National Farmers Union "Growing Good Taste"

Section 3: Grades 6-8

Contents:

**** Lesson contains a cooperative education component.***

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Lesson 1: Any Way You Slice It

Unit Objective: Children will make a veggie pizza to learn what foods they really need.
Grades: 6-8
Length: 1 hour: 10 minutes for the introduction, 5 minutes to prepare the crust, 15 minutes for the lecture and flipchart activity on nutrient-dense and junk foods, 15 minutes for the Veggie Pizza Cooperatives to put together and then eat their project, 15 minutes for the concluding discussion.
Materials Needed: Whiteboard or flipchart and markers, non-stick baking sheet, one 8-ounce package of low-fat crescent rolls, a mixing bowl and spoon, one 8-ounce package of softened fat-free cream cheese, one package dry ranch-style dressing, ½ cup servings of a variety of chopped vegetables such as carrots, red bell peppers, broccoli, green onions, tomatoes or celery, (Optional: low-fat shredded cheese).
Preparation Needed: This can be done in a classroom setting; however, if you have access to a grocery store that has a classroom or cooking center, you may look into holding this class at that facility. It may be that the grocery store will donate the materials for this event. Also, ask your local newspaper if it would be interested in covering this lesson as it has a photogenic appeal. You will need an oven. To shorten the time required for this activity, you can pre-bake the pizza crust at home and bring it to the class. Explain how it was prepared. If baking during the class, pre-heat an oven to 375 degrees.

Background:

Pizza is one of the top favorite foods of teenagers. Unfortunately, many pizzas are loaded with salt, fat, and calories. A single slice of pizza can contain nearly 700 calories. A healthier alternative that can be fun to make and share is a veggie pizza. It is served cold, although the crust needs to be baked. Students will learn to appreciate **nutrient-dense foods**, **moderation**, and **serving sizes,** plus **metabolism**.

Teaching Strategy:

1. *You might think pizza is one of the five food groups. It isn't. Many times, it does contain most of the five food groups: grains in the crust, veggies in the sauce and toppings, milk in the cheese toppings, and meats also in the toppings. The downside is pizza can also be loaded with a lot of salt, fat, grease, and calories. Just one slice of a popular food-court pizza has 680 calories, and gives you 45 percent (29 grams) of your daily fat intake and 64 percent (1,540mg) of the salt you need on a daily basis. If you have three pieces, you have pretty much had all the calories you need for one day, and you will have too much salt and fat.* Large pizzas can weigh several pounds. Weight alone is not a good measure of the quality of food. Ask the children if they think of serving size when they eat pizza or if they keep eating until they are full. *It takes about 20 minutes before your stomach tells your brain you are full. You might want to use* **moderation** *and eat one piece of pizza, then wait a few minutes to see if you are hungry for a second piece. Moderation means not overeating or eating too little.*
2. *Today we are going to make a great alternative to standard pizza. This will be a group project. When people work together to do something that is difficult or impossible to do alone, it is called cooperation.* ***Cooperatives*** *are a type of business that gives everyone a chance to participate, and wants everyone to share in the success. We are going to form our Veggie Pizza Cooperative. Everyone will help make the pizza, and everyone will get a chance to enjoy the final results.*
3. Make sure every student takes time to wash their hands at the nearest sink or uses wipes to clean their hands.
4. *Here is how we will make the pizza.* On a larger non-stick baking sheet, assign one or two students to roll out the crescent rolls, stretch and flatten to form a single rectangular or round shape, depending on the space available. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes until golden brown and let cool. An adult will want to handle the actual baking part of this project.

