

## **DEVELOPMENT OF A RECIPE HANDBOOK UTILIZING LOCALLY-AVAILABLE VEGETABLES**

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**Background:** The 1993 National Nutrition Survey (NNS) results showed that the average Filipino diet of rice, fish and vegetable, falls short of the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA), particularly for vitamins and minerals. The reduction in ascorbic acid intake is a result of the decreased consumption of fruits and vegetables. Several studies have shown an increasing incidence of chronic or lifestyle diseases among the Filipino population which can be attributed to stress, fast-paced lifestyle, and nutritionally imbalanced diet. Nutritional Guidelines for Filipinos (NGFs) recommend eating more vegetables, fruits, and rootcrops for good health and proper nutrition. Vegetables are rich sources of vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals, and dietary fiber. The handbook is a useful educational campaign tool in support of the continuous efforts of concerned government agencies and NGO's to increase the consumption of vegetables.

**Objective:** To develop a recipe handbook containing acceptable standardized recipes utilizing locally available vegetables. **Methods:** A total of 50 recipes from the National Nutrition Council-Department of Agriculture's (NNC-DA) compilation of recipes from a series of cooking contests conducted in the National Capital Region (NCR) and the province of Laguna were selected, tested and standardized. The edible portion (EP) weights and household (HH) measures per ingredient, total cooked weight (TCW), and serving size of each recipe were determined. The recipes were then subjected to sensory evaluation by in-house panelists using the 9-point Hedonic Rating scale. An average score of seven (7), which means 'liked moderately' was considered acceptable. Contents of Energy and other nutrients namely: protein, iron, calcium, vitamin A, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin and ascorbic acid were estimated using the Menu Eval Software (1995 version) based on the 1997 Food Composition Tables (FCT) values. Photo sessions of the 50 acceptable recipes were conducted. The recipes were translated to Filipino for better understanding of its target users, i.e., mothers, caregivers, homemakers, Home Economics (HE) teachers, and nutrition frontline workers, such as Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS), and Barangay Health Workers (BHWs). Literature search on commonly eaten fruits and vegetables was also done for additional information on nutritional contents of commonly eaten fruits and vegetables and tips on vegetable purchasing, preparation, cooking, and serving. **Results:** The recipe handbook entitled "*Mga Lutuing Gulay – Masustansiya Na, Masarap Pa*" containing 50 acceptable recipes was developed in a user-friendly format using appropriate colors intended for easy browsing. The recipes were classified into four (4) categories, namely: (1) *Pang-ulam*; (2) *Pangmeryenda*; (3) *Pampagana*; and (4) *Panghimagas*, and arranged alphabetically under each category. A photograph and information on featured vegetables highlight each recipe. For better utilization, additional information on commonly eaten fruits and vegetables and tips on vegetable purchasing, preparation, cooking, and serving were included in the appendices.

**Conclusion and Recommendation:** It will guide the target users in improving the meals served on the family table and in increasing awareness on the importance and

value of vegetables in the country. It will also help increase the utilization of vegetables grown by local growers, farmers and producers. Strengthen advocacy on the use of locally grown and available vegetables should be done through the conduct of more projects of similar nature by concerned government agencies, NGO's and other organizations.

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