

Making America Organic...One Home At a Time!



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Kids' Food Pyramid Launched

In a new Food Pyramid for kids, the government hopes to teach children to eat right with a spaceship computer game, lesson plans, worksheets and tips for families.

Unveiled Wednesday, the kid-specific version of the new pyramid is aimed at children 6 to 11 years old.

"Homework can be fun, don't you think?" Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns asked a roomful of students at Samuel Tucker Elementary School in Northern Virginia.

"Nooooooooooooooooo," the kids groaned.

But they clapped after seeing the "MyPyramid Blast Off Game," in which a Food Pyramid spaceship blasts off. The ship only makes it to Planet Power if kids load it up with the right combination of healthy food: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lowfat or fat-free milk and lean meat.

Third-grader Saurav Khulal said the game was fun as he played it in the school computer lab. Saurav said he might play it "a little bit" at home, but he prefers games like Pokemon during the half-hour of computer time his parents allow.

Classmate Christine LaPierre played the game with Eric Bost, clicking and dragging a veggie burger -- her mom's favorite -- spinach salad and chicken on board the ship. Christine said she'll play the game again, but, "My brother won't like it. He would keep on putting cookies on there."

The government rolled out the new guide for healthy eating in April, tipping the old pyramid on its side and adding a stair-climbing stick figure.

The kids' pyramid is more cartoonish, with a girl running up the steps to the top and kids playing soccer, baseball and basketball, walking a dog, riding a bike, stretching, picnicking and even doing yoga.

Exercise is an important part of being healthy,

Johanns told the students. Obesity among children and teenagers more than doubled in the past 30 years.

"We don't want this generation of young people to be the first generation that lives fewer years than their parents," Johanns said.

Like the adult's version, the kids' pyramid drew criticism for not going far enough.

"The materials don't even have the guts to urge kids to drink less soda pop, to eat less candy," said Michael Jacobson,

executive director of the Washington-based Center for Science in the Public Interest.

"If the government really wanted to improve kids' eating habits, it would get junk food out of schools, it would ban junk food advertising on television, it would require calorie counts on fast-food menu boards and sponsor hard-hitting educational materials," he said. "That would really drive home the point that these empty-calorie foods are causing obesity."

At the same time, a food industry group created a separate kids' pyramid in a partnership with the Weekly Reader newspaper that distributed a curriculum to 58,000 classrooms just this week. The group, Grocery Manufacturers of America, said its pyramid was based on the same pyramid for adults but that there was no coordination with the government.

"We saw it as an opportunity for GMA to help promote USDA's nutritional message," GMA spokeswoman Stephanie Childs said.

The blast off game can be found on the USDA web site at http://www.mypyramid.gov/kids/kids_game.html.

Harvest Blend Regular

- Baby Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Broccoli Crowns
- Spinach
- Red Chard
- Romaine Lettuce
- Shallots
- Green Bell Peppers
- Gala Apples
- Bartlett Pears
- Bananas
- Kiwi
- Valencia Oranges

See the web site for details on our other options. Produce bag contents are subject to change based on availability.

You Don't Say

"The first time I ate organic whole-grain bread I swear it tasted like roofing material." - Robin Williams

"Don't be too daring in the kitchen. For example, don't suddenly get involved with shallots. Later, when you are no longer a Lonely Guy, you can do shallots. Not now. If you know coriander, stay with coriander and don't fool around. Even with coriander you're on thin ice, but at least you've got a shot, because it's familiar. Stay with safe things, like pepper." - Bruce Jay Friedman

"Why does Sea World have a seafood restaurant?? I'm half-way through my fish burger and I realize, Oh my God....I could be eating a slow learner." - Lyndon B. Johnson

Recipes

Black Cherry Soda Chicken

- 1 tbsp dried green tea
- 1 tbsp ground sumac, or 2 tsp lemon pepper
- 1 tbsp dried onion or shallot flakes
- 1-1/2 tsp coarse salt (kosher or sea salt)
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1 can (12 ounces) black cherry soda
- 1 chicken (3-1/2 to 4 pounds)
- 2 tsp vegetable oil

Make the rub: Put the green tea, sumac, onion flakes, salt, and black pepper, if using, in a spice mill or coffee grinder and grind them to a fine powder. Pour half the soda (3/4 cup) into a measuring cup and set aside for the sauce. Sprinkle 1 tsp of the rub inside the body and 1/2 tsp inside the neck of the chicken. Drizzle the oil over the outside of the bird and rub or brush it all over the skin. Sprinkle the outside of the bird with 1 tbsp of the rub.

