WHAT'S UP...

Recently, your child has been tasting asparagus, kiwi, lean ground beef, and foods made with 100% whole wheat flour in classroom activities, meals and snacks offered by the Head Start. Over the next few weeks, try adding these foods into meals and snacks at home. The more you and your family try new foods together, the more likely that your child will be willing to try new foods in the future.

Asparagus is rich in vitamins and minerals, and with only about 4 calories per spear, it packs a powerful nutritional punch for both children and adults. Asparagus can be purchased fresh, canned or frozen. If frozen, be sure to avoid asparagus packed in cream or sauces, which add unwanted fat.

Kiwis are also high in fiber and many vitamins and minerals that are especially important for your child's health and development. Kiwis are only sold fresh, but can be used in a variety of ways!

In this newsletter, we have delicious ideas for using asparagus, kiwi and whole wheat flour. We also include tips on reducing the fat in ground beef, which will help make meals healthier for your family. Look in the other CHILE take-home materials and at your CHILE-participating grocery store for more ideas and recipes using these foods!

Remember to always cut all foods into small pieces no larger than ½ an inch to prevent choking in young children.

DON'T FORGET...

Look for CHILE shelf labels this month at your local CHILE participating grocery store. While there, visit the CHILE display rack and pick up recipe cards for meals and snacks to make at home using asparagus, kiwi or whole wheat flour!

"Don't know which local grocery store is a CHILE-participating store in your community? Ask someone at your Head Start!"

Bring your child along with you to the store to find asparagus and kiwi in the produce section and whole wheat flour in the baking aisle. You can also find asparagus in the canned and frozen sections of the store! Just look for the CHILE shelf label!
CUT THE FAT, NOT THE FLAVOR: Make Ground Beef Better!

Ground beef in the grocery store is typically 75% lean / 25% fat. Leaner types that are at least 90% lean and only 10% fat are better for your family’s health, but may be hard to find in the grocery store and are usually more expensive. It is possible to reduce some of the fat in high-fat ground beef. Here are some tips:

Reducing the Fat in Cooked Beef Crumbles:
1. Brown ground beef in a skillet over medium heat for 8 to 10 minutes or until meat reaches 160°F (no longer pink and juices run clear).
2. While ground beef is cooking, microwave four cups of water in a glass measuring cup or microwavable bowl on high for 5 to 6 minutes or until very hot, but NOT boiling. Be careful, the water will be VERY HOT.
3. Using a slotted spoon, remove ground beef pieces from skillet and place on a large plate or other container lined with 3 layers of white, non-recycled paper towels, and let sit for 1 minute. Blot top of beef crumbles with more paper towels.
4. Place beef crumbles in a mesh strainer or colander and set in a large sturdy bowl.
5. Pour hot water over beef to rinse off fat. Allow to drain into the bowl for 5 minutes.
6. Pour fat into a separate container and let cool and solidify. Place in trash.

Reducing the Fat in Cooked Ground Beef Hamburgers:
1. Shape raw ground beef into 4-ounce patties.
2. Heat nonstick skillet over medium heat until hot. Without adding any oil to the pan, place patties in skillet.
3. Cook for 10-12 minutes or until the internal temperature is 160°F (center should not be pink and the juices should be clear). Turn once halfway through cooking.
4. Remove patties and place on large plate lined with 3 layers of paper towels. Let stand 1 minute, turning over after 30 seconds. Season and serve.

Look in the CHILE Take-Home Kit for more tips on what to look for when shopping for ground beef and how to make some of your favorite foods with a little less fat but lots of flavor!

RECIPE #1: Fresh Steamed Asparagus

Ingredients:
1 Bunch of fresh asparagus

Directions:
1. Rinse the asparagus well under running water
2. Holding the asparagus spear on both ends, bend until it naturally snaps between the heads and the tough end portion. Discard the ends, or save them for later use to add flavor to soup stock or a stew.
3. In a large saucepan or skillet, bring ½ an inch of water to a boil.
4. Add a single layer of asparagus to the pan.
5. Cover, reduce heat and simmer until tender, about 3-7 minutes.

Tips:
1. Cut asparagus into pieces no larger than ½ an inch to prevent choking.
2. The time it takes for asparagus to cook depends on its size and freshness. As soon as it turns bright green, it’s ready.