

# Seasonal Gr'Eatings!

A newsletter to help make good eating great fun

Fall 2011



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## Celebrate Fall — Nature's Bounty!

Time to celebrate the rich deep colors of Autumn! Fall is a great time to involve children in the preparation and serving of festive, colorful seasonal foods. And, there are so many delicious and nutritious ones to try!

*This newsletter has been made available to you by:*

Thomasville City Schools

## Fun with Apples



Celebrate Fall with an apple a day! We call an apple "Mother Nature's toothbrush," because it cleans your teeth as you eat it! Did you know that there are thousands of different varieties of apples? Try different types and see which ones you like best.

**Any way you slice it, apples are crunchy, delicious, sweet, and FRESH!**

- **Go Apple Picking:** It's an awesome family outing, plus kids will get to pick their own and see where apples come from. When they pick 'em, they're much more likely to want to eat 'em!
- **Be a Magician!** Did you know there's a star hiding inside? If you cut an apple in half through its diameter, kids can discover a magical star made by the pattern of the seeds!
- **Apple Puzzle:** Cut up an apple into chunks. Put back together and wrap in plastic wrap. Kids will have fun putting the pieces back together.
- **Apple Smiles:** Make a sandwich with fruit as the bread! Wash and cut an apple into thin wedges, and pat dry. Put cheese or peanut butter between two wedges and squeeze gently. Smile as you eat it, and say "cheese!"
- **Apple Rings:** Kids often prefer eating very thin slices of apples instead of apples cut into sections. Drizzle some orange or lemon juice on the slices to prevent browning, and pack up for a snack to grab or a bag lunch item.

For more snack recipes: <http://foodplay.com/FreeMaterials>

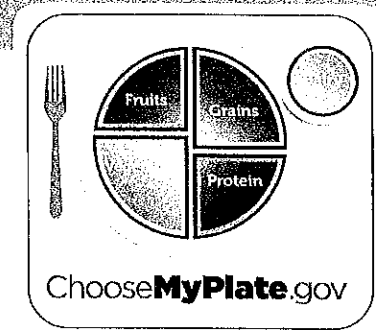
## Get Outside, Get Active!

Staying active as a family is important all year long, but especially at holiday time when the focus is often on eating!

**Try some of these fun ideas:**

- **Play in the leaves!** Or, rake them up!
- **Take walks outside** while you still can.
- **Walk your children to school** instead of driving, if you live close enough. More and more schools are creating the "walking school bus," where groups of families walk to school together!
- **Go on a hike and collect a nature basket!** Have kids collect neat things from nature that they find along the way, like colorful leaves, rocks, and sticks.
- **As a family,** take a brisk walk, dance, throw a ball around, play kickball, frisbee, volleyball, soccer, softball — **something fun that everyone can do together!**
- **For Thanksgiving, create a fun and active holiday ritual!** Turkey tag, sweet potato relay race, apple toss, active charades, or "Capture the Flag!"

Autumn is a wonderful time to introduce children to healthy, seasonal fruits and vegetables. The same foods eaten at Thanksgiving can be eaten all season long! And, holidays like Thanksgiving are a great opportunity to involve kids in the cooking!



## Spotlight on Winter Squash!



This incredibly nutritious and delicious vegetable helped Native Americans and the colonists survive the cold winters. Harvested in the fall and stored throughout the winter, squash is a rich source of nutrients such as Vitamin A, Vitamin C, complex carbohydrates, and fiber. But, best yet, squash is a kid-friendly food, naturally sweet, easy to prepare, and offers great nutritional value for its cost.

**There are so many to try, and lots of easy ways to prepare!** You can use the many varieties of winter squash interchangeably in most recipes.

**Here are some general guidelines:**

### 1 BAKE!

To bake acorn or butternut squash, cut in half and remove seeds. If desired, fill hole with small chunks of apples, raisins, cinnamon, a bit of maple syrup or brown sugar, and sprinkle with apple juice or water. Place in baking pan on rind side, fill the pan with about a half inch of water. Bake at 375°F until tender (about 25-60 minutes, depending on variety). For pulp, scoop out the squash and mash.

### 2 STEAM!

Best with butternut or kabocha squash. Wash, cut into small pieces, place in steamer over boiling water. Without a steamer, place larger chunks in a pot with an inch of boiling water. Cook covered until tender. Drain well. The rind may be removed before or after cooking.

### 3 ROAST!

Cut squash in half and scoop out seeds. Place face down on oiled roasting pan. Bake at 375°F until tender (20-60 minutes, depending on size).

### 4 Use squash PULP (cooked and mashed squash without the rind) for soups, pies, muffins, quick breads, cookies, as a side dish, or even added to burritos!

