

News Release  
Berny Unruh - Phone Number 785-628-9430  
Cottonwood Extension District Agent  
Family and Community Wellness

## National Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Month

June is National Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Month so this is the perfect time to add some color to your meals. Many of the early garden crops are showcased at our local farmer's markets that most likely opened this weekend. More and more choices and varieties will show up as the summer progresses.

It is important to include five to nine fruits and vegetables in your diet every day. For some that is not a difficult task but for many families that is not an easy task due to various reasons. In addition to fresh, fruits and vegetables can be purchased in many ways – canned, frozen and even dried. I have always liked to buy frozen because I can take out the amount that I need and return the bag to the freezer. The very best option is to grow fruits and vegetables yourself. If you have questions about getting your garden growing, don't hesitate to call the Extension Office and we have Master Gardeners who would be happy to give you a call and give you some encouragement.

I often hear that fresh fruits and vegetables are too expensive. When all the options are compared, they usually cost the least when they are purchased in their fresh form. Prices can vary a lot depending on many factors such as the season, the store and the package size. Sometimes it will seem more expensive to buy a whole melon rather than a cut melon, but your cost per serving will usually end up being lower when you buy the whole melon. Fresh does have more of a risk of spoilage, so be sure to eat it all before it spoils.

If we compare the nutritional value, fruits and vegetables may be the most nutrient dense food of all of the foods in your grocery cart. If we compare a bag of apples to a bag of potato

chips there is absolutely no comparison. I think everyone will agree that even if you have to pay a little more for a bag of apples, it is a win-win when nutrition is compared.

From avocados and apples to zucchini and watermelon there are so many fruits and vegetables to choose from. My favorite activity when I visit schools or a summer program is to write the ABC's on a poster and have the students try to find a fruit or vegetable for every letter of the alphabet. We often have some very creative answers including quiche made with vegetables. Whether you have them as a snack, on a salad or in a smoothie, they will provide your body with the necessary vitamins and fiber. Make it a goal for your family to get at least five fruits and vegetables every day this next week.

-30-

*Berny Unruh is the Family and Community Wellness Agent for the Cottonwood Extension District. She can be reached at 785-628-9430 or at [bunruh@ksu.edu](mailto:bunruh@ksu.edu)*  
K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.