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## Resolutions for Healthy Families in a Healthy Montana

Since January 1999, Eat Right Montana (ERM), a statewide coalition promoting healthy eating and active lifestyles, has published a monthly packet of sound advice on nutrition and fitness. For its 11th year, the coalition plans to expand and enhance the practical tips it offers to Montanans with the 2009 theme - *Going Green: Simple Steps for Healthy Families*.

"Eat Right Montana recognizes that personal health, environmental health, and economic health are all necessary for this state to both thrive and maintain its natural beauty," explains Coleen Kaiser, MS, RD (registered dietitian) and MSU Extension Nutrition Educator in Bozeman. "Using the green theme, ERM will weave together environmentally friendly concepts, including eating green (local, sustainable agriculture), green fitness (active living with minimal resources), and waste reduction (recycling, etc.). Each issue will also have a delicious recipe with seasonal, green-colored foods."

The green theme is a great fit with Montana Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) Lead by Example initiative for Sustainable Government ([www.deq.mt.gov/Recycle/LeadByExample.asp](http://www.deq.mt.gov/Recycle/LeadByExample.asp)). Each of ERM's 2009 packets will focus on a community that is leading by example - by promoting gardens, school salad bars, trail days, breastfeeding, and more.

As a member of the Montana Food System Council, Ms. Kaiser is heartened by the steps that Montana is taking to support local agriculture. "One example is the new undergraduate degree in Sustainable Food and Bioenergy Systems (SFBS) at MSU, spearheaded by Dr. Alison Harmon and others." According to the **Grow Montana** network, if each household in Montana spent just \$10 per week on Montana-produced food, it would redirect \$186 million each year to local producers.

Fortunately, you don't need a degree to go green, feel better, and be healthier in 2009. Just make a family resolution to:

- **Enjoy more healthful, Montana foods:** Make your contribution to sustainable agriculture by purchasing at least \$10 per week of beef, barley, lamb, lentils, and numerous other products labeled as '*Grown in Montana*.' The dollars you spend will help to support agricultural families and contribute to vibrant, healthy communities in rural areas across the state.
- **Take more walks in Big Sky country:** There's no need for fancy fitness equipment or expensive gym memberships. Not when you have access to dozens of beautiful Montana parks and miles of wonderful trails for walking and hiking. Fitness experts agree that regular, brisk walking is one of the safest and easiest ways for people of all ages to get and stay fit.
- **Throw less trash away in the Treasure State:** The DEQ reports that Montana currently recycles 15% of the solid waste generated each year. Every family in the state can contribute to the goal of 22% by 2015 with some simple new habits, such as recycling newspapers and magazines, shopping with reusable bags, and composting food and yard waste.

"Going green isn't like an episode of extreme makeover," says Coleen Kaiser. "It's about making simple changes that add up to a big difference over the long run. With a few new habits, we can all have a seriously healthy impact on Montana."

Past and current issues of Eat Right Montana's monthly packets can be downloaded for free at

[www.eatrightmontana.org/eatrighthealthyfamilies.htm](http://www.eatrightmontana.org/eatrighthealthyfamilies.htm)