



# Growing Together: Food, Family and Friends

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As we begin a new year, think about ways to involve your family in working together toward common goals, such as planning and preparing meals or completing household chores like cleaning.

## Eat

Does your family cook together? Preparing food provides meals for your family and also opportunities for teamwork, communication, learning about math, language and nutrition.

Enjoy more whole-grain foods with this pizza dough recipe. Set up a pizza topping buffet so everyone can individualize their pizza.

How many food groups can you place on your personal pizza?

- Fruit and veggie toppings such as tomato sauce, mushrooms, zucchini slices, green pepper slices, onion slices or pineapple tidbits
- Protein toppings such as ham, sausage, seasoned ground beef, tofu or shrimp.
- Dairy (calcium-rich) toppings such as mozzarella, provolone or Romano cheese.

Set a goal: What will you make next time your family cooks together? See the recipes at [www.ag.ndsu.edu/food](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/food).

## Whole-wheat Pizza Dough

- 1 cup all-purpose flour (plus additional flour as needed)
  - 1 ½ cups whole-wheat flour
  - 1 teaspoon salt
  - 1 ¼ cups warm water (105 to 115 F)
  - 2 tablespoons olive oil
  - 2 packets\* active dry yeast
  - 1 teaspoon sugar
- \*1 packet = 2¼ teaspoons yeast.

Use a mixer with a dough hook or mix by hand in a large mixing bowl. Combine all dry ingredients except sugar and yeast. Make a “well” in the center of the dry ingredients. Combine warm water, yeast, sugar and olive oil. Slowly add liquid to the dry ingredient “well” and mix until all flour is incorporated, adding more flour to make a ball. On a floured work surface, knead for about 10 minutes or until dough is smooth and elastic. Shape into a ball, place into a lightly greased bowl and turn once to grease the entire surface. Cover bowl with clean towel, place in a warm, draft-free location and let rise until doubled in size. Preheat oven to 425 F. Punch down dough, form into a small circle and place on a floured work surface. Let rest for 5 minutes, then press out dough until it is slightly larger than the pan size (use a rolling pin if you like). Fold dough in half and half again. Place the “wedge” onto a greased 16-inch pizza pan that’s been dusted with cornmeal. Unfold dough and crimp edges to form a crust.

Or, divide dough in half to make a thin-crust pizza; use a rolling pin to press into two 10-by-15-inch pans. Top with favorite sauce and toppings and bake for 15 to 20 minutes.

Yield: One 16-inch pizza with thick crust or two 10-inch by 15-inch thin-crust pizzas – or several small pizzas. Makes eight servings. Each serving of crust has 170 calories, 4 grams (g) fat, 5 g protein, 29 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber and 300 milligrams sodium.

# Connect

The launch of a new year provides a terrific opportunity to prioritize healthy habits for family members and plan activities that will help you move toward those goals in small steps. Let's explore some healthy goals related to eating together, moving together and staying connected as family members.

Putting together goals for healthy habits in the new year can be a fun family discussion. For any family, having this discussion together helps each person get excited, and all can contribute their ideas. Make it a conversation over a family meal. Goals or resolutions should be limited in number, realistic and enjoyable. Also, they can vary depending on a family member's age, needs or preferences. You might enjoy tracking progress with sticker charts or other tools to visually see your efforts each week.

## Goals and Eating Together

- Consider exploring one new healthy food as a family on a regular basis, perhaps weekly or once a month. Find a new, healthy recipe that incorporates the food item you select and try it out for one family meal.

## Goals and Moving Together

- Discuss activities that family members enjoy that allow you to get moving and prioritize getting out and being active together. Even an outing to go sledding in the winter can burn calories and build muscles. Set a priority to be active together at least once a week, whether it's going to a nearby gym, walking, playing a physical game or some other activity.

## Goals and Connecting Together

- Explore a goal to prioritize eating one planned or "special" meal together at least once each week. Meet at a consistent time and keep it fun, such as a make-your-own-pizza night, a "Taco Tuesday" or a Saturday morning breakfast bash.

Whatever you choose to do for your goals, use the opportunity of a new year to bring more health and connection to your family as you eat together, move together and stay connected.

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## Savor (the Savings)

Stretch your family food budget by planning meals and avoiding wasting food. Check out the "Pinchin' Pennie\$ in the Kitchen" series of publications. Learn how to make soup, casseroles, stir-fry, quesadillas and more from the food you have on hand. Take a look at the meal plans and grocery lists. See [www.ag.ndsu.edu/food](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/food) and click on "Food Preparation" then "Cooking on a Budget."



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