5. While the pizza crust is baking, continue with the educational lecture. *Why do pizzas have such high numbers? Not all do, but many people like meat lover's or supreme style pizzas, while others like deep dish or thick crust pizzas. To make these products tasty and appealing, pizza companies use a lot of salt and a lot of fat to give them flavor. Pizza is a very popular food. It is also a very processed food.* **Processing** *means the original ingredients have been subject to a series of steps during which a lot of additional ingredients have been added.* Give your students time to consider your comments. *Think of it this way: bread is a good source of grain. When you eat a slice of bread you can see the* **serving size**. *A pizza crust can contain the calorie equivalent of several slices of bread in each piece. Or think of it this way: you need milk every day, yet the mounds of cheese used in pizza contains more salt and a higher percentage of fat than a glass of 2 percent milk. We need to consider both the nutritional content and actual serving size of foods.*
6. *Food provides energy to our bodies. It helps us grow and it helps us heal if we are injured or ill. Some of the best foods are* **nutrient dense***, meaning they are rich in nutrients compared to the number of calories they contain. A good example is strawberries. One cup of strawberries is 150 calories, yet it has 3.5 grams of fiber and 86 milligrams of vitamin C. Nutrient-dense foods are the opposite of foods that have low nutritional value when compared to their calorie content. These foods are sometimes called empty-calorie foods or junk foods.* Be sure to check the crust in the oven.
7. *Nutrients include six classes: carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, minerals, and water. Although water itself does not have any calories, our bodies need it in order for our metabolisms to work well.* **Metabolism** *is the word that describes how our bodies convert nutrients into energy and life. Did you know the majority of your body contains water? If you are concerned about gaining weight, one of healthy actions you can take is to eat more nutrient dense foods and get more physical exercise.* Good examples of nutrient-dense foods are whole grain breads and cereals, rice, beans, pasta, vegetables, and fruits. Compare these choices to sweet foods that are high in sugar or salt, such as candy bars, donuts, cookies, potato and corn chips, soda pop, and many types of dipping sauces. All of these may have carbohydrates, yet they are also high in fat and provide small amounts of vitamins and minerals. These types of junk foods supply empty calories. On a whiteboard, write down the headings "Nutrient-Dense Foods" and "Junk Foods." Ask the children to give you examples of both. This exercise may not result in even matches. The children should be able to name many more junk food examples. Why? Two good reasons. One, junk food appears more convenient to eat and children (and adults) tend to want foods high in sugar, salt, and fat. Two, children have been exposed to hundreds of hours of television commercials promoting Doritos corn chips, Captain Crunch cereal, Mountain Dew soda pop, and thousands of other junk food products. For comparison, they have seen very few (if any) commercials that make fruits and vegetables look fun or tasty.
8. Explain to your students that nutrient-dense carbohydrates have another advantage over fats and sugary foods. Because they contribute significantly fewer calories for a given amount than foods with a high fat or sugar content, nutrient-dense carbohydrates actually keep weight gain in check.
9. By now the pizza dough should have cooled enough. Ask your Veggie Pizza Cooperative members to take turns completing the following tasks: one student will place the 8-ounce package of softened cream cheese in a medium bowl, the same (or next) student will add 1/2 of the ranch dressing. Another student will spread the mixture over the cooled crust. In turn, have students sprinkle premeasured and chopped ½ cup servings of finely-chopped carrots, red bell peppers, fresh broccoli, and green onions. You may also add other vegetables as appropriate, such as tomatoes and celery. Finally (and optionally) you may have a student add a light sprinkling of low-fat cheddar (or similar) cheese. Although you can refrigerate this pizza before serving, in the interest of time slice it into small pieces and let the Veggie Pizza Cooperative share in their achievement. Let them know a slice of this pizza may have fewer than 100 calories and only 15 to 20 grams of salt. Compare that to the traditional pizza (680 calories and 1,240 grams of salt) you discussed at the top of the page.
10. *This pizza-making activity shows you that you do have healthy and fun alternatives to other types of food. This pizza features nutrient-dense food items that are unprocessed and much more healthy for you to eat. You*

will find the recipe for this pizza on this handout. Pass out the Pizza Recipe page. *You also will see another recipe for a fruit pizza that makes a great dessert. It is made much the same way, but it can contain lots of fruit items that are just as nutrient dense as vegetables. You may want to make either of these with your parents and for your family.*

