

JUNE 2020

COMMUNITY NUTRITION CONNECTIONS

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT HEALTH BRANCH MANITOBA REGION'S NUTRITIONISTS



Alfred's garden, a community success story.



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Brought to you by the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch Manitoba Region's Nutritionists



Welcome to the first edition of our Manitoba Region Nutrition Newsletter. This quarterly newsletter will provide community workers with nutrition information, ideas on how to teach nutrition in communities, healthy and tasty recipes and most importantly, community success stories. If you have a community success story that you would like to share in this newsletter, please email it to Brigitte Pereira at: brigitte.pereira@canada.ca.

We wish you a healthy and safe summer!

Sincerely,

The FNIHB Manitoba Region Nutritionists: Jessica Almeida, Lora Montebruno-Myco, Natalie Wowk-Slukynsky and Brigitte Pereira



Jessica Almeida



Lora Montebruno-Myco



Natalie Wowk-Slukynsky



Brigitte Pereira



Community Success Story

PINAYMOOTANG'S COMMUNITY GARDENS

Alfred Pruden has been working as Pinaymootang's ADI worker for the past 15 years. He has also been gardening since then, with much success! However, due to COVID-19 everything is different this year, including how Alfred runs his ADI program and specifically his community gardening project.

To encourage community members to continue to garden, but while still respecting the socially distancing guidelines, Alfred put together 80 gardening packages for community members. His gardening packages included seeds, labels and instructions on how to plant the seeds. He then left them at the front of the health centre (behind a plexiglass) and called community members encouraging them to pick up a package.

Alfred is expecting to see approximately 100 community gardens in Pinaymootang this year. Many community members will use the gardening packages that Alfred put together, but there are also community members who no longer need his support, which is great news to Alfred. Some community members are buying their own tillers and other gardening tools, allowing them to have bigger and nicer gardens.

Alfred also promotes traditional medicines such as chaga and muskeg tea. He teaches community members how, where and when to pick the medicines, as well as how to prepare the medicines for use, all while socially distancing!



Alfred Pruden Pinaymootang's ADI Worker



Alfred's garden in past years.

Be active as a family this summer!



- As a family agree to be active together.
- Come up with a list of activities that you would like to do.
- Have everyone, kids too, provide their suggestions for activities.
- Plan to do one activity on that list as a family every week.
- If you cannot do one activity weekly, start by doing one activity each month.

Tips to start a community garden

- Talk to and learn from Elders about gardening.
- Find people who are interested in learning to grow gardens.
- Host a community gardening workshop using local resources to share knowledge about gardening.
- Each gardener can teach another person about gardening.
- Get support from Chief and Council.
- Involve youth in your gardening project.
- Ask your local store to sell gardening supplies.

The Basic Garden Manual for Northern Manitoba provides detailed information on when, where and how to garden in Manitoba. For a copy of this manual, visit: [The Basic Gardening Manual for Northern Manitoba](#).



Do you need support with starting a food security project in your community?

Karen Flett is Manitoba's First Nation Food Security Coordinator. She works for Four Arrows Regional Health Authority's Kimeechiminan (Our Food) Program, and provides support and advice to all Manitoba First Nations communities and tribal councils. Karen can provide training and share knowledge around starting or maintaining community gardens and raising chickens.

You can contact Karen by calling: (431) 338-3045 or emailing her at: kflett@fourarrowsrha.org.



Nutrition for our immune system

Good nutrition plays an important role in supporting our immune system. Although it is too soon to link COVID-19 with specific foods or nutrients, we do know that vegetables and fruit provide nutrients like beta-carotene, vitamin C, and vitamin E. These nutrients can boost our immune function and support the body's natural immune response.

Canada's Food Guide recommends filling half your plate with vegetables and fruit, but this can be challenging for families due to high costs, lack of availability of fresh produce, and food aversions.

Summer is a perfect time to commit to eating more vegetables and fruit. Not only are seasonal vegetables and fruit more flavourful, they tend to cost less and are easier to find in local stores.



