suggestions might include getting to choose the fruit/vegetables offered at lunch for a day or promotional prizes from the 5 A Day catalog); write these on a flipchart page. Some possible tie-ins for this activity include September, National 5 A Day Month; March, Pride of Dakota Month (especially for beans).

◆ **Today’s Lesson...**

- ▷ In today’s lesson, we’ll help you choose words to use on menus that will draw attention to and stimulate appetite for fruits and vegetables. Eating begins with our eyes and our brain.
- ▷ We’ll also review some fun activities that will get kids’ attention and help make choosing fruits and vegetables a fun and easy choice.
- ▷ Finally, we’ll review some ideas for helping you to get some allies in your quest to get kids to eat fruits and vegetables. Parents, teachers and other school staff, and community members can help you help kids to choose fruits and vegetables.

◆ **You Will Be Able To...**

- ▷ Choose words for menus that help kids get excited about fruits and vegetables;
- ▷ Learn about and choose fun activities that help students choose and eat fruits and vegetables;
- ▷ Plan to target audiences to promote fruits and vegetables;

◆ **Identify the Purpose**

- ▷ Healthy children

**Performance Standard**

The learner will:

----Develop a plan to increase fruits and vegetables in school meals.

◆ **Lesson Content**

▷ Menus Good Enough to Eat!

You have probably heard the expression, “**you eat with your eyes**”. This is true when you look at an appealing plate of food, and your mouth may start to water before you even taste the food! Even before that, your brain can start to get your body ready to eat. You may have had the experience of reading a menu at a restaurant and feeling yourself getting hungrier when all you’ve done is read the words. Think about some of the menus that you have read that cause you to anticipate the meal to come. Now think about the menus at your school. Ask participants, “Do you think that students reading those menus get the same reaction? If so, what are some of the items on your menus?” If the answer was “no” or no one volunteered to share,

ask, “Why don’t you think that the menus are helping students look forward to meals?” and record the responses.

Distribute **H-F1 Let’s Get Descriptive** and read off some words that can help fruits and vegetables sound tasty. For example, “Chilly Carrot Coins” or “Ripe Fleshy Peaches” or “Leafy Green Lettuce Salad”. Other hints for jazzing up menus:

--Use the school mascot to name some items: “Wildcat Watermelon”.

--Color the names of menu items: “School Bus Yellow Corn”, “Forest Green Beans”, “Fire Engine Red Tomatoes”.

--Ask your student advisory group or student council to help name menu items.

--Look at recipe names in cookbooks, such as the 5 A Day Quantity Recipe Cookbook, for appealing words and descriptions. Show **V-F2 Cover of the 5 A Day Quantity Recipe Cookbook**, and note some of the descriptive recipe names, such as: “Touchdown Tomato Soup”, “Fruit on a Raft”, (waffles with apples), “Wonderful Stuffed Potatoes”, “Cool Clementines”. The *5 A Day Quantity Recipe Cookbook* was provided to all school preparation kitchens in the fall of 2004.

**Activity (10 minutes)** Distribute **H-F2 FVG Menus Good Enough to Eat**. Using **H-F1** as a reference, direct participants to work in pairs to come up with menus that use descriptive adjectives to enhance the appeal of the menu items, especially the fruits and vegetables. After the participants have had a few minutes to brainstorm, ask them to share ideas; post some of the menu names. In addition to using descriptive menu names, help provide ideas, education and excitement by adding additional information to your menus.

Show **V-F3, Menu Promotional Ideas**

--Send menus home. Menus sent home are one of the best marketing tools that school foodservice can use.

--Include nutrition facts about foods that are good sources of vitamins, minerals, fiber. If the school analyzes the nutrient content of menus, or has recently had personnel from DPI do so, then that information would be helpful to add, too.

--If promoting a special fruit or vegetable, include extra information about that item. Centers For Disease Control (CDC) has a 5 A Day website area with a feature called *Fruit and Vegetable of the Month* [www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/5aday/](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/5aday/) with fruit and vegetable product, history, and nutrition information.

--Add games or activities to menus. Suggestions include kids' activity sheets from the 5 A Day website [www.5aday.org](http://www.5aday.org) or cafeteria art from the Dole 5 A Day website, [www.dole5aday.com](http://www.dole5aday.com)

--How about adding a corn-y joke now and then? Here's another one: How do you fix a broken tomato? With tomato paste!