11. *Close the lesson by conducting a discussion among students to answer these questions.*
    a. Of the five food groups – Grains, Vegetables, Fruits, Milk, and Meats and Beans – how many are represented in this project. Answer: grains in the crust, vegetables in the toppings, milk in the cream cheese and possibly cheddar cheese. One could argue that tomatoes would provide a fruit component, and peas and cheese would add some protein. The point to make to children is this appetizer gives them a fun way to increase their servings of vegetables, and that they need eat natural rather than highly processed foods.
    b. Where did the ingredients come from? The crescent rolls were made mostly from flour made from wheat. Wheat is a grain crop grown by thousands of farmers across the United States. It is a type of grass. Wheat is the main ingredient in pancakes, cookies, bread, spaghetti, and pizza crusts. The cream cheese was made from milk. Dairy farmers raise and take care of the dairy cows that provide milk. In turn, milk is made into cheese, yogurt, ice cream, butter, and the milk we put on our cereal. Vegetables are raised and sold locally at farmers' markets. They are also raised in larger fields in warm areas of the United States and are trucked to grocery stores year-round. The same is true for fruits. Ask the students if they have ever visited a farm or farmers' market.
    c. Was it fun and easy to make a veggie pizza? The answer should be yes. Ask the students if they cook at home. What do they like to make. What are some of their favorite homemade meals or snacks? Do they believe the veggie pizza was tastier or fresher than a processed food item that comes out of a box?
    d. If they could change the toppings on the pizza, what would they want to add? How about chicken? Or cucumbers? Or fresh peas?

Veggie Pizza Appetizer

Ingredients:
One 8-ounce package reduced-fat crescent rolls, 8-ounce package of softened cream cheese, one package dry ranch-style dressing, vegetables (see recommendations below).

Directions:
Preheat oven according to directions on low-fat crescent roll dough package.
Spread out crescent rolls onto a nonstick baking sheet, forming one large layer of dough.
Press the seams together on the dough.
Bake according to the crescent roll directions.
In a small bowl mix together the cream cheese and ½ packet of dry ranch dressing mix.
When the dough has completely cooled, spread the cream cheese and ranch dressing mixture over the dough.
Clean, slice and arrange fresh vegetables of your choice on top. (Unlike standard Italian-style pizzas, you cannot overstuff this one with too many calories, fats, or salt. Select a mix of nutrient-rich vegetables such as carrots, red bell peppers, fresh broccoli, and green onions. You may also add other vegetables as appropriate, including tomatoes, celery and cucumbers.
Finally (and optionally) you may add a light sprinkling of low-fat cheddar cheese. You can refrigerate this pizza before serving.

Fruit Pizza Dessert

Ingredients:
One 8-ounce package reduced-fat crescent rolls, one package 8-ounce fat free cream cheese, ¼ cup sugar, fresh fruit (see recommendations below).

Directions:
Preheat oven according to directions on low-fat crescent roll dough package.
Spread out crescent rolls onto a nonstick baking sheet, forming one large layer of dough.
Press the seams together on the dough.
Bake according to the crescent roll directions.
In a small bowl mix together the cream cheese and sugar.
When the dough has completely cooled, spread the cream cheese and sugar mixture over the dough.
Clean, slice and arrange sliced fruit on top. Select a mix of nutrient-rich fruits such as apples, oranges, strawberries, peaches, grapes, bananas, kiwi, melons, cantaloupe, blueberries, and watermelon.

Americans should have five servings
of fruits and vegetables daily.

Lesson 2: It's a COOL Numbers Game

Unit Objective: Students will learn to read food labels for nutritional value and COOL.
Grades: 6-8
Length: 1 hour: 5 minutes for the opening, 10-minute discussion on what to look for on food labels, 15-minute exercise using the "Looking at Labels" activity sheet, 10 minutes to review the answers and discuss the realities of adding calories that are harder to count, 20 minutes to inspect food labels and answer the questions in a group discussion format.
Materials Needed: Pencils, enough chairs and table space for each student, whiteboard or flipchart and markers, enough copies of the "Looking at Labels" activity sheet, a dozen unopened food items with easy to read nutrition labels including items that clearly show country-of-origin (U.S. would be appropriate), "fair trade" (look for coffee beans), a cooperative (such as Land O' Lakes dairy products, Marie's salad dressing, juices such as Ocean Spray cranberry or Florida's Natural Brand orange), and a mix of common items such as a loaf of bread, boxed macaroni and cheese, a can of soup, a bottle of salad dressing, a package of cookies, and other processed foods.
Preparation Needed: Print one copy per student of the "Looking at Labels" worksheets, and set up a display of unopened food products that have easy-to-read labels.

