



Eat and Be Smart Raiders: Guidelines for Healthy Eating at Meetings and Events

Are you often in charge of organizing meetings at TTU where food is served? Then the Eat and Be Smart Texas Tech Guidelines are for YOU! TTU departments, organizations, residence hall floors, and other groups frequently have food at meetings, social events, and pot-lucks. *Why are we concerned about foods offered at these times?* **Frequently, these foods are high in fat and calories and do not include fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.** *The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* encourage us to eat a variety of foods and include physical activity in our daily lives. Offering healthier foods at meetings and events will help everyone be more successful in meeting nutrition guidelines and managing their weight. To encourage creative ideas, see the “Healthier Meetings Contest” at the end of this document.

Healthier Choices Mean Healthier Red Raiders

- 77% of Texans do not meet the minimum recommendation of fruits and vegetables.
- 63% of Texas adults are overweight.
- Overweight/obesity cost Texans about \$10.5 billion per year.

Including more fruits and vegetables and whole grains can help with weight management and the prevention of heart disease, cancer, stroke, Type II Diabetes, and other costly diseases.

You may think that being healthy costs more, tastes bad, and is dull. However, staying healthy can be fun and taste good! **Fruits and vegetables add color and variety to our meals and snacks, in addition to lots of nutrients.** Many fresh fruits and vegetables are available year round, but canned, frozen, and dried can be used too. Include some new options like sugar snap peas, small Clementine oranges, and grape-sized tomatoes. Encourage colleagues to try new foods served in new ways--- remind them that our tastes change over time so things that they didn't like before may taste better now. **Sometimes, you may pay a little more for healthier foods, but remember, these foods also give you more nutrients, and help you to be more healthy, saving money in the long run.**

Pizza Plus!

Only a few simple changes to what you offer at meetings can provide the guests

with food choices that can decrease the risk of disease, increase energy, and give them a positive outlook towards their healthy lifestyle. For instance, why not serve fruit and vegetable platters along with that free pizza for an event? Add some vegetables on that pizza order and/or cut the pizza into smaller slices when you serve to guests.

Five Guidelines for meetings and events

1. Offer more healthy food choices and smaller portion sizes at meal meetings.

At receptions, potlucks, and meetings designed to provide a meal or snack, offer a variety of healthy food choices, such as **fruits, vegetables, and whole grains**. Whole grains or foods made from them contain all the essential parts and naturally-occurring nutrients of the entire grain seed. This will increase vitamin, mineral, and fiber intake, while lowering overall calorie and fat intake. Portion sizes are important in controlling total calorie intake. **Portion Distortion** is a term that reflects how our portion sizes have grown over the past 40 years, and are much larger than recommended serving sizes. For instance, a regular bagel used to have about 200 calories. Now they are doubled in size and at least 400 calories. A good idea for bagels at events is to offer them cut up in fourths with low fat spread on the side.

For potluck meals, make sure that fruits, vegetables, and whole

grain breads are available. Encourage your colleagues to take advice from cultures that believe that “we should take and eat only what we need.”

2. Offer only healthy foods at non-meal meetings.

Americans tend to **underestimate** how much and how frequently we eat foods that are high in fat and calories. It can be easy to disregard cookies, popcorn, or chips eaten at events during non-meal times, but their calories may push you over your recommended limit. It is smart to include reasonable, **healthy snacks** between meals. Therefore, only offering smart portions of healthy foods during non-meal meetings can help everyone stay on course to a healthy lifestyle.

3. Keep foods safe.

Fresh fruits, vegetables, and raw foods need to be washed and cleaned in order to keep them safe from bacteria and viruses. Keep **cold foods cold** and **hot foods hot**. Do not allow foods to sit for more than two hours at room temperature.

4. Lead by Example.

Group leaders/organizers can promote healthy eating. Let your colleagues know that you care about your health and theirs. Eat healthy and be physically active during your week, your events, and your life. Please refer to our ***Healthy Raiders-Get Moving Guidelines for Health Physical Activity*** to learn more.

Suggestions of Food & Beverage items

Beverages:

- Ice water
- Bottled water
- Teas-regular, herb, unsweetened
- Coffees
- 100% fruit or vegetable juices-small portions
- Skim or 1% milk

Snacks:

- Fresh fruit-cut up with low-fat yogurt dip
- Raw vegetables-cut up with low-fat dressing
- Pretzels
- Tortilla chips-baked, offered with salsa
- Whole-grain crackers
- Angel food cake with fresh fruit topping

Breakfast foods:

- Fresh fruit
- Yogurt cups
- Bagels-whole-grain, cut up, served with low-fat cream cheese
- Muffins-mini, whole grain
- Granola bars

Lunch/Dinner foods:

- Fresh fruit and vegetables
- Entrees with 12-15 grams of fat or less per serving
- Vegetarian options
- Whole-grain breads
- Salads with dressings on the side

Eat and Be Smart Contest

To encourage healthier foods at meetings and events, we are having a **contest** to capture all the great ideas that may develop as **Red Raiders** find new and creative ways to use meetings and events as opportunities to improve our health. **Contest deadline is November 17, 2006.** Go to the FIT Tech website (www.ttu.edu/fittech) for more details.

Adapted from:

Eat Smart North Carolina: Guidelines for Healthy Foods and Beverages at Meetings, Gatherings and Events

Eat Smart Move More North Carolina
www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com

References Used:

Eat Smart. Be Active.
A Guide to Creating Healthy Lifestyles in Texas Communities
www.eatsmartbeactivetx.org

Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Obesity in Texas
http://www.eatsmartbeactivetx.org/files/strategic_plan.pdf

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/obesity/state_programs/texas.htm