

A message from NUTRITIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

October 5, 2022

Greetings from NDS! Today's Wellness Wednesday topic is:

## Healthy Halloween Treats



Halloween is always a fun day, filled with costumes, imagination and of course tons of candy and treats. Instead of keeping candy and sweet treats off limits, use Halloween as an opportunity to teach children to enjoy special treats, in moderation, as part of an overall healthy diet.

- Opt for healthy snacks first to fill up on. You can make it fun by choosing orange foods, such as: carrots or baked sweet potato fries. You can add green as well, such as: sliced cucumbers or guacamole.
- Opt for small portions of sweet treats.

Making your own treats can add some nutritional value to your celebration.

🍎 Try including fruits, vegetables, nuts or whole grains. 🍿 Try popcorn tossed with cinnamon and sugar or chocolate-covered fruit as healthier alternatives to candy. 🍂 Go for pumpkin treats, such as fiber-packed cinnamon-roasted pumpkin seeds or vitamin A-rich pumpkin chocolate chip mini muffins.

## Healthy-Halloween-themed snack ideas

- [Smoothies made with low-fat vanilla yogurt and canned pumpkin](#)
- [Pumpkin pie dip with low-fat cream cheese, Greek yogurt, toasted pumpkin and spices](#)
- [Chocolate Chip Pumpkin Bar recipe](#)

## Mix up your candy bowl and offer:



- Whole-grain cheddar flavored crackers
- Fruit snacks made with 100% fruit with added vitamin C
- Animal-shaped graham crackers
- Mini rice cereal treat bars
- Cereal bars made with real fruit
- Individual fruit cups
- Mini 100% fruit juice boxed
- Mini bags of pretzels

[American Heart Association](#) provides a list of healthy Halloween celebration ideas for everyone!

A message from NUTRITIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

October 12, 2022

Greetings from NDS! This week's Wellness Wednesday topic is:

## National Apple Month & Harvest of the Month

October is National Apple Month and apples are the highlighted fruit in October for PA Harvest of the Month. There are about 7,500 varieties of apples worldwide, with about 2,500 grown in the U.S. Apples range in color in shades of red, green, and yellow. They can also vary in flavor from tart (such as Granny Smith and Stayman) to sweet (such as Fuji and Gala). Most varieties are eaten raw and only some are considered food for cooking such as McIntosh, Granny Smith, Rome, and Cortland.



### Go PA!

Pennsylvania produces 400 to 500 million pounds of apples per year and ranks fourth in the nation for apple production. The majority of apple production in Pennsylvania is centered in the southcentral part of Pennsylvania but apples are grown throughout the commonwealth.

- Approximately one third of Pennsylvania's apple crop is sold fresh, the remainder is sold for processing to make products such as apple cider, applesauce, apple pies and apple juice.

### So Delicious and Good For you Too!

Did you know apples are second most consumed fruit in the U.S., behind bananas? The average American consumes roughly 19 pounds of apples per year through a combination of fresh apples and apple products.

- Apples are a great source of fiber and vitamin C. Eating apples with the skin is best as almost half of the vitamin C content is just underneath the skin and eating the skin also increases insoluble fiber content.
- Apples are also a source of phytochemicals which are substances that are believed to guard against cell damage and have a wide variety of health benefits. Studies have shown that apples, or the specific phytochemicals in them, may protect against cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and some forms of cancer and may help with weight control.
- Additionally, apples are fat, cholesterol, and sodium free making them an excellent snack!