Background:

Most products have labels. A new car has a label showing where it was made, what standard features and options it has, and even the percentage of content of parts made outside the United States. Clothes have labels showing where they were made, what they are made of, and how to wash them. Some labels, such as Abercrombie & Fitch or Hollister, are used to identify a style. Processed and packaged foods display **nutritional labels**. More recently, foods have gotten COOL. COOL stands for **country-of-origin labeling**. **Farmers Union** was a leading advocate for adding this important consumer information to labels. This information tells us if the food we buy comes from the United States or another nation.

Teaching Strategy:

1. Begin by asking your students if they can feel a label on the inside back collar of their shirts. Most of them should nod in agreement. *What does the label tell you?* Wait for their answers. Either by their responses, or by yours, let them know a label on clothing tells where it was made, what it is made of, and how to clean and care for it. *Why would we want to know this information?* Again, listen to their answers. *Labels give us information. They may tell us the price of something, the size of something, and the weight. Is this especially important when it comes to food? Yes. We prepare meals and cook from scratch using measurements.*
2. *Let's consider what information we will find on food labels, beginning with nutrients. Nutrients include six classes: carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, minerals, and water. Although water itself does not have any calories, your body needs it in order for your metabolism to work well.* Foods may be measured using English (ounces and pounds, pints and gallons) or Metric (milligrams and grams, milliliters and liters). A consistent measurement for all foods is calories per serving. *Calories are units of energy we use to fuel our bodies. Food to us is like fuel to a car. And, the better quality food we have, the better our bodies can grow, heal, and power us in everyday activities.*
3. Much of the information on labels is given in percentages**.** Food contains fat, protein, carbohydrates, and fiber. Food also contains vitamins, such as A, C, and D, and minerals like iron and calcium. The percent daily value (DV) on a food label tells you how much of these items you are getting in each serving of food.
4. Food labels are based on a 2,000-calorie diet accepted for "average" adults. The actual calories needed by each individual vary greatly and take into account each person's age, gender, and normal level of physical activity. Food labels do not apply specifically to children. Because they

are growing, children's need for some nutrients will be different than adults.

