11-2006

Grain Group [Facilitator's Guide]

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Lesson Goals

After this lesson, participants will:

- Understand why bread, cereal, rice, and pasta (grains) are an important part of your daily diet.
- Know the number of ounce equivalents she needs daily from the Grain group and how many of these should be whole grains.
- Identify recommended serving sizes of foods in the Grain group.
- Name at least one way to stretch the food dollar when purchasing bread and cereal products.
- Identify high- and low-calorie choices from the Grain group.
- Plan and serve meals that include enriched or whole grain breads and cereals.
- Name two ways to store grain products.
- Calculate how much dry rice or pasta it will take to feed four people.

Before Teaching the Lesson

1. Read carefully:
   - Grain group, Make Half Your Grains Whole (NEP-202)
   - The Plains of Grains (NEP-202A)
2. Check the homemaker’s “24-Hour Food Recall Record.”
   - Does she include a variety of foods from the Grain group in her diet?
   - Does she serve any whole grain breads and cereals?
3. Check local grocery store prices for good buys in grain products. Clip food ads to use in teaching.
4. Collect food models, nutrient comparison cards, food labels, and packages to teach the homemaker serving sizes, good sources of high-fiber breads and cereals; and high- and low-calorie choices in the Grain group. Include one example each of a product labeled enriched, fortified, and whole grain.
5. Plan how you will teach this lesson.

Teaching Tools

For the homemaker:

- Grain group, Make Half Your Grains Whole (NEP-202)
- The Plains of Grains (NEP-202A)
- “24-Hour Food Recall Record”
- MyPyramid Worksheet (NEP-201C)
- “Dry Milk” factsheet (NEP, JRW-10)
- “MyPyramid; Steps to a Healthier You” mini-poster (USDA CNPP-15)
- Nutrient comparison cards and food models
- Food labels and packages
- Newspaper food ads
- Cookbooks
- Food and nutrition calendar
- Recipes for foods from the Grain group
- PowerPoint® presentation “Grains” or flip chart

For youth:

- LEAP for Health (3-5 year olds)
- The Organwise Guys:
  - “How to Be Smart from the Inside Out” (3rd-5th grades)
  - “Basic Training for Better Health”
  - “Healthy Heart Challenge”
  - “Undercover Agent”
- Fantastic Foods 4-H Curriculum:
  - “Six Easy Bites” (3rd-4th grade)
  - “Tasty Tidbits” (5th and 6th grade)
  - “You’re the Chef” (6th-9th grade)
  - “Food Works” (10th-12th grades)
Lesson Points to Stress

1. Bread and cereal products are an important part of your diet. They are nutritious and inexpensive.

2. The Grain group includes a variety of products made from corn, wheat, rice, rye, and oats. Examples are noodles, macaroni, grits, crackers, pancakes, and all types of breads and cereals.

3. The key nutrients provided by the Grain group include several B-vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, vitamin B6, folic acid, and vitamin B12), iron, and fiber.

4. The B-vitamins help you use energy from food. They also help nerves function and promote a normal appetite, good digestion, and healthy skin.

5. Iron helps to form red blood cells. Iron in the blood helps carry oxygen to the body’s cells. Without adequate iron, the body’s cells are starved for oxygen and unable to perform their work. People who do not have enough iron tire easily.

6. White bread and other products with white flour are often “enriched.” This means that B-vitamins and iron lost during milling (when the flour is made) are returned to the product. This process is called enrichment. (Kentucky law requires enrichment.)

7. Cereals and other grain foods may be fortified. Products that are fortified have extra amounts of nutrients added to them in processing.

8. Some foods in the Grain group are good sources of fiber. Fiber helps prevent constipation, aids in digestion, helps to regulate blood glucose, reduces blood cholesterol, and may help prevent some cancers and bowel disorders.

9. Fiber is found in whole grains. White flour and products made from white flour are not sources of fiber. Some examples of foods in the Grain group that supply fiber are whole wheat and cracked wheat bread, oatmeal, popcorn, and bran.

