

Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agricultural Extension Services

Activity Sheet
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Eating a Variety of Foods

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Target population: young adults and adults

Time:
60 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Flip chart or drawing board
- Color markers
- 7-10 large pictures of food items (for demonstration)
- 100 small pictures of food items (for group activity; there can be repeats of food items)
- Large dish (5-6 total)
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Note that each country may have various types of food groups (e.g. 5, 6, or 7) and methods to classify (e.g. 3 main groups- energy giving). Provided are examples of these various representations:



Zimbabwe (3 main food groups)

Introduction

A variety of foods from the different food groups need to be consumed on a daily basis to provide the body with energy, protect the body, and to help build the body. The purpose of the “How Different Foods Help” activity sheet is to help families plan to consume a variety of foods on a daily basis.








Objectives

At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. Identify the different food groups
2. Explain the importance of eating these food groups on a daily basis
3. Create a meal for the entire family that uses each of the food groups

Guide

Use the table below to associate the different food groups, example of foods (*think about more foods, too!*) from each food group, and the importance of each food group¹:

Classification	Food Group	Examples of Foods	Importance of the Food Group
Energy Giving	Staples 	Bread, Tortilla, Rice, Porridge	Provides energy for the body to move, breathe, and perform daily activities (cook, work in the fields)
	Fats 	Oils, butter, nuts, seeds	Provides the body with energy and protects organs (heart, liver, skin)
Body Protecting	Fruits 	Papaya, Mango, Banana, Passion Fruit	Helps protect the body from diseases and illnesses
	Vegetables 	Squash, Potato, Corn, Tomato	Helps protect the body from diseases and illnesses
Body Building	Legumes 	Cowpeas, Kidney Beans, Lima Beans, Black Beans	Helps strengthen the muscles, repairs wounds, and protect against heart disease and diabetes
	Meats 	Chicken, eggs, beef, mutton	Helps strengthen the muscles and repairs wounds
	Dairy 	Milk, yoghurt, cheese	Helps strengthen bones

Active Learning Exercise

- 1) **Prompt and awareness.** Use the table below with the seven food groups to guide your discussion.
 - a. Prior to teaching participants about the different food groups, ask them to raise their hands if they know about the different foods groups. If some raised their hand, ask them to name the different food groups. (~ 5 minutes)
 - b. Write on the board the 7 different food groups. Place the pictures of foods under each food group listed (objective 1). (~ 5 minutes)
 - c. After displaying all the 7 foods groups with the models, ask them if they know why these foods are important to eat on a daily basis. Discuss with the participants why these food groups are important to eat on a daily basis (objective 2). (~ 10 minutes)
- 2) **Group activity - Food meals.** Participants will make a healthy dish including the different food groups following instructions.
 - a. Arrange groups of no more than 4 people and provide them with a dish. (~ 5 minutes)
 - b. Using the pictures of food items, have each group create a meal using one food from each food group (objective 3). (~ 10 minutes)
 - c. Elect one group member to discuss their meal and ask them if they would eat this meal on a daily basis. If yes, why (they should explain the importance). If no, then why not (maybe they will explain the barriers to eating this type of meal on a daily basis). If time permits, discuss other aspects associated with the consumption of these dishes (e.g., holiday, breakfast, etc.) (~ 15 minutes)
- 3) **Take home and conclusion.** End the session with asking participants to name the 7 food groups, why it is important to eat these foods, and how they will eat these food groups on a daily basis. Emphasize that there are no formulas for a healthy diet, just healthy attitudes (objectives 1-3). (~ 10 minutes)



Honduras' Food Guide (5 food groups)



Bangladesh Food Guide (6 food groups)

References:

'Eat a variety of foods for Protection, Energy and Body Building to be healthy and well. (Zimbabwe, FAO 2015)