5. Children can use food labels to get a good idea about serving sizes, fat content, and whether the food is contributing enough vitamins (or too much salt and sugar) for their needs. Labels are a great source of each food's ingredient list. Ingredients are listed in order from the most to least. *One thing to look for is where sugar appears in the ingredient list. Limit foods that mention sugar in the first few ingredients. That means it's a very sugary food. Sugar has different names, so it might also be called high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, sucrose, or glucose.*
6. *Here are a few other things you will want to look at on the labels. The nutrition label always lists a serving size, which is an amount of food measured in volume (1 cup), weight (8 ounces), or units (19 potato chip). Serving sizes help people understand how much they're eating. If you ate 38 potato chips, that would be two servings.* Explain to your students that some labels can be confusing. A popular brand of tomato juice sells individual cans that contain 2 ½ servings per can, yet the per-serving information could easily be misunderstood to represent the entire can as a single serving. *Finally, labels tell you the number of calories in a single serving. The calories in a food can come from fat, protein, or carbohydrates. People pay attention to calories because if you eat more calories than your body burns, it could lead to weight gain.* Another important part of the label is the number of calories that come from fat. *It is good to limit fat intake to about 30 percent of the total calories you eat.*
7. Assign the students to teams of three and pass out the "Looking at Labels" worksheets. Encourage the students to work together to answer the questions based on the labels shown. Give them time to consider each question. Assist where you may need to, or fill on a sheet out on your own.
8. *Let's review the answers.* What has a serving size of ½ cup? Ice cream. What provides 30 percent of your calcium in one serving? Milk. What has 24 servings inside the container? Cheese. What has half of its calories coming from fat? Ice cream. What has the least amount of fat calories? Yogurt. What provides 10 percent of your daily sodium needs? Cheese. What has the highest sugar content per serving? Yogurt.
9. *All of these products were made from milk that comes from dairy farms. Yet each item has different nutritional values. Is it possible you would eat each of these items just as it is? Yes. Is it possible you would eat these items in combination with something else? Yes. You might add chocolate syrup topping to the ice cream. And many of you would dish up more than ½ cup. You might wind up with three or four servings in one bowl.* If your students ate ten slices of cheese, they would get all the salt they needed for one day. Is that a balanced way to get their salt? No. Odds are they would have cheese as part of a sandwich. *Some people add fruit slices or dry cereal to yogurt. Of course, you could also add strawberry mix to your milk. Each of these actions adds to the calories you consume. It is important to consider the overall nutritional balance you get from the different foods you eat during the day. Every calorie counts. Candy bars and cookies contain high calories with little nutritional value, and a high percentage of fat and sugar. Real foods like fruits, cheese, and meats also contain calories, some fat, and sugar, but they also offer essential nutrients that we need.*
10. Gather the students around a table and let them examine unopened food items you brought from home and that are listed in the materials list above. Ask them to take their time to look at the labels and see if they can find items that come from a cooperative, has a country-of-origin label, or that has a "fair trade" label. Remind them that a cooperative is a farmer-owned business. *Farmers are sharing the work, from growing crops and packaging the products to helping sell them. By working together, farmers are able to earn more income from their crops. Farmers Union is a type of cooperative. It is a farm organization that works to make things better for farmers across America. One of the things Farmers Union did was ask Congress to make sure food products have a country-of-origin label on it. This allows consumers to know where their food comes from. Some countries are proud of their products. Swiss chocolate, Columbian coffee, and olive oil from Italy. American farmers are proud of the food they grow and they want grocery shoppers to have the choice of buying an American food product. Some food items, bananas for example, are not easily grown in the United States and have to be imported. It is good for consumers to know what countries grew the bananas that are in our grocery stores. A "fair trade" label assures consumers that the farmers in other countries are being paid fairly for their crops.*
11. Ask each student to pick up a food item, look at the label, and share one fact about it with the

group. They may look at the calories, serving size, first item listed in the ingredients, types or percentages of nutrients, or where it was made. Give them time to talk and to add any additional comments they may have.

12. *You all are great label lookers. You may not need to read each and every label of every food you buy. You should look at some foods, especially junk foods, to see what an actual serving is and think about how your calories may be adding up. Remember, these labels are put on food items so you can be a smarter consumer.*

Sources: KidsHealth, National Farmers Union, USDA

Looking at Labels

Milk 2%

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 8 fl oz (245g)
Servings Per Container 8

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 130	Calories from Fat 45
	%Daily Value*
Total Fat 5g	**8 %**
Saturated Fat 3g	**15 %**
Trans Fat 0g	**0 %**
Cholesterol 20mg	**7 %**
Sodium 125mg	**5 %**
Total Carbohydrate 13g	**4 %**
Dietary Fiber 0g	**0 %**
Sugars 12g	
Protein 8g	
Vitamin A 10% • Vitamin C 4%	
Calcium 30% • Iron 0%	

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

American cheese

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 1 slice (19g)
Servings Per Container 24

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 60	Calories from Fat 40
	%Daily Value*
Total Fat 4.5g	**7 %**
Saturated Fat 2.5g	**13 %**
Trans Fat 0g	**0 %**
Cholesterol 15mg	**5 %**
Sodium 250mg	**10 %**
Total Carbohydrate 1g	**0 %**
Dietary Fiber 0g	**0 %**
Sugars 1g	
Protein 3g	
Vitamin A 4% • Vitamin C 0%	
Calcium 20% • Iron 0%	

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

Vanilla ice cream

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 1/2 cup (65g)
Servings Per Container 14