## Ideas for celebrating National Apple Month

celebrating the Apple



1. Go apple picking at a local orchard
2. Read an apple book
  - [\*Ten Apples Up on Top\*](#) by Dr. Seuss
  - [\*Up, Up, Up It's Apple Picking Time\*](#) by Jody Fickes Shapiro
  - [\*Apples, Apples, Apples\*](#) by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace
  - [\*A Day at the Apple Orchard\*](#) by Megan Faulkner
  - [\*Applesauce Season\*](#) by Eden Ross Lipson
  - [\*The Apple Orchard Riddle\*](#) by Margaret McNamara
  - [\*The Seasons of Arnold's Apple Tree\*](#) by Gail Gibbons
  - [\*Apples, Apples Everywhere!\*](#) By Robin Koontz
3. Compare apples to apples
4. Enjoy a simple apple snack- try apples slices spread with nut or sun butter, dipped in honey or maple syrup or sprinkled with cinnamon or pie spice.
5. Learn about Johnny Appleseed
6. Bob for apples
7. Host an apple feast - serve all kinds of dishes with apples such as applesauce cake, apple pancakes, apple cider, stuffed baked apples, and apple pie to name a few.
8. Explore apples through ['colorful learning'](#)

## Easy Apple Muffins

### Ingredients:

- 2 medium apples
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. allspice
- 1/2 tsp. ground ginger
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup oil
- 1 1/2 cup flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda



(Makes about 18–20 small muffins and 12 medium size ones.)

### Steps:

1. Preheat the oven to 350° F and grease your muffin pans.
2. Grate the apples into a mixing bowl. Combine the sugar and spices, and pour over the grated apples. Let sit for 10 minutes.
3. Stir the egg and oil into the apple/sugar mixture.
4. Add the flour, salt, baking powder, and baking soda. Mix until just combined.
5. Spoon the batter into greased muffin pans and bake for 20–25 minutes.
6. Let cool on a rack. Enjoy!

A message from NUTRITIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

October 19, 2022

Greetings from NDS! Today's Wellness Wednesday topic is:

## National Farm to School Month

This week, NDS recognizes National Farm to School Month (NFSM). The National Farm to School Network advocated for this celebration in 2010, when it was then passed by Congress. NFSM is celebrated in all 50 states in the United States, Washington DC and U.S. Territories. That means over 23.6 million children benefit from The Farm to School Initiative.

The program uses a three-prong approach that includes Procurement, Education and School Gardens. Procurement is the purchasing, promotion and serving of locally sourced foods whenever possible. Education is the engaging of kids in the topics of nutrition, farming, agriculture and all the moving parts within each. Finally, School Gardens allow kids to participate in hands-on experience with growing and harvesting their own foods.



The Farm to School Network also strengthens the local economy, creates financial opportunities for farmers and helps to confront racial inequities. Now is the time when we acknowledge the connection between schools, local farms, the community and the invaluable role NDS plays in continuing this partnership.

## Ways to Get Involved

- Teachers, highlight a new local food by learning everything about it. Bonus if you bring it in for students to try.
- Schedule a field trip to a local farm for apple and pumpkin picking, hay ride and explore more about the farming process virtually or in person.
- Read a book about farming, agriculture and nutrition.
- Visit one of the resources below for Farm to School Month activities like coloring pages, stickers and more!

## Additional Resources

<https://www.farmentoschool.org/our-work/farm-to-school-month>

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/celebrate-national-farm-school-month> -



A message from NUTRITIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

10/26/2022

**Greetings from NDS! Today's Wellness Wednesday topic is:  
National Pumpkin Day!**

Wednesday, October 26<sup>th</sup> is National Pumpkin Day! Did you know that pumpkins are actually a fruit, not a vegetable? Every part of a pumpkin is edible, including the skin, leaves, flowers, and stem. Pumpkins are an excellent source of beta carotene, which gives pumpkins the orange color. Beta carotene turns into vitamin A after you eat it, which is great for your eye and skin health, and supports your immune system. Pumpkin seeds are low in calories and high in protein and iron, making a great snack option.



Pumpkins originated in Central America, but now grow on all continents except Antarctica. Over 1.5 billion pounds of pumpkins are grown every year in the United States. Out of the total 1.5 billion pounds, over 800 million pumpkins are ripe for picking during October. Illinois is considered the “Pumpkin Capitol of the World,” growing twice as many as any other state. Another fun fact: the world’s heaviest pumpkin weighed over 2,600 pounds!

Celebrate by making your favorite pumpkin recipe. You can also try making [Healthy Pumpkin Muffins with Oat Flour](#).

