

# Mealtime Memo

*for Child Care*

## Healthy Meals for HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH









September is Hispanic Heritage Month! We are excited to share culturally focused recipes and meal planning tips that are compliant with the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal plan guidelines. Serving [culturally diverse meals](#) to children in your care provides opportunities to experience flavors from other cultures. Some kids may be familiar with these flavorful combinations, but for others, this may provide the chance to learn something new.

Hispanic and Latin American cuisine includes foods common to Mexico and Central and South America. These foods can be heart-healthy and fiber-packed by including black and red beans, plenty of brightly colored vegetables, lean meats, brown rice, and avocado.



### HEALTHY MEAL TIPS




To keep meals heart-healthy, use these tips from the [American Heart Association](#).

-  Use avocado or olive oil and avoid using oils that are high in saturated fats, such as lard.
-  Oven-fry foods by spraying or brushing oil lightly over the food before baking.
-  Grill, bake, or sauté foods instead of frying.
-  Sauté using cooking spray, small amounts of water, or broth.
-  When using canned goods, choose low-sodium or no-salt-added versions.
-  Substitute brown rice for white rice. You can also blend white and brown rice to help transition to serving only brown rice.
-  Substitute whole-grain or corn tortillas for white flour versions.
-  Use low-fat cheeses instead of whole fat products.



## KID FRIENDLY RECIPES

[CACFP meal patterns](#) for lunch and supper require milk, meats or meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains. Try these tasty recipes to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month while creating a balanced meal.

-  Picadillo is a delicious stew with ground beef, tomatoes, and other flavorful ingredients. It is a popular dish in South American countries and the Caribbean. Serve it over brown rice or as a filling in a whole-grain or corn tortilla. [Click here](#) to check out a picadillo recipe.
-  Quesadillas are a popular menu item from Mexico. They are made by filling a tortilla with cheese and other ingredients such as beans, vegetables, meats, and spices then cooked on a griddle. [This recipe](#) bakes the quesadilla, making it easy to feed more children!
-  The batata, or sweet potato, is a root vegetable native to Central and South America, Mexico, and the West Indies. [This sweet and savory recipe](#) combines sweet potatoes with apples to make a delicious dish. Use as a side item or serve atop oatmeal or whole-grain waffles as a Latin American breakfast twist!

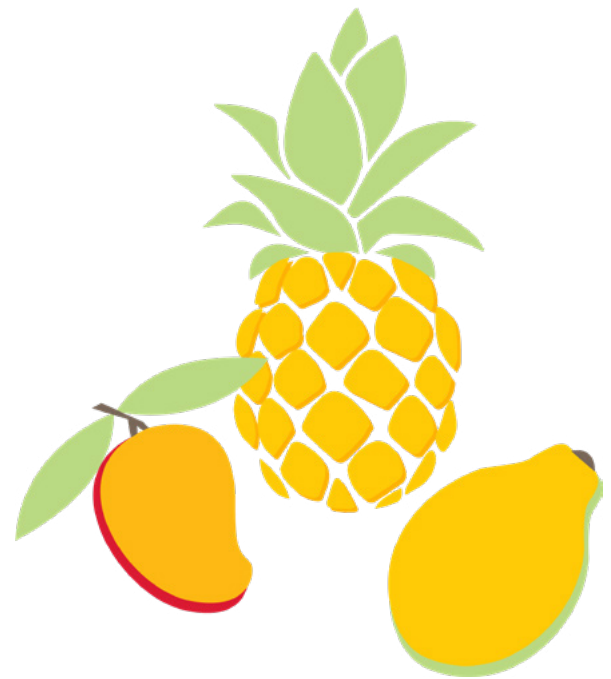
## FUN, HEALTHY HISPANIC MEALS

Experiment with different fruits or vegetables for snacks or sides. Papaya, mango, and pineapple are all delicious and nutritious options.

For example, serve oven-fried yuca in place of fries. Yuca is a root vegetable similar in shape and size to a sweet potato. The texture and flavor are similar to a white potato, but it has a mild sweetness. Be sure to remove the skin before cooking and use a vegetable oil spray to cut back on the fat and enjoy a fiber-rich side item.

Have fun with seasonings! Use herbs and spices like cilantro, chili peppers, cumin, oregano, cinnamon, and lime juice to boost flavor and reduce the need for added salt.

Continue to stay safe as you celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month! Refer to the [August Mealtime Memo – Staying Safe During COVID-19](#) for important information.



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