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 140	Calories from Fat 70
	%Daily Value*
Total Fat 7g	**11 %**
Saturated Fat 4.5g	**23 %**
Trans Fat 0g	**0 %**
Cholesterol 20mg	**6 %**
Sodium 40mg	**2 %**
Total Carbohydrate 15g	**5 %**
Dietary Fiber 0g	**0 %**
Sugars 15g	
Protein 3g	
Vitamin A 4% • Vitamin C 0%	
Calcium 10% • Iron 0%	

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

Fruit-flavored yogurt

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 6 ounces (170g)
Servings Per Container 1

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 170	Calories from Fat 15
	%Daily Value*
Total Fat 1.5g	**2 %**
Saturated Fat 1g	**5 %**
Trans Fat 0g	**0 %**
Cholesterol 10mg	**3 %**
Sodium 125mg	**5 %**
Total Carbohydrate 33g	**11 %**
Dietary Fiber 0g	**0 %**
Sugars 30g	
Protein 6g	
Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 0%	
Calcium 20% • Iron 0%	

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

Of these dairy products, which one:

Has a serving size of ½ cup? _____

Provides 30% of your daily calcium per serving? _____

Offers 24 servings inside the container? _____

One-half of its calories come from fat? _____

Has the least amount of fat calories? _____

Provides 10% of daily sodium (salt) needs? _____

Has the highest sugar content per serving? _____

Lesson 3: What's in Store for You

Unit Objective: Students will learn of specific food products in their local grocery store.
Grades: 6-8
Length: 1 hour: 5 minutes for introduction, 50 minutes for a tour of the grocery store, 5 minutes for wrap-up discussion.
Materials Needed: "What's In Store" checklists and ink pens for each student.
Preparation Needed: Make the necessary calls in advance to locate a grocery store whose manager will allow your students to tour his or her operation (either hosted by a store employee or yourself, if that is acceptable). Explain that you will have an activity sheet the students will fill out to learn more about food items, especially locally-sourced or food items provided by cooperatives, such as dairies. If the store manager is agreeable, you may get to inspect the bakery, produce department, and dairy department. Larger stores may have displays of organic products and produce. Keep in mind some smaller rural stores may take much less than an hour to tour; if so, you may want to schedule a separate tour at a nearby bakery or similar type of food operation. Either make arrangements for parents to drop off and pick up their children at the grocery store, or make other provisions to transport them to the store if allowed by your organization. If you need additional adult assistance for a larger group, make sure you have arranged for that among parents or other volunteers.

Background:

Across the country, grocery stores are using their weekly sales ads to highlight more locally-sourced food. Grocery sales ads are featuring the farmers who provide produce, dairy, and other items to the grocery store. Other ads list the companies within the state that are delivering food products to the store. "Buy local" and organic foods have become marketing trends, even for giant supermarkets like Walmart, because customers want to know where their food comes from. This field trip will give students a chance to look and learn at a local grocery store.

Teaching Strategy:

1. Meet the children at the entrance to the grocery store at the set time. Remind students to be on their best behavior.
2. Walk inside the store and meet the manager or other representative as pre-arranged. Make brief introductions and hand out the "What's in Store" checklist and pens to the students. Tell them as they go through the store to mark off items they see. Make sure your host has a checklist too so he or she can help guide the children to discover the items for which they will be searching.
3. At the conclusion of your tour, have your students thank the store manager.
4. Before they leave, find a quiet spot and ask the children to review their answers with you. This activity is meant to be an awareness-building exercise for your students.

What's in Store?

Directions: Write down an example that answers each question.

