

A message from NUTRITIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

01/05/2022

Greetings from NDS! Today's Wellness Wednesday topic is third of several with resources for schools and students about Nutrition & Local Agriculture.

This relates to the School Wellness Policy Goal that reads: We promote nutrition through the implementation of activities such as having a school garden, taste testing local products, incorporating local foods into school meals, and educating students in the classroom and on field trips about local agriculture.

American Dairy Association – Northeast: Virtual Farm Tours & Lesson Plans for Teachers

Have you ever wondered how milk is produced? Or how long it takes for milk to get from farm to table? American Dairy Association North East invites your classroom on a LIVE Virtual Farm Tour to a dairy farm!

Several tours are offered and are geared to either the Middle & High School students or PK-8th graders. The American Dairy Association also offers free lesson plans for students.

Visit their [website](#) for these resources - and much more - today!

1/12/2022

Today's Wellness Wednesday topic focuses on the January Harvest of the Month Produce: Sweet Potatoes

PA Harvest of the Month highlights sweet potatoes during the month of January. Did you know that sweet potatoes are in the morning glory family and probably date back to prehistoric times? Sweet potatoes grow under the soil while their leaves sprout above the ground. The skin of this root vegetable can vary from dark yellow to dark red with orange flesh inside, with a naturally sweet flavor.

Sweet potatoes are sometimes called yams, but real yams are white, starchy roots with tough skin that are native to Africa; yams are not commercially grown in the United States.

Nutritionally, sweet potatoes are a good source of fiber, potassium, and vitamin A. Fiber is important for proper digestive function and can also lower the risk for diabetes, heart disease, and some types of cancer. Potassium is a mineral that helps muscles contract and the body maintain normal blood pressure. Vitamin A plays a role in immune function and promoting eye health.

For more information on sweet potatoes including selection, handling, storage, preparation, and recipes, click [here](#).



1/19/2022

Today's Wellness Wednesday topic focuses on
Staying Active No Matter the Weather

During these cold days of winter, it is important for kids and adults to remain active. Luckily, there are a lot of creative, fun, and easy ways to get in some movement each day:

- Outdoor winter activities: walking; jogging; making a snowman, snow fort for snowball fights, and snow angels; sledding; go to a playground, play tag, play soccer (if the ground is dry).
- In the house: dancing; yoga; HIIT workouts (these generally combine short bursts of intense exercise with periods of rest or lower-intensity exercise which often mix aerobic and resistance training), or weights workouts; games requiring movement, such as twister or charades; create an obstacle course with cushions and pillows for younger children; hopscotch in the hall (using tape).

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia has a more extensive list of ways to keep kids active through the winter located [here](#).

1/26/2022

Greetings from NDS! Today's Wellness Wednesday topic addresses ways to:

Beat Winter Blues

With dreary winter weather, dark mornings *and* evenings, and chilly temperatures often come the winter blues. While there's no medical diagnosis for the winter blues, they are fairly common and are characterized by feeling sad or less energized than usual.

The following are some ideas for lifting your mood and giving your energy levels a BOOST!

20 minutes or more of vigorous activity four times a week has been shown to reduce depressive moods.

- Stick to a regular sleep schedule and develop a nighttime routine.
- Laugh more; laughter stimulates your brain to counter symptoms of depression.
- Make hot chocolate with natural cocoa powder and fortified milk (real cocoa is high in mood improving flavonoids, and fortified milk's combination of carbs, protein, and vitamin D helps to increase serotonin levels and subsequently feelings of relaxation).
- Give yourself a reasonable task to complete, but don't let your to-do list overwhelm you.
- Give yourself little things to look forward to, such as a staycation, trying a new recipe, or spending an afternoon ice skating with kids or friends.
- Light therapy can help regulate your body's circadian rhythm during a season when it doesn't get as much sunlight as usual.
- See your healthcare provider to make sure your winter blues aren't a sign of a more serious underlying condition.

SOURCE: Click [here](#) for more information on the winter blues and strategies for combating them