10. The USDA’s Dietary Guidelines recommend making at least half of all grains consumed whole grains.

11. One serving, or 1-ounce equivalent, from the Grain group may be 1 slice of bread, 1 small biscuit or roll, 1/2 hamburger or hot dog bun, 1/2 cup of pasta, rice, or cooked cereal, or 1 cup of ready-to-eat cereal.

12. The B-vitamins dissolve in water. Be careful not to wash them away during preparation. Do not wash rice before cooking. Do not rinse rice or pasta after cooking.

Supplemental Points to Stress (NEP-202A)

1. Shop carefully for grain products and use and store them properly to get more for your food dollar.

2. Save money by buying day-old bread or shopping at a bread outlet. Compare prices by weight and not by the size of the loaf. A large loaf of bread may be mostly air.


4. Store uncooked cereal products, such as flour, rice, noodles, cornmeal, etc., in tightly closed containers in a dry place. Store cereal products at room temperature. Bread should be kept tightly wrapped. If bread is to be used within a week, store it at room temperature. For longer storage you should refrigerate or freeze bread.

Ideas for Teaching the Lesson

1. Before teaching the lesson, review what you taught the homemaker on your last visit.
   - What information has been used?
   - What new things have been tried?

2. Using food recalls, ask the homemaker to circle foods from the Grain group and underline those that contain fiber.

3. Use labels, wrappers, and packages from a variety of breads, cereals, and other grain products to discuss the terms whole grain, enriched, and fortified.

4. Ask the homemaker to select food models of grain products that her family likes. Use these food models to emphasize serving sizes. Measure 1 cup of a ready-to-eat cereal into a bowl, and measure 1/2 cup of cooked rice or pasta onto a plate.

5. Make a poster titled, “Can You Pick the Best Buy in the Grain group?” Compare similar products using food labels or food ads. Put the price per unit for each product under a flap. Have the homemaker check to see if she chose the less expensive item. You might want to use examples in The Plains of Grains (NEP-202A). Do something similar for comparing low- and high-calorie choices in the Grain group.
Ideas for Teaching Small Groups

1. Demonstrate how to prepare and store baking mix from the recipe on the “Dry Milk” factsheet (NEP, JRW-10). If time permits, bake a product using the mix. If not, have a sample prepared for tasting and provide the recipe.

2. Ask each member in the group to bring an ingredient for creating a casserole featuring a grain product. Prepare and serve for tasting.

3. Use a flip chart or the PowerPoint® presentation “Grains” to illustrate lesson points. Review the handout with the homemakers.

4. Give the homemakers menus for several days. Include serving sizes. For each menu, ask the group to identify the foods in the Grain group, add up total number of servings, and evaluate the quality of choices for:
   • Someone on a limited budget
   • Someone on a weight-loss diet
   • Overall good nutrition (Are half the grains whole?)

What changes would the group make in each of the menus?

How to Tell What the Homemaker(s) Learned

Immediately following the lesson:
   • Ask each homemaker to name several foods from the Grain group. Can she identify at least one source of fiber?
   • Ask each homemaker to identify how many ounce equivalents she should eat daily from the Grain group.
   • Ask each homemaker to give reasons why grain products are important for good health.
   • Ask each homemaker to identify best buys in the Grain group.

At a later visit:
   • Review the homemaker’s “24-Hour Food Recall Record.” Have changes occurred in the types or amounts of grain products in her diet, such as including more variety, using whole grains, and controlling portion size?
   • Ask if the baking mix recipe, found in the “Dry Milk” factsheet, has been prepared. If so, was whole wheat flour used? What was baked?
   • Use food recalls and ask the homemaker to circle foods in the Grain group and underline those high in fiber.
   • Ask the homemaker if she has made any changes in her buying habits in the Grain group. Is she making economical choices?
   • Observe how the homemaker is storing grain products. Are recommended storage methods being used?

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