I found fresh vegetables, including _____

This store does or does not bake bread on site _____

One aisle was full of paper products, including _____

I found fresh fruits, including _____

One dairy product made by a cooperative is _____

One aisle was full of cleaning products, including _____

I found this item with an organic label _____

This store advertised locally sourced items _____

My favorite department is _____

I found signs advertising healthy choices _____

Junk foods (pop and chips) were next to each other _____

Cookies and candy were on lower shelves _____

I found food for dogs and cats _____

Fresh food delivered daily to the store includes _____

The price-per-unit label was easy to find _____

People shop here for non-food items like _____

I wish this store sold this food item _____

I believe this food is grown close to town _____

I believe this food item came from another country _____

Lesson 4: Just Desserts

Unit Objective: Students will discover fun desserts they can make from healthy ingredients.
Grades: 6-8
Length: 1 hour: 5 minutes for the introduction; 10 minutes for the kabobs; 10 minutes for the pear pinwheels; 10 minutes for the fruit smoothies; 10 minutes for the strawberry and peanut butter crepes, 10 minutes for discussion, and 5 minutes for clean up.
Materials Needed: Wax paper and tape, a microwave, blender, paper plates, measuring cups, **Fruit and Cheese Kabobs:** small wooden skewers, cookie cutter shapes, cantaloupe or honeydew melons, slices of reduced fat Colby jack cheese, fresh strawberries; **Pear Pinwheels:** whole-wheat tortillas, shredded cheddar cheese, and pear slices; **Fruit Smoothies:** pre-sliced bananas, fresh or frozen peaches, 8-ounce containers of vanilla-flavored yogurt, and orange juice; **Strawberry and Peanut Butter Crepes:** store-bought 9-inch crepes or potato lefse, peanut butter and chopped strawberries.
Preparation Needed: Pre-slice the cantaloupe or honeydew melons and strawberries, peel and pre-slice the pear and bananas.

Background:

Because of commercial advertising, cultural traditions, and peer pressure, children have developed a taste for (or rejection of) many food products. When it comes to snacks and desserts, your students may be accustomed to simply opening a package of cookies. Then again, they may have been forced to eat veggies or fruits that they do not like and associate "healthy" with "unhappy." These fun snack-making activities will give them a chance to become their own snack chefs.

Teaching Strategy:

1. Open the lesson by asking the students if healthy snacks can be fun snacks. Listen to their responses. Now ask if they have been made to eat healthy snacks that they found less than appealing. *It's kind of like melting cheese on green beans, some of us like it but some us don't.*
2. Ask the students if they would like to make a series of snacks that are fun. First check to see if any of your students have food allergies for which you may have to account. Begin by sending them to the nearest sink or hand out wipes to make sure they have clean hands before proceeding. While the students are doing this, tape down wax paper at the work spaces.
3. *We will begin by making* **Fruit and Cheese Kabobs**. *Cheese is a good source of calcium. It is a dairy product made from milk and it comes in many flavors. We often don't get enough fruits in our diets. If you make this at home feel free to use fruits you like.* Ask the students to use cookie cutters to cut shapes out of the cantaloupe, honeydew and cheese slices. Thread the cheese, melon and strawberries onto small wooden skewers. These kabobs can be refrigerated or eaten immediately. Each one is about 30 calories.
4. *Now we will move onto* **Pear Pinwheels**. *Begin by placing a whole-wheat tortilla on a paper plate, and sprinkle with cheddar cheese. Cover cheese with the thin slices of pear. Sprinkle with a bit more cheese.* Supervise each student as he or she microwaves the dish for 30 seconds, or until cheese melts. Roll up the tortilla and cut it into slices. What are the benefits of this snack? *You will get a serving of a whole wheat product, cheese that contains calcium, and a fruit that we need to eat more of. Some people may prefer apple slices in place of pears.*
5. *Our next snack will be* **Fruit Smoothies**. Each student will need one banana, one cup of fresh or frozen peaches, one 8-ounce container of vanilla-flavored yogurt, and ¼ cup of orange juice. Have each student step up to the blender and let them place all of these ingredients in a blender and mix well. Make sure the lid is on tightly before starting the blender and provide adequate supervision. Pour into a glass and serve. Our last snack project will be **Strawberry and Peanut**

Butter Crepes. *Place your crepes on a paper plate. Spread it with peanut butter and sprinkle on chopped strawberries. Roll up the crepes, trim the ends, and cut the rolled up crepe into 1-inch slices.* As an alternative, you may substitute potato lefse for crepes.

6. There are a few additional snack recipes shown below for items that have to be frozen before serving. If you feel inclined, you may make these items in advance and pass them out at this time.
7. Gather the students in chairs set in a circle. *We had a great time today making some unusual and fun snacks that are much more healthy for you to eat than donuts, cookies, or candy bars.* Go around the circle and ask each student what they liked and why. Would they want to make any of these at home? Do they get a chance to do any cooking or experimenting at home?
8. Ask the children to help you clean up as necessary, and make sure they wash their hands one more time.