Ask participants if any of them have to limit the length of their menus so that they will fit to certain formats such as small squares on menu templates or limited space for the local newspaper. Ask them to brainstorm solutions to these limitations. Some possible solutions may include making the squares on the menu bigger, using two different formats (one shorter for newspaper and one longer for their own publication), posting the menu with delicious adjectives right outside the cafeteria, or having the delicious menu read as an announcement over the intercom. Many students decide to purchase meals based solely on the day's menu.

Extend the Activity: Back at school, encourage participants to review their menus and add fun and appeal with adjectives and other descriptive words.

▷ Partners who can help promote fruits and vegetables

Ask, "Which food group is the most difficult to get children to take from the serving line and to eat?" The answer is surely to be vegetables. Because we know that children are not eating enough fruits and vegetables and because they have many benefits to health, they need some special attention when it comes to promotion.

First we'll talk about some people who can help you so you don't feel like you have to do this on your own. Then we'll present some ideas from which you can choose to try back home. Who can help? Lots of folks in the community are interested and may be willing to help you promote these healthy foods to kids. Show *V-F4 Promotional Partners*

--**Foodservice Staff.** Let's start with your core team members, the frontline staff who are preparing and serving fruits and vegetables to kids every day. Are they excited about fruits and vegetables? Do they make positive comments about fruits and vegetables when they are serving them? Do they encourage children to try them? If not, schedule a "pep talk" about fruits and vegetables. Each day, encourage each server to think of at least one positive comment to share with several children. Examples are, "Aren't those carrots pretty? Look at the orange color, why don't you make your tray prettier by taking some?" or "These peaches are sweet and cold;

wouldn't you like to try some?" or "These peas are nice and warm and want to roll right into your mouth-try some!" or "The celery is very crunchy today-take a bite!"

Foodservice staff can also get into the spirit of fruit and vegetable promotions. Wear the colors of fruits and vegetables the day they are being served. For example, wear red shirts or aprons when serving tomatoes if this fits with uniform guidelines at your facility. Some SNP staff in North Dakota have even gone so far as to make costumes to look like fruits and vegetables that are worn during special promotions!

--**Parents.** Parents are a very concerned group, but parents, like all of us, are rushed, and providing healthy meals may not be a priority. Even when it is, finding time to prepare meals is becoming harder. When parents do cook at home, the menu item most often dropped due to lack of time is a side dish, according to research by the Produce for Better Health Foundation. You are an ally in their quest to do the best for their children. Just eating breakfast and lunch at school provides students with the opportunity to choose 3 servings of fruits and vegetables daily. Reminding and encouraging parents to have their children participate in the school meals programs is a way to reach out to them.

Show ***H-F3 Letter to Parents***. Discuss that participants may take and copy directly, perhaps on the back of a menu, and send home with parents. Or, if they wish, they can access the document at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/child/train/fvgalore.shtm>

At that site, they can download the document and can personalize with school name, date, logo, or other information. Then the document can be saved to their computer, printed and copied for use at their school(s). (Note to instructors: please encourage SNP personnel to try to access even if they don't routinely use the internet.)

Another way to connect with parents is to provide them with some recipes for preparing fruits and vegetables at home. Show ***V-F2 Cover of the 5 A Day Quantity Recipe Cookbook***. In the Appendix at the back of this resource are 37 family size recipes for some of the quantity size recipes that are included in the cookbook for your use. These family-size recipes are there for you to share with parents; they might also work for a small childcare facility. ***H-F4 Recipe Letter to Parents*** includes a letter to parents on the front side and 4 recipes to send home on the back side. You may copy ***H-F4 Recipe Letter to Parents*** as it is. Or this document may be accessed at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/child/train/fvgalore.shtm>

At that site, they can download the document and can personalize with school name, date, logo, or other information. Then the document can be saved to their computer, printed and copied for use at their school(s). A very effective way to link your efforts to home is to prepare and serve one of the recipes at school and send home the family-size recipe the same day or week.

The school parent teacher group (PTO or PTA) may also be able to provide assistance. They may be able to provide time and funding for decorations for special promotional events.

--**Students.** There are several ways to involve student groups in helping to promote fruits and vegetables. Survey them to find out what you can do or promote differently. Some questions might include asking them about their most and least favorite fruits and vegetables; ask what might help them eat more fruits and vegetables. Student advisory groups or student councils can also help with promotional activities.

--**Teachers** are natural partners for your efforts to promote fruits and vegetables. Linking the cafeteria to the classroom can reinforce healthy meals messages and encourage children to make healthful choices. Healthy meals give students the energy and nourishment they need to succeed in the classroom.

Consider contacting teachers at or before the beginning of the year to let them know of your plans to promote fruits and vegetables. Ask them to take part in the planning process.

