



Growing Together: Food, Family and Friends

Julie Garden-Robinson, Ph.D., R.D., L.R.D., Food and Nutrition Specialist
Susan Quamme Wehlander, M.Ed., Child Development Specialist

Connect with Food During March — National Nutrition Month

Do you have a favorite recipe from your grandparents or another family member? Maybe the aroma of baking bread reminds you of a favorite aunt who made it for you. Have you shared the recipe with other family members?

Food connects us to the cultures and traditions of the people who prepared it. This year, for National Nutrition Month, prepare a dish from your heritage with family members. Invite people in the kitchen to cook together.

Children and teens can learn about food preparation when you share memories of foods you enjoyed with older family members. Eating healthfully throughout your life is important, so you might find that you'd like to reduce the amount of sodium or fat in an older recipe.

For example, when preparing soup that calls for broth, choose the lower-sodium types available at the grocery store. Instead of buying canned fruit in heavy syrup, choose fruit packed in juice or light syrup.

NDSU Extension has many recipes to try. Want to learn how to make recipes a little healthier?

See **“Now You’re Cookin’:
Recipe Makeovers!”**.

To explore some recipes from other cultures, see **“North Dakota Food and Culture: A Taste of World Cuisine”**.

Here's a tasty dessert that provides calcium from the yogurt and vitamins from the berries.

Berry Parfait Cups

½ cup granola plus more for topping

½ cup vanilla yogurt of choice

¾ cup berries, larger pieces diced

Topping:

¾ cup fresh fruit, berries, kiwi, peaches, bananas, etc.

¼ cup granola, smaller pieces work better

Line a muffin pan with liners. Sprinkle about 2 teaspoons of granola into the bottom of each cup. Set aside. In a medium bowl, add in yogurt and fresh fruit. Using a dough blender or fork, mash fruit into yogurt until mostly mixed in, with just a few chunks remaining. Using a rubber spatula or wooden spoon, stir and fold until well mixed. Spoon 2 tablespoons of the fruit and yogurt mixture into each cup, making sure to create an even layer. Tap the pan to smooth out each layer. Press about 1 tablespoon of fresh fruit into the top of each cup. Sprinkle granola over the fruit, about 1 teaspoon. Place the pan into the freezer and chill until firm, about two to four hours.

Makes 12 parfait cups. Each parfait cup has 50 calories, 1.5 grams (g) fat, 1 g protein, 9 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, and 10 milligrams sodium. Nutritional value varies depending on the granola you choose.



NDSU

Connect

Mindful Eating: A Fun Family Activity

Families aim for a peaceful meal together, but it's not always easy. Practicing mindfulness can make mealtimes calmer while improving emotional regulation, self-awareness and stress management. Mindful eating helps us focus on the present moment, allowing us to truly experience our food.

Here's a simple and engaging activity to help your family practice mindful eating.

The Mindful Apple Activity

For this activity, each family member will need an apple. Together, you'll explore your apples using four of the five senses.

1. **Look** – Examine your apple carefully. What colors do you see? Encourage children to notice different shades beyond just red or green.
2. **Listen** – Hold the apple close to your ear. Does it make a sound when you turn the stem or rub the skin? What do you hear?
3. **Smell** – Take a deep breath and notice the apple's scent. How would you describe it?
4. **Taste** – Take a small bite, but don't swallow right away. Chew slowly and focus on the flavors and textures. How does this bite compare to other apples you've eaten? Do you think paying attention makes food taste better?

Extend the Learning

To reinforce mindful eating, have children create a placemat with reminders to **look, listen, smell and taste** their food. You can also read "No Ordinary Apple" by Sara Marlowe, a story about a boy named Elliot who learns the art of mindful eating.

By practicing mindfulness at meals, your family can enjoy food more fully and create a calmer, more enjoyable dining experience.

Resource: *Mindful Me: A 4-H Primary Mindful Curriculum*



Marcos Elihu Castillo Romirez_istock.com

Savor the Savings

Many of the foods we buy at the grocery store have increased in price. Avoiding food waste can help save money.

- Before you stop at the grocery store or order take-out, check what's in your refrigerator, freezer and pantry. What could you prepare from what you have on hand?
- If you have leftovers, think of them as "planned overs." Make tortilla wraps or stuff pita pockets with leftover chopped chicken, veggies and lettuce. Add some salsa. Make a soup or casserole from what you have on hand.
- See the "**Pinchin' Pennie\$ in the Kitchen**" series of handouts from NDSU Extension to learn how to stretch your dollar and make personalized recipes.

March 2025

Get this newsletter in your email **every** month. Subscribe at www.ag.ndsu.edu/food

County commissions, North Dakota State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. NDSU does not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of age, color, gender expression/identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, participation in lawful off-campus activity, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, spousal relationship to current employee, or veteran status, as applicable. Direct inquiries to Vice Provost, Title IX/ADA Coordinator, Old Main 100, 701-231-7708, ndsu.eoaa@ndsu.edu. This publication will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities upon request, 701-231-7881.