Sources: Adapted from Parents Magazine

Great Snack Recipes

Peanut Butter and & Raspberry Pops

Ingredients: 1/2 cup smooth peanut butter, 1 cup plain low-fat yogurt, 1 cup reduced-fat milk, 2 tablespoons honey, 2 teaspoons vanilla extract; 1-1/2 cups raspberries; 2 cups raspberry juice or raspberry juice blend.
Directions: Combine peanut butter, yogurt, milk, 2 tablespoons honey, and vanilla in a food processor or blender until smooth. Pour peanut-butter mixture into eight 6- to 7-ounce paper cups or pop molds until they are one-third full; cover and freeze for 1 hour. Cover and chill remaining peanut-butter mixture until needed. Stir together raspberries and juice, divide among the cups or molds, and insert sticks. Cover and freeze for an hour. Then fill with the remaining peanut-butter mixture and freeze for at least 8 hours, or until firm. Let stand at room temperature for about 5 minutes before unmolding.

Yogurt Pops

Ingredients: 2 cups low-fat vanilla yogurt; 1 cup assorted berries (raspberries, blueberries, blackberries, chopped strawberries); 5 pretzel rods, halved; or 10 baked snack stick crackers.
Directions: In a large bowl, gently stir together the yogurt and fruit. Spoon into 4-ounce ice-pop molds or 3-ounce paper cups. Cover molds or cups with foil; use a sharp knife to cut a small hole in the foil and insert cut side of pretzel rod or snack stick. Freeze until firm. Remove foil and mold or cup before serving.

Fruit and Cheese Kabobs

Ingredients: Small wooden skewers, cantaloupe or honeydew melon, slices of reduced fat Colby jack cheese, fresh strawberries.
Directions: Use cookie cutters to cut shapes out of the cantaloupe or honeydew slices and cheese slices. Thread the cheese and fruit cutouts onto small wooden skewers (if the slices are thick enough, it will look better running the skewers through from side to side). Layer strawberries in between the other items. These kabobs can be refrigerated or eaten immediately.

Pear Pinwheels

Ingredients: Whole-wheat tortillas, shredded cheddar cheese, and pear slices.
Directions: Begin by placing a whole-wheat tortilla on a paper plate, and sprinkle with cheddar cheese. Cover cheese with the thin slices of pear. Sprinkle with a bit more cheese. Microwave each for 30 seconds, or until cheese melts. Roll up the tortilla and cut it into slices.

Fruit Smoothies

Ingredients: One pre-sliced banana, one cup of fresh or frozen peaches, one 8-ounce container of vanilla-flavored yogurt, and ¼ cup of orange juice.
Directions: Place all of these ingredients in a blender and mix well. Pour into a glass and serve.

Strawberry and Peanut Butter Crepes

Ingredients: One 9-inch store-bought crepe, peanut butter and chopped strawberries.
Directions: Place your crepes on a paper plate. Spread it with peanut butter and sprinkle on chopped strawberries. Roll up the crepes, trim the ends, and cut the rolled up crepe into 1-inch slices.

Optional Activities

The following activities could be incorporated at the end of any lesson to fill extra time.

1. Discuss other ways to prepare fruits and vegetables. Examples may include pouring skim milk over a small bowl of sliced fruit and adding a dash of honey; adding fruit slices to a whole bran cereal; grilling shish kabobs of potatoes, tomatoes, green or red peppers, and onions; making a sandwich using sliced tomatoes or onions or radishes using low-fat ranch dressing on whole wheat bread.

2. Have the students prepare a thank you card for their host at the grocery store. Use a large tag board folded in half and have all of the students sign it. Be sure to make the card colorful and bold. The store may display it, so be sure to add your Farmers Union organization's name at the bottom.

3. Have the students step up to the whiteboard or flipchart and write down the good food item they should eat more of, and beside it write the snack food they eat too much of.

4. Teach some Farmers Union songs.