**DELICATA SQUASH!** Choose a small Delicata squash, and cook it whole! Wash squash, and cover with light layer of oil. Punch a few holes with a fork and bake whole squash in oven or toaster oven at 350°F for 20-35 minutes, depending on size. It's done when outer rind is browned and inside is soft. When cooked, cut in half (careful, it's hot!), scoop out the seeds, and enjoy!

## Seasonal Produce: What to eat NOW!

**Fill at least half your plate with fruits and veggies!**

### What's in Season:

**Fruits**—Apples, figs, citrus, cranberries, gooseberries, grapes, huckleberries, pears, persimmons, and pomegranate!

**Veggies**—Beets, broccoli, brussel sprouts, carrots, cabbage, cauliflower, collards, kale, onions, parsnips, potatoes, pumpkin, rutabagas, sweet potatoes, swiss chard, turnips and winter squash!

### Yummy Roasted Autumn Veggies:

Roast a variety of colorful veggies! Favorites to include are onions, garlic, regular or sweet potatoes, squash, carrots, parsnips, and mushrooms.

### Directions:

Just wash, cut into small chunks, put in bowl, sprinkle with olive oil, and mix. Have kids help mix and layer the dish! Fill a layer or two in a large pyrex dish, and bake at 375°F until soft and browned. (Time depends on the veggies selected, usually 15-45 minutes.) Flavor with soy sauce or tamari or salt and pepper.



Celebrate National  
**FOOD DAY!**

[www.foodday.org](http://www.foodday.org)

# Happy Halloween!

## a healthier Tips for Halloween:

What would Halloween be without candy? Why not use the holiday to teach kids about moderation!

- **One-a-Day Rule.** Have kids put their candy into a big jar that is kept out of reach. Each day, they can pick one piece out of the jar. This teaches kids that candy is a once-in-a-while treat, and not something they should eat all the time.
- **Package up extra candy** and send it in a care package to soldiers ([www.operationgratitude.com](http://www.operationgratitude.com)).
- **Encourage children to share candy** with friends and family. This makes for great practice with sharing, and will help empty their stash more quickly!
- Get kids a fun, but **smaller Trick-or-Treat bag** or bucket. Kids will enjoy the holiday without going overboard!
- **Have an auction.** Buy back your children's candy (say, 5¢ - 10¢ per piece) so that they can start saving their coins for something they're wishing for.
- **Encourage exercise.** If your children eat a few too many candies, encourage them to burn it off with an extra bike ride, hike, or playground trip each day.
- **Be a good role model!** Try not to keep candy hanging around and, instead, have healthy foods attractively displayed within easy reach — like a bowl of cut-up fruit or veggies with a dip of yogurt or dressing.

## Make a Party with Orange and Black Foods!

### Orange Foods

Baby Carrots  
 Carrot Coins & Sticks  
 Cheddar Cheese  
 Oranges, Tangerines  
 Deviled Eggs  
 Pumpkin & Squash  
 (in Soup or Cupcakes)  
 Cantaloupe  
 Apricots  
 Mangoes  
 Papayas  
 Persimmons

### Black Foods

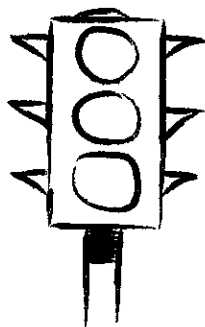
Black Bean Dip  
 Chili  
 Black Olives  
 Raisins  
 Figs, Dates, Dried  
 Plums  
 Chocolate Pudding  
 Pumpernickel Bread

### Orange and Black Combos

Black bean chili served in a cleaned out pumpkin  
 Chocolate sorbet served in cut-out navel oranges  
 Baby carrots served with black bean dip  
 Squash or pumpkin soup served in a bread bowl  
 Pumpernickel mini-slices with cheddar cheese  
 Toothpicks with black olives and cheese cubes

**Roasted Pumpkin Seeds:** Place pumpkin pulp in a colander and rinse pulp away from seeds. Put seeds in a bowl, sprinkle lightly with vegetable oil, and mix. Put a layer onto a baking sheet, and sprinkle lightly with salt. Bake at 350°F for 25-30 minutes, until toasted and lightly browned.

