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EAT RIGHT MONTANA

A coalition promoting healthy eating and active lifestyles

November 2006

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to the November issue of Eat Right Montana's 2006 Healthy Families Campaign. We continue this month with our annual theme of "Play Local, Eat Local, Live Healthy."

As the holiday season approaches, we turn our attention to those individuals who may need emergency food assistance through food banks and food pantries. The monthly press release features an interview with Peggy Grimes, Executive Director of the Montana Food Bank Network. In addition, the eat local handout provides an overview of some food security issues, statistics and resources.

Along with the holiday season come the shorter days and colder temperatures of winter. This month's *Play Local* handout provides inspiration and practical tips for staying physically active and enjoying the local outdoors year-round.

As always, Eat Right Montana thanks the generous donors listed at the left. Through their support, the production of these monthly Healthy Families packets is possible. Eat Right Montana is a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of healthful eating and active lifestyles. New members to this organization are always welcome and may contact one of the individuals listed below for membership information.

Your feedback is important to us; please let us know what you think. For a complete archive of past Healthy Families packets, go to:

www.montanadieticassociation.org/promo.html

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Physical Activity



Staying Physically Active as the Days Grow Shorter and Colder

For many folks living in the upper reaches of the northern hemisphere, the winter months mean shorter days, colder temperatures and unfortunately, less physical activity. Well, there is not much you can do about the day length or mercury level, but there are definitely strategies for staying active no matter what time of year.

Ideas for Staying Physically Active in Winter Months:

- Find “walkable” indoor venues (the mall, schools).
- Try a new winter sport.
 - Snowshoeing
 - Cross-country skiing
- Join a health club.
- Put traction on your feet and walk all year. Check out the following:
 - YakTrax <http://yaktrax.com/>
 - Shoe Ice Cleats: <http://www.shooicecleats.com/>
- Swim at your local community pool.

Dress for the Weather Can Make All The Difference!

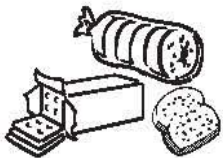
Dressing for outdoor activity can make the difference between a fun time and a cold, miserable experience. Some pointers for dressing for activity in the cold include:

- Wear Layers. Dressing in layers gives you flexibility in the great outdoors. The main three layers should be:
 - Wicking: Against your skin, you want a fabric that removes moisture from your skin (synthetic fabrics).
 - Insulating: This second layer will help to maintain the body heat you generate with activity (fleece or wool).
 - Weather Protection: This outside layer protects you against wind and precipitation (nylon or GORETEX®).

Benefits of Winter Activity

- Staying active keeps your immune system in tip-top shape, helping to keep you healthy during cold and flu season.
- Just say no to winter weight gain!
- Ward off the seasonal blues – physical activity is a wonderful stress reliever and mood lifter.
- Maintain an active social life – daily walks or exercise routines with a friend can bring great joy all year long.
- Continual, year-round physical activity can help you to avoid injuries.

Healthy Eating



Food Banks and Food Pantries: Helping Locally

Do you know anyone who has had to make the tough choice between paying their rent and buying food for their family? Unfortunately, this difficult situation is all too common for many Americans. In 2004, 3.9 million households in the U.S. received food assistance from a food bank/pantry at least once during the year.

What is a Food Bank/Food Pantry?

A food bank collects food and distributes to agencies that serve the low-income population. A food pantry provides food directly to individuals in need.

Definitions: Food Security, Food Insecurity and Hunger:

There is a continuum between those who live in conditions of adequate and consistent access to healthful food, to those who must reduce their food intake in order to “get by” each month. Here are the terms and definitions:

- **Food Security:** the ability to access food in a consistent, socially acceptable manner in order to meet the family's nutritional needs.
- **Food Insecurity:** the inability to access food in a consistent manner, requiring emergency food assistance, trying to have enough to feed the children - adults may skip meals.
- **Hunger:** the condition where both the adults and children cannot access food consistently and have to reduce food intake, eat poor diets and often go without any food.

Poverty Leads to Food Insecurity:

- In 2005, 37 million people (12.6%) nationwide lived in poverty.
 - 17.8% of the nation's children (under age 18)
 - 11.3% of people aged 18-64
- Montana's poverty rate is 14.4%.
 - Represents 130,000 people in the state
- In 2004, 38.2 million people lived in food-insecure households, including 13.9 million children.
- In Montana, 12.2% of households are food insecure.
- In 2005, 476,224 clients (repeat visits included) received emergency assistance from a food pantry.

