

## Fuel for the Future: Choosing Foods Better for Your Health and the Environment



**eat right.** Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Each year in March, we are invited to celebrate National Nutrition Month, a time when everyone is invited to learn about making informed food choices and developing healthful eating and physical activity habits. This year's theme is "Fuel for the Future" encouraging us to eat with sustainability in mind. In this article you will find tips to make small changes that can add up to a host of benefits for both your health and the environment.

### Prioritize Plants

Plant-based foods such as beans, lentils, tofu, nuts, and seeds add valuable nutrients to your diet while having a lower

impact on the environment compared to animal-based foods. Flavorful items like a bean chili, lentil burgers and tofu stir fry will keep you fueled without missing meat. Adding plant-based dishes once per week to your meal plan can have a powerful impact. You can even begin incorporating plant-based foods by adding beans, nuts or seeds to your favorite dishes.

- Try a new fruit or vegetable each time you make a trip to the grocery store
- Keep canned beans and frozen vegetables on hand to make a quick soup or stir fry
- Incorporate plant-based items to your favorite meals. Try adding chickpeas or sunflower seeds to your salad, lentils to your soup, or black beans to your favorite casserole.

### Consider Food Waste

Being mindful of food waste is a simple step to take to benefit both the environment and your budget.

- Check your kitchen to plan meals around foods you may have already in stock
- Store extra produce in containers to freeze to make soups or smoothies later

- Keep containers on hand to freeze leftovers
- Use leftovers in soups or casseroles for dinner the next day
- Choose frozen and canned fruits and vegetables



## Fuel Your Budget

### Try Frozen or Canned Produce

- Frozen or low sodium canned fruits and vegetables often cost less but still provide essential nutrients.

### Buy Produce In Season

- Choosing foods in season not only taste better but also often cost less.
- Pro Tip: Produce closer to the front of the store is more likely in season.

### Minimize meat

- Save money by reducing your portion of meat at a meal to the size of a deck of cards.
- Substitute a plant-based item for meat at least once per week.

## Seasonal Recipe:

### *Spring Salad with Lemon Dressing*

*Serves 1 (increase portions as desired for a crowd)*

#### Ingredients:

##### Salad

- 2 cups of romaine lettuce, chopped
- ¼ cup canned chickpeas, rinsed
- 2 Tbsp of toasted walnuts
- ¼ cup fresh blueberries
- ¼ cup sliced fresh strawberries

##### Dressing

- ¼ cup olive or canola oil
- 1-2 Tbsp fresh squeezed lemon, or to taste
- 1 Tbsp of maple syrup, honey or agave nectar
- 1-2 teaspoons of favorite vinegar

#### Instructions:

1. Add lettuce to a bowl and top with remaining salad ingredients
2. In a small dish, whisk dressing ingredients.
3. Toss salad with fresh dressing and enjoy!

**Would you like to work with a Registered Dietitian?**

To schedule an appointment, please obtain a referral for **Medical Nutrition Therapy** and contact:

Presbyterian: **412-692-4497**

Shadyside: **412-623-2421**