

## NEWS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

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## Tips for Packing School Lunches

August is Kids Eat Right Month and the perfect opportunity to discuss healthy eating as the new school year begins. It's important to pack a nutritious lunch that your children will eat and will help them perform at their best. Here are some easy to follow tips that can make packing a healthy lunch easier:

- **Plan ahead:** Write out which foods will go into each lunch in advance. This can help eliminate packing unwanted foods when you are in a hurry in the morning. Or better yet, have your child help put together his lunch the night before.
- **Involve the kids:** Come up with a list of acceptable foods with your children and let them pick out what they would like in their lunches. Be sure to list foods according to food group and have them choose at least one item from each to ensure a well-rounded meal. Don't forget to explain why eat group is good for them!
  - Protein/Dairy (meats, nuts, beans, cheese, yogurt, milk) – Helps them grow big and strong!
  - Fruits/Vegetables (apples, grapes, carrots, celery) – Provides vitamins and minerals to keep their hair shiny, skin clear, and sickness away!
  - Grains (whole wheat bread, brown rice, quinoa, oatmeal) – Gives them the energy to do well in school and run around!
- **Provide protein-based snacks:** Protein will keep your child feeling fuller for longer, delaying any hunger distractions. (peanut butter on celery, turkey lettuce roll up)
- **Avoid packages:** These tend to be processed foods full of added sugar, fat, and sodium. Create your own "packaged" food with homemade trail mix, veggie sticks, fruit cubes, or tortilla roll ups with low-fat turkey and cheese.
- **Water:** The perfect drink to hydrate without empty calories from added sugars. Flavor your child's water by adding cucumber slices, whole berries, orange wedges, or mint leaves.

- **Food safety:** Be sure to use an insulated, soft-sided lunch-bag with two freezer packs (or use frozen 100% juice boxes or water bottles). If packing hot foods, use an insulated container to keep these foods hot. Before filling the container, pour in boiling water and let it stand a few minutes.

Children in Placer and Nevada Counties that participate in the “Let’s Eat Healthy” Program will be learning about healthy foods and how they help their bodies, so be sure to ask them about the class! For more nutrition or program information, please call (530) 889-7350 or visit our website: <http://ceplacer.ucanr.edu>. “Like” us on Facebook for additional tips and updates at UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program.

Roger Ingram  
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