Healthy Eating

Food Banks and Food Pantries: Helping Locally (continued)

Want to Help?

Use this "Food Bank Wish List" to select non-perishable foods to request for a community food drive:

Grains:

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Pancake mix | Infant cereal |
| Rice pilaf | Oatmeal |
| Rigatoni | Cream of wheat |
| Cereal | Brown rice |
| Quick bread mix | Pasta |
| Flour (white or whole wheat) | Cornmeal |
| Graham crackers | Noodle soup |

Vegetables and Fruits:

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Tomato sauce | Raisins/other dried fruits |
| Spaghetti sauce | Baby food fruit |
| Canned vegetables | Applesauce |
| Vegetable soup | Canned pumpkin |
| Baby food vegetables | Canned peaches/pears |

Milk Group Items:

- Powdered milk
- Infant formula
- Evaporated milk
- Shelf stable pudding
- Parmesan cheese

Meat Group Items:

- Nuts
- Peanut butter
- Beef stew
- Canned beans/peas
- Dried beans/peas

Fats/Oils/Sweets:

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| Jelly | Sugar |
| Syrup | Preserves |
| Vegetable oils | Lite mayonnaise |
| Lite salad dressings | |

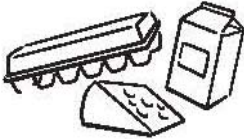
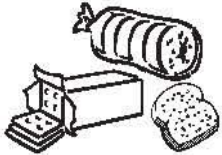
For more information on food banks, food pantries and other emergency food programs, visit America's Second Harvest at:

<http://www.secondharvest.org>

or call them at: **(800)-771-2303**

To find information on resources in your local area, you may utilize the food bank locator found at:

http://www.secondharvest.org/zip_code.jsp





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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EAT LOCAL, PLAY LOCAL, LIVE HEALTHY
Celebrating Healthy Families 2006

Use of Emergency Food Supply on the Rise in Montana

As the holiday season approaches and Thanksgiving is mere days away, there is a group that will not be taking time off to relax but rather will be gearing up for their busiest time of year – the food banks and food pantries around the state and country.

“Thanksgiving marks the start of one of our busiest times of year,” notes Peggy Grimes, Executive Director of the non-profit Montana Food Bank Network (MFBN).

The Montana Food Bank Network is a statewide organization that serves needy individuals and families by gathering and distributing donated food to 154 emergency food programs around the state. Among these programs are about 97 food pantries, some youth homes, low-income daycare centers, and senior centers.

“Very often people use the terms ‘food bank’ and ‘food pantry’ interchangeably,” said Grimes, “But actually there is a difference. Food banks collect food and distribute to agencies that serve the low-income population while food pantries provide food directly to the individuals.”

When asked about trends in emergency food provision in the state of Montana, Grimes sighs. “We just completed a comparison of food pantry visits over the past seven years. Between 2004 and 2005 the number of food pantry clients went from 78,529 to 213,895. When we took an overall count of the number of visits to an emergency food facility, the number went from 456,226 in 2004 to 804,536 in 2005. These numbers represent the reality of how much food needs to move through the emergency food system in Montana.”

Why the recent increases in food pantry use? “Rising fuel costs hit Montanans hard,” Grimes explains. “When fuel prices rise in Montana, most folks living on a tight budget don’t have the option to take a bus or subway to work – the money has to come from somewhere and the food budget is usually the target.”

“Food insecurity is not a problem unto itself – it is a symptom of poverty. Until we solve poverty issues, we are not going to be able to solve hunger and food insecurity issues. Until people are making a living wage and able to support

themselves in a socially acceptable manner, the emergency food system is going to function at the same intensity it is now."

Montana has a very low unemployment rate but is rated number two in the nation for people holding two jobs and number one in the nation for people holding three jobs.

"The only way many people are keeping their head above water is to hold down two or more jobs. And even at this, they are still needing to resort to emergency food resources now and then," said Grimes.

In looking to the future, Grimes and her hardworking group at the MFBN are diligently readying themselves for the upcoming holiday season where they anticipate providing food for as many as 1.14 million meals during the two-month holiday season.

When asked what tops her wish list for the holiday season, Grimes doesn't skip a beat, "A living wage for Montanans," Grimes says. "Until we as a society address the fact that so many people are having to make a choice between paying the rent or buying groceries, emergency food resources will serve more as grocery stores for those living in poverty. I'd like to see emergency food resources move back into the realm for what they were originally intended – emergencies."

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