

THE FNRI-DOST 2008 MENU GUIDE CALENDAR: HEALTHY MENU GUIDE FOR TODAY'S LIFESTYLE

Marietta M. Bumanglag (MPH), Ma. Idelia G. Glorioso (MSCN),
Ma. Julia T. Goloso (MSNH), Milflor S. Gonzales (MA Comm),
Divorah V. Aguila (MSPH), Romeo R. Artuz, Erlinda V. Ilao,
Estrellita M. Pamaran, and Filoteo D. Ponte

ABSTRACT

Background: Recent nutrition surveys revealed the prevalence of overweight and obesity among adolescents and adults. Among 13-19 year-old, four out of 100 are overweight. Twenty for every 100 lactating mothers are overweight. While the prevalence of overweight and obesity is not yet a serious public health problem as undernutrition is, this situation should raise concern because of the increasing prevalence rates of lifestyle-related non-communicable diseases in later life such as diabetes mellitus and cardiovascular diseases, and risk factors such as hypertension. Obesity has been associated with the increased consumption of high-calorie foods and physical inactivity. As preventive measures, it is advisable for people to eat the proper kinds and amounts of foods, exercise regularly, avoid smoking, and drink alcoholic beverages only in moderation. These nutrition advices and tips are translated by the FNRI-DOST into handy and user-friendly Menu Guide Calendar (MGC), especially designed for community extension workers, health educators, and homemakers tasked with teaching or actually performing the daily planning and preparing of family meals.

Objectives: Generally, to promote the nationwide utilization of the Institute's research results and disseminate present nutrition knowledge toward improving the health and well-being of the Filipinos. Specifically, to develop and promote a suitable, simple, and research-based printed nutrition tool for increasing awareness and knowledge of healthy diet as one of the key components of a healthy lifestyle.

Methods: Recipes using popular foods and selected food items that are low in fat, low in sugar, low in sodium, and low in calories were standardized and evaluated for sensory quality (using the 9-point Hedonic Rating Scale) and nutrient contributions. The developed recipes, categorized into soups, vegetable dishes, pasta dishes, main dishes, and dessert/snacks were translated into a Menu Guide Calendar which put together menu cycles for a year-round guide. Up-to-date information on healthy lifestyle were later incorporated.

Results: The 2008 FNRI Menu Guide Calendar features 12 monthly 7-day cycle menus and 13 standardized recipes highlighting healthy ingredients, with energy, protein, calcium, iron, vitamin A, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and vitamin C contributions stated per serving size. Tips on the proper usage/intake of foods, the benefits of exercise, and the equivalent calories from food for a particular type of activity were also included. The printing of the calendar was realized in partnership with UNILEVER Philippines, Inc.

Recommendation: As an everyday-use nutrition promotion tool, the MGC should be a continuing yearly S&T output of the FNRI,DOST. Collaboration with private and industry partners for the increased production, printing, and circulation of the MGC should be expanded to cover a wide range of stakeholders.

