Brown Bag It!

Whether you are packing a lunch for yourself to take to work or your child to take to day-camp or school, you want to make it something yummy to eat and you want to keep it safe.

Include a cold pack to keep cold foods safe until lunch time. This can be store bought or you can make one yourself by freezing a juice box. The juice box will be thawed by lunch time, providing you with a cold refreshing drink. You can also put ice cubes in a zip-lock bag. Double bagging is a good idea so water doesn’t leak out as the ice cubes melt.

If you are putting hot foods in your lunch make sure they are piping hot before putting them in a thermos or other container designed to keep foods hot.

Thoroughly wash all containers each day and wipe out the lunch box. Adding hand wipes or sanitizer to lunch boxes is also a good idea. And don’t forget the napkins.

With a little planning it is easy to pack a healthy, delicious lunch in just a few minutes.

Ask your EFNEP educator for more lunch ideas and food safety information.

Peanut Butter Dip

1/2 cup plain yogurt
1/2 teaspoon of vanilla
1/3 cup of peanut butter

Combine all ingredients and mix well. Refrigerate until ready to use. Refrigerate leftovers.

Makes 6 (2 tablespoon) servings.

Serve with washed, raw fruit such as:
- apple slices
- grapes
- strawberries
- banana slices
- pear slices
- kiwi slices

Per 2 tablespoon serving:
- Calories: 90
- Calories from fat: 60
- Total fat: 7g
- Saturated fat: 1.5g
- Total carbs: 5g
- Dietary fiber: 1g
- Sugars: 2g
- Protein: 4g

Source: Eating Smart: Being Active
Wisdom on Watermelon

One of the most popular fruits of the summer is watermelon. This juicy fruit is the perfect treat on a hot summer day and it has many health benefits. As its name indicates, watermelons are over 90% water so it helps to prevent dehydration in hot weather. It is low in calories, sodium and fat but rich in flavor.

Other health benefits and important nutrients in watermelon:
- **Lycopene**, the red pigment helps to fight cancer and cardiovascular disease.
- **Beta carotene (vitamin A)** helps to boost the immune system and fight age-related blindness.
- **Vitamin C** helps to fight off infections and viruses. It also protects you from free radicals that can accelerate aging and cause cataracts.
- **Vitamin B6** helps to produce antibodies that fight many diseases.
- **Potassium** helps in lowering blood pressure and prevent kidney stone formation.

**How to pick a watermelon**: 1) heavy in weight, 2) smooth, rind that is dull with a creamy; yellow spot on the underside. 3) hear a deep, hollow sound when thumped.  
*Wash before cutting and eating.*

Lisa McCoy, MS, RDN, Extension Educator, FCS-Healthy Living

Fresh Brown Bag Ideas

Use mini bagels instead of bread for sandwiches.

Fill a divided container with reduced-fat cheese cubes, whole grain crackers and fruit such as grapes or apple slices.

Muffins filled with vegetables add a unique flair to lunch.

Freeze individual containers of applesauce for a lunch time apple slushy.

Even an old stand-by like peanut butter and jelly or bologna and cheese can be made more interesting if you cut the bread into shapes with cookie cutters.

Think outside the box for a fun, healthy lunch box.

Dancing Raisins

You will need:
- Tall clear glass
- Raisins
- Club soda that has a lot of bubbles (this won’t work if the club soda is flat)

1. Pour the club soda in the glass  
2. Drop in half of a raisin  
3. Wait at least 20 to 30 seconds and watch what happens to the raisin. (the raisin should rise and fall.)

The reason why the raisin floats to the top is because the bubbles stick to the sides of the raisin and make the raisin more buoyant. Buoyant means that something floats more easily. The bubbles make the raisin flat the way a life jacket makes a person float.

Now start to experiment. Will it act the same with a whole raisin? What about something like popcorn? Or chocolate chips? Experiment and have fun!

http://pbskids.org/zoom/activities/sci/dancingraisins.html

Newsletter prepared by:  
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The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) helps families. **Eat better, Feel better, and Cut food costs.** To find out more about EFNEP contact:

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