## GO Foods — SLOW Foods — WHOA Foods!



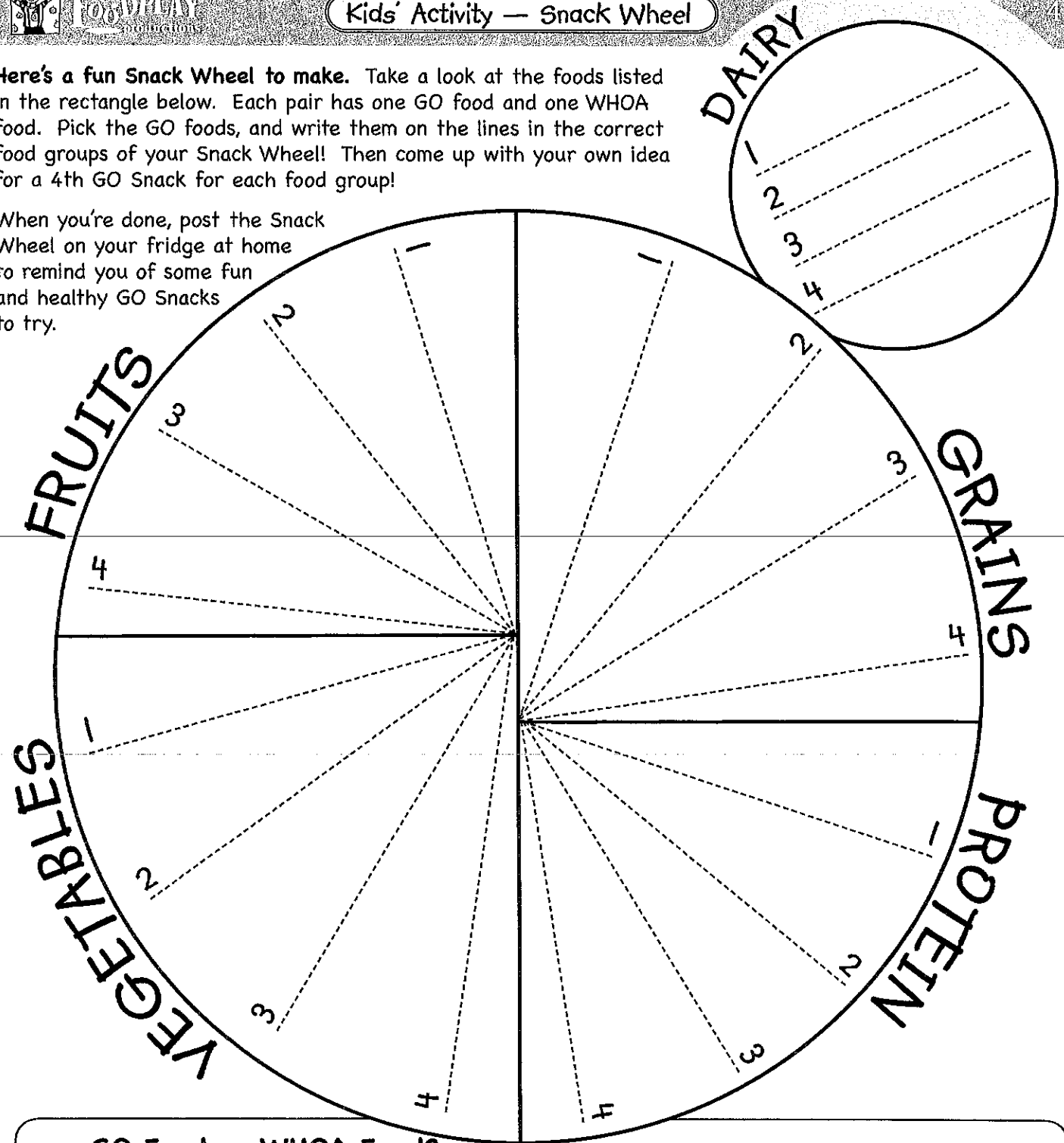
We want children to fuel up with healthy foods ("GO" Foods) and keep candy and other non-nutritious products ("WHOA" Foods) for a once-in-a-while treat. A fun way to help kids understand the difference is to use a traffic light as the guide.

- **Green light** is for **GO** Foods — fuel up with these for a healthy diet.
- **Yellow light** is for **SLOW** Foods — foods that don't offer much in the way of nutrients but can be eaten in moderation.
- **Red light** is for **WHOA** foods — products devoid of nutrients and rich in sugars, unhealthy fats, and additives. Reduce these to only once in a while.



Here's a fun **Snack Wheel** to make. Take a look at the foods listed in the rectangle below. Each pair has one **GO** food and one **WHOA** food. Pick the **GO** foods, and write them on the lines in the correct food groups of your **Snack Wheel**! Then come up with your own idea for a 4th **GO** Snack for each food group!

When you're done, post the **Snack Wheel** on your fridge at home to remind you of some fun and healthy **GO** Snacks to try.



**GO Food or WHOA Food?**

trail mix (nuts, seeds, raisins) / candy bar  
 French fries / baked sweet potato  
 cheese stick / cheesecake  
 fresh salad / potato chips  
 sugar crispies / oatmeal  
 lightly buttered popcorn / spicy corn chips  
 donut / cinnamon raisin bagel

onion rings / baby carrots and hummus  
 grilled chicken breast / fried chicken nuggets  
 100% orange juice / fruit punch  
 ice cream / yogurt parfait  
 fresh grapes / grape fun fruit snax  
 supersize cheeseburger / turkey sandwich with fresh veggies  
 low-fat milk / chocolate milk  
 apple pie / fresh apple