THE FNRI-DOST 2007 MENU GUIDE CALENDAR:
YEAR-ROUND DAILY GUIDE TO FORTIFYING MEALS
WITH MICRONUTRIENTS

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Background: Results of the 2003 Sixth National Nutrition Surveys (6NNS) revealed inadequacies of the Filipino diet in vitamin A, iron, and iodine. Inadequate intake of foods rich in these micronutrients lead to Vitamin A Deficiency (VAD), Iron Deficiency Anemia (IDA), and Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD). They have devastating effects on pregnant and lactating women and children under six years of age. One of the government's responses to address this problem is the Food Fortification Act of 2000 whereby cooking oil, flour, sugar, rice and salt are mandated to be fortified at levels approved by the Department of Health (DOH). The FNRI-DOST translates research and development results into handy, user-friendly and information-packed nutrition tools/materials, subsequently promoting their use. One such tool is the FNRI Annual Menu Guide Calendar (MGC) which is especially designed to target community extension workers, health educators, and homemakers tasked with teaching or actually performing the daily chore of planning family meals. The printing of the 2007 MGC, as a vehicle to promote food fortification, was realized in partnership with the UNILEVER Philippines, Inc. This MGC features cycle menus, standardized recipes, and nutrition, health and food safety tips for the general population. This year's theme focuses on a year-round daily guide to fortifying meals with micronutrients through the use of various fortified foods. Objectives: Generally, to promote nationwide the utilization of the Institute's research results and disseminate present nutrition knowledge towards improving the health and well-being of the Filipinos, and specifically, (1) to develop a suitable, simple, and research-based, printed nutrition tool for the general public and (2) to promote the use and consumption of fortified foods. Methods: Recipes using fortified foods and food ingredients were tested, standardized, and evaluated for their sensory quality (using the 9-point Hedonic Rating Scale) and nutrient contributions. Selected recipes were photographed for the calendar. Menu cycles were put together for a year-round guide. Up-to-date information on the daily nutritional guide pyramids for Filipinos for various age groups were incorporated in the calendar. Results: The 2007 FNRI MGC includes 12 monthly 7-day cycle menus and 12 standardized recipes incorporating fortified foods, with energy, protein, calcium, iron, vitamin A, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and vitamin C contributions provided per serving size. Health and nutrition tips, facts about food fortification, iodized salt, and the Philippine Recommended Energy and Nutrient Intakes (RENI) were also added. Recommendation: It is recommended that the MGC, as an everyday-use nutrition promotion tool, be a continuing yearly output of an FNRI - industry partner(s) collaboration and its circulation be increased a hundred-fold to reach as many beneficiaries as possible, including those in the rural areas.