Let teachers know that you have a learning laboratory right in the kitchen. Volunteer to help them expand the classroom learning experience. You could highlight a specific food on the menu during a week when classes are studying a specific food or foods from a different country. Or consider a classroom presentation with samples of a specific food to taste.

Here's an activity that could help you link to parents. Show ***H-F5 Letter to Teachers***. This is an invitation to teachers to use the kitchen/cafeteria as a learning laboratory. Many teachers teach lessons on parts of plants. You serve parts of plants every day! Copy this handout as it is or access at

<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/child/train/fvgalore.shtm>

At that site, they can download the document and can personalize with school name, date, logo, or other information. Then the document can be saved to their computer, printed and copied for use at their school(s).

--**Community members** may also be potential partners in your quest to promote fruits and vegetables. The local grocery store may partner with you to promote fruits and vegetables on sale the same week you feature them on your menu. Do you have a Farmers' Market in your area? They are popping up all over North Dakota. In the summer of 2005, there will be more than 50 farmers markets all over the state. Consider these local growers as potential suppliers of produce to your program. Some may not be large enough to supply enough food for a whole school, but their numbers are growing. Some late season fruits and vegetables that may be available in September after school starts include melons, squash or pumpkins.

Are there community volunteer groups with whom you could partner? Maybe senior citizens or fraternal groups have volunteers who could help make things or are looking for a way to be involved in the school.

▷ Activities that help promote fruits and vegetables

*Meal Appeal* is full of activities! Instructors review pp. 17-19 of this book for ideas. VF-5, ***Make It Fun!***, lists some of those activities; reveal listed items of this visual.

-Use the window clings found in the "Fruits and Vegetables Galore" resource distributed to all schools by USDA Team Nutrition. They are located in the *Meal Appeal* booklet in the back appendix section. Instructors find and display these clings for participants.

Planning Promotions

(Instructors review *Meal Appeal* p.20.) You may lead into this part of the course by noting that the questions we just answered about when to hold an activity, how to do it, and who can help are essential questions to ask when planning activities to promote fruits and vegetables to students.

(Note to instructors: p. 19 of *Meal Appeal* suggests providing fruits and vegetables as prizes for contests, activities. However, authorities including the Society for Nutrition Education do NOT recommend using food as a reward, even if the food reward is a "healthy" food such as fruits or vegetables. Suggest small non-food prizes such as pencils, stickers, or tattoos as prize awards for promotional activities.) Promotions can take some time to plan and pull off, but they can help to generate excitement and positive feedback about fruits and vegetables. Use your imagination and ***Promotion Planning Worksheet***, HF- 6, to help you. Reveal items on VF-5, ***Plan Your Promotion!*** While discussing when to do it, point out that HF-7, ***Events Calendar/Seasonal Fruits and Vegetables***, lays out some fun

observances that can be linked to promotions. March is *Pride of Dakota* Month, another good opportunity to promote home-grown vegetables such as dry beans used in soup or chili or potatoes. Look for special menu promotion ideas this month from DPI Child Nutrition Programs and the ND Department of Agriculture. Choosing and promoting vegetables in season can help to add variety, obtain the most flavorful fruits and vegetables, and can help to control costs. Extend the Activity: Back at school, encourage participants to make copies of the worksheet and work with other SNP staff and partners to help them plan their own promotions.

◆ **Performance Check**

**Activity (5-7 minutes)** Working singly or in pairs, have participants plan one promotion for one target audience for the coming school year using *Promotion Planning Worksheet*, HF- 6.

- ▷ Display V-I1 *The 5P's*, and have participants take out *H-B7, Increasing Fruits and Vegetables in Meals-A Plan for Your School*. Focus on the last of the 5P's – Promoting. Have participants mark what they are currently doing to promote fruits and vegetables and how they can plan to increase their own activities.

◆ **Closure**

- ▷ Fruits and vegetables are a requirement of the meal pattern, contribute to good health, and are beautiful and tasty, but they are also the most difficult to get children to take from the serving line and to eat. Most children are not meeting the recommended number of servings daily to be as healthy as possible. As school foodservice professionals you have the unique opportunity to improve the health of the children you serve. We have explored ways to purchase, store and serve fruits and vegetables safely and attractively, and present them in a way that's appealing and stimulates the appetite. Hopefully, you have even found that fruits and vegetables can be fun and planned for ways to promote their goodness to help motivate your customers to take and eat the fruits and vegetables you've worked so hard to choose and serve. You have the power to make a positive difference in the health of the children you serve. Good Luck!

*Final instructions for wrap-up of the course to go here....*