Place the chicken in the oven at 325, and cook the chicken until the skin is a dark golden brown and very crisp and the meat is cooked through (180 degrees F on an instant-read thermometer inserted in the thickest part of a thigh, but not touching the bone), 1-1/4 to 1-1/2 hours. Serve with the Black Cherry Barbecue Sauce, recipe below.

Black Cherry Barbecue Sauce

- 3/4 cup black cherry soda
- 1 can Bing cherries (17 ounces), drained
- 3 tbsps cherry preserves
- 2 tbsps fresh lemon juice
- 2 tbsps butter
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 cup dry red wine
- 1 tbsp cornstarch
- kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Put the cherry soda, cherries, cherry preserves, lemon juice, butter, sugar, cinnamon, and 3 tbsps of the wine in a heavy saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium and let the sauce simmer gently for 5 minutes. Put the remaining 1 tbsp wine and the cornstarch in a small bowl and stir to form a slurry (thick paste). Whisk this paste into the cherry sauce. Bring the sauce to a boil over high heat to thicken, about 1 minute. Taste for seasoning, adding more sugar or lemon juice to adjust the sweetness and salt and pepper to taste; the sauce should be highly seasoned. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Peas with Spinach and Shallots

- 2 medium shallots, thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp oil
- 1 tbsp unsalted butter
- 10 oz frozen peas
- 1/4 cup water
- 5 oz baby spinach
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp black pepper

Cook shallots and garlic in oil and butter in a 12-inch nonstick

skillet over moderate heat, stirring, until soft, about 6 minutes (start with cold oil and skillet). Stir in the peas and water and cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until peas are tender, about 5 minutes. Stir in spinach, salt, and pepper and cook, tossing, until spinach is just wilted, about 1 minute.

Sautéed Green Beans and Minced Shallots

- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 pound fresh green beans
- 1 tbsp shallots, minced
- salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Heat olive oil over medium heat in a large skillet. Add beans and shallots. Cook approximately 5 minutes until beans are crisp and tender, stirring often. Season with salt and pepper.

Cauliflower Shallot Pickle

- 1 head cauliflower (cut in florets)
- 2 oz shallots
- 1/4 cup salt
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. turmeric powder
- 2 tsp mustard seeds powdered
- 2 tsp red chili powdered
- 4 cloves
- 1 cup white vinegar
- 1 cup water

Mix onions, cauliflower and salt and let stand overnight. Drain and rinse in cold water. Combine sugar, turmeric, mustard seeds, cloves and chilies in a jar. Stir in the vinegar and water. Add the cauliflower and shallots. Stir well. Let stand for two days. Refrigerate to store.

Green Pepper Steak

- 1 pound beef round
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 1 clove garlic
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- 1/4 cup salad oil
- 1 cup green onion, sliced thin
- 1 cup red and green bell peppers, cut in 3/4" cubes
- 2 stalks celery, sliced thin
- 1 tbsp cornstarch
- 1 cup water
- 2 tomato, cut into 2" chunks
- 8 ounces water chestnuts, canned, sliced
- 4 ounces mushrooms, sliced

With a very sharp knife cut beef across grain into thin strips, 1/8-inch thick. Combine soy sauce, garlic, ginger. Add beef. Toss and set aside while preparing vegetables. Heat oil in large frying pan or wok. Add beef and toss over high heat until browned. Taste meat. If it is not tender, over and simmer for 30 to 40 min. over low heat. Turn heat up and add vegetables. Toss until vegetables are tender crisp, about 10 minutes. Mix cornstarch with water. Add to pan; stir and cook until thickened. Add tomatoes and heat through. You can prepare the beef ahead and refrigerate just before adding the vegetables. Finish cooking later.