

March 1, 2023

'FUEL FOR THE FUTURE' AND REMEMBER TO EAT YOUR VEGGIES FOR NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH



Contact:

Christina Louv, Public Information Officer, Pasco
Christina.Louv-Pickle@flhealth.gov
(727) 619-0163 (media only)

West Central FLA – Your West Central Florida County Health Departments serving Citrus, Hardee, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, and Sarasota – are inviting you to learn the importance of healthy eating habits during *National Nutrition Month* this March. This year's theme, *Fuel for the Future*, promotes a healthy vegetarian and/or plant-based diet.

During *National Nutrition Month* everyone is encouraged to make informed food choices and develop sound eating and physical activity habits they can follow all year long. Making healthy eating habits does not require drastic lifestyle changes.



According to the National Library of Medicine, a high sugar, high fat, processed food diet has contributed significantly to obesity and chronic disease in America. Not only do Americans consume fewer than the recommended daily servings of fruit and vegetables, but they also consume a lot of red meat and poultry each year, which creates a much higher daily caloric intake and protein requirements of a healthy diet.

Developing a healthy eating pattern is not a one-size-fits all endeavor. The key is tailoring your favorite foods to meet your individual nutrient needs. For those wondering how to get started, speaking with a registered dietitian can be an important first step. These health professionals can help fine-tune traditional recipes, provide alternatives to cooking methods and offer other helpful advice for incorporating family-favorite foods into everyday meals.

Your local health department can serve as a valuable resource as you look to expand your food horizons this month. You can reach your county's office at:

DOH-Citrus	(352) 527-0068	DOH-Manatee	(941) 748-0747
DOH-Hardee	(863) 773-4161	DOH-Pasco	(727) 619-0300
DOH-Hernando	(352) 540-6800	DOH-Pinellas	(727) 824-6900
DOH-Highlands	(863) 386-6040	DOH-Polk	(863) 519-7900

National Nutrition Month was initiated in 1973 as *National Nutrition Week*, and it became a month-long observance in 1980 in response to growing interest in nutrition.

To learn more about nutrition and National Nutrition Month, visit the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics website at: www.eatright.org.

Healthiest Weight Florida is a public-private collaboration bringing together state agencies, not-for-profit organizations, businesses, and entire communities to help Florida's children and adults make consistent, informed choices about healthy eating and active living. To learn more about how to be active and make nutritious food choices, visit www.healthiestweightflorida.com.

Florida's WIC program is a federally funded nutrition program for Women, Infants, and Children. WIC provides the following at no cost: healthy foods, nutrition education and counseling, breastfeeding support, and referrals for health care and community services. Find out more at www.FloridaWIC.org.

About the Florida Department of Health

The Department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote, and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county, and community efforts.

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit www.FloridaHealth.gov.