Manager’s Corner

Red/Orange Vegetables Subgroups in School Meals

PROJECT COORDINATOR
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1320 General Nutrition
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Improve the operation of child nutrition programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination.

**VISION**
Lead the nation in providing research, education, and resources to promote excellence in child nutrition programs.

**MISSION**
Provide relevant research-based information and services that advance the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs.

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Professional Standards

GENERAL NUTRITION – 1300

Employee will be able to understand the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, USDA’s food guidance system concepts, and general nutrition principles.

1310 – Dietary Guidelines for Americans, MyPlate, and School Nutrition
Relate the Dietary Guidelines and USDA’s food guidance system (such as MyPlate) concepts to the goals of school nutrition programs.

1320 – General Nutrition
Understand general nutrition concepts that relate to school meals, such as whole grains, sodium, etc.

Introduction

Manager’s Corner: Red/Orange Vegetables Subgroup in School Meals is designed to empower managers to use in training their staff. Each lesson is roughly 15 minutes. This lesson plan contains:

- Learning objective
- Statement explaining the importance of the topic
- List of materials
- Instructions on how to present the information
- Questions to ask staff
- An activity to strengthen or refresh the knowledge of the staff
Lesson Overview

Instructions for lesson:
- Review the lesson objective and background information
- Review why it is important
- Ask staff the questions.
- Facilitate the activity outlined.
- Provide time for staff to ask questions.

Objective: Identify food sources, nutrient considerations, health benefits, and menu suggestions for red/orange vegetables.

Background Information: Red/orange vegetables are a great way to add color and increase the eye appeal of meals served throughout your program. Some food sources for red/orange vegetables include red and orange peppers, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots, pumpkins, and winter squash, to name a few. Red/orange vegetables provide a significant amount of vitamin A, beta-carotene, vitamin C, potassium, and antioxidants. Eating red/orange vegetables provides several health benefits that include reduced risk of heart disease (heart attack and stroke), lowered blood pressure, reduced risk of kidney stones, decrease in bone loss, and protection against certain cancers.

Why it is important: The red/orange vegetables subgroup is a requirement of federally funded school lunch meals, and it provides many health benefits to children.

Questions for Staff

- **What are some red/orange vegetable food sources?**
  Answer: Food sources for red/orange vegetables include red and orange peppers; tomatoes; cherry tomatoes; sweet potatoes; carrots; pumpkin; and winter squash (acorn, butternut, and hubbard).

- **What nutrients do red/orange vegetables contain?**
  Answer: In comparison with other vegetable subgroups, red/orange vegetables provide a significant amount of vitamin A since they are rich in beta-carotene. Red/orange vegetables are also a good source of vitamin C, potassium, and antioxidants.
• **What are the health benefits for individuals consuming a variety of vegetables, including red/orange vegetables?**

**Answer:** Health benefits for individuals consuming red/orange vegetables include:

- Lower intake of calories due to a low calorie, low-fat food source
- Reduced risk of heart disease which includes heart attack and stroke
- Lowered blood pressure, reduced risk of kidney stones, and decrease in bone loss due to rich potassium source
- Protection against certain cancers

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**Activity: Red/Orange Vegetables**

**Activity materials provided in this document:**
- Red/Orange Vegetables
- Red/Orange Vegetables Answer Key

**Materials provided by the school nutrition operation:**
- ICN Meal Plan Mini Posters Red/Orange Vegetables (located at https://theicn.org/icn-resources/). Select Meal Pattern Mini-Posters and choose the mini-poster from the listing.
- Copies of handouts
- Pens/Pencils

**Activity Instructions:**

- Print the handouts and worksheets.
- Ask staff to complete the Red/Orange Vegetables using the information from the ICN Meal Plan Mini Posters Red/Orange Vegetables mini-poster.
- At the conclusion of the activity, review the Red/Orange Vegetables Answer Key.
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Red/Orange Vegetables

Instructions: Review the menu below and select the red/orange vegetables. Identify ways to incorporate red/orange vegetables into school meals.

### Grades 9-12 Weekly Lunch Menu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mini Meatball Sub or</td>
<td>BBQ Chicken Drumstick</td>
<td>White Bean chili</td>
<td>Cheese Pizza Alfredo or</td>
<td>Biscuits and</td>
</tr>
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<td>Fruit, Yogurt,</td>
<td>Whole Wheat Roll or</td>
<td>Cornbread Muffin or</td>
<td>Grilled Chicken</td>
<td>Scrambled Eggs or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granola Parfait</td>
<td>Fish Taco</td>
<td>Beef Wrap</td>
<td>Sandwich</td>
<td>or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranch Potato Wedges</td>
<td>Baked Beans Creamy</td>
<td>Cherry Tomatoes</td>
<td>Broccoli Florets</td>
<td>Pepperoni Pizza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cole Slaw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tossed Salad</td>
<td>Fresh Baby Carrots</td>
<td>Fresh Baby Carrots</td>
<td>Fresh Baby Carrots</td>
<td>Hash Brown Patty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh Peach</td>
<td>Apricot Halves</td>
<td>Fresh Banana</td>
<td>Fresh Citrus Fruit Cup</td>
<td>Fresh Plum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canned Fruit</td>
<td>Fresh Fruit</td>
<td>Canned Fruit</td>
<td>Canned Fruit</td>
<td>Fresh Plum</td>
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<td>Milk Choice 1% fat or</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


What are some ways red/orange vegetables can be incorporated into school meals?
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Red/Orange Vegetables Answer Key

**Instructions:** Review the menu below and select the red/orange vegetables. Identify ways to incorporate red/orange vegetables into school meals.

### Grades 9-12 Weekly Lunch Menu

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<td>White Bean Chili Cornbread Muffin or Beef Wrap</td>
<td>Cheese Pizza Alfredo or</td>
<td>Biscuits and Scrambled Eggs or <strong>Pepperoni Pizza</strong></td>
</tr>
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<td>Baked Beans Creamy Cole Slaw</td>
<td><strong>Cherry Tomatoes</strong></td>
<td>Grilled Chicken Sandwich</td>
<td>Broccoli Florets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tossed Salad</strong></td>
<td><strong>Fresh Baby Carrots</strong></td>
<td>Cucumber Slices</td>
<td><strong>Fresh Baby Carrots</strong></td>
<td>Hash Brown Patty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fresh Peach</strong></td>
<td>Apricot Halves</td>
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<td>Fresh Citrus Fruit Cup</td>
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</table>

**Note:** The correct answers are in bold font. Additionally, the mini meatball sub and pepperoni pizza provide a serving of red/orange vegetables due to the tomato sauce used in the recipes.


**What are some ways to incorporate red/orange vegetables into school meals?**
Example response: Include tomatoes in a breakfast omelet.

**Please note:** The answer provided is only an example and is not an inclusive list of possible responses.
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References