Remember that fruits and vegetables lose vitamin C when heated or stored for long periods of time. To get the most nutrients, eat them as soon as possible after shopping and consider steaming or microwaving vegetables for short periods of time to limit nutrient loss.

FACTS ABOUT VITAMIN C

Vitamin C, or ascorbic acid, is a water-soluble vitamin found naturally in vegetables and fruit. Our bodies do not naturally produce or store vitamin C for later use. This makes it important to include foods rich in vitamin C every day to stay healthy. According to a 2010 study, Manitoba First Nations men and smokers of both sexes have low intakes of vitamin C.

Why is vitamin C needed?

- Vitamin C is important for the growth and repair of tissues in all parts of the body.
- It is also important for the healing of wounds and cuts, and protects you from bruising.
- It keeps your gums healthy.
- It helps in the absorption of iron from plant foods.
- It acts as an antioxidant, which can protect you from developing cancer, heart disease and arthritis.



Did you know that strawberries...

- Grow in Manitoba and are the first fruit to ripen each summer.
- Come from perennial plants, which means they grow back year after year .
- Are an excellent source of vitamin C and a good source of fibre, folate, potassium, and many other vitamins and minerals.
- Are very rich in antioxidants, which may benefit the heart.
- Can be stored in the refrigerator for 1-2 days. Strawberries should only be hulled and rinsed under water when you are ready to eat them. Rinsing them ahead of times speeds up spoiling.
- Can be frozen by placing them in a single layer on a baking sheet, freezing them until firm and transferring them to a sealed bag.

Pick your own strawberries! Strawberry picking is a fun and educational activity for the whole family, and eating Manitoba strawberries straight from the farm helps support local farmers. To find a farm near your house visit: [Prairie Fruit Growers Association](#).

Recipe Corner

STRAWBERRY SUMMER SALAD

INGREDIENTS:

8 cups of lettuce, washed
½ red onion, thinly sliced
2 cups strawberries, washed and sliced
1/3 cup pecan pieces (or walnut pieces)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Place the lettuce, onion, strawberries and pecans in a large bowl.
2. For the salad dressing, mix the vinegar, mustard, syrup, salt and pepper in a small bowl.
3. Gradually whisk in the oil, until creamy. Pour over the salad and serve.

You can make this recipe your own by choosing different types of nuts, vinegar, onion or salad leaf.

STRAWBERRY BANANA SMOOTHIE

DIRECTIONS:

Place 2 cups of fresh or frozen strawberries, 1 cup of milk, 1 banana and 1 cup of ice in a blender and pulse until smooth. Serve immediately. Make this recipe your own by choosing different fruit.



Educational Activities

Are you looking for ways to teach nutrition in your community? Try these activities!

Test your vitamin C knowledge! Match the two columns (answers are at the bottom of the page).

1	Vitamin C is an antioxidant	A	must come from the foods you eat everyday.
2	Vitamin C is an essential nutrient. An essential nutrient	B	because the absorption of iron from plant foods (such as grains and vegetables) is helped by vitamin C.
3	Another name for vitamin C is	C	is a nutrient that your body needs, but cannot make.
4	It is a good idea to combine vitamin C-rich foods with iron-rich plant foods in the same meal. For example, combining black beans and salsa or spinach salad with strawberries	D	helps you lessen vitamin C losses when cooking.
5	Steaming or microwaving vegetables for a short time	E	fighting harmful substances in the body, which may help prevent or delay certain cancers and heart disease, and promote healthy aging.
6	Vitamin C cannot be stored in your body for later use and	F	ascorbic acid.

DID YOU GET YOUR VITAMIN C TODAY?

Ask participants to consider their own eating habits by writing down what they ate yesterday for breakfast, lunch, supper and snacks.

Ask them to identify how many foods they had that contained vitamin C.

Discuss the importance of vitamin C and give them ideas on how they can choose foods to meet their daily needs.

For more educational nutrition resources to help you teach nutrition in your community, visit the Manitoba First Nations Diabetes Leadership Council website at: www.mfndlc.ca.

GRANT OPPORTUNITY

The Government of Canada has a Local Food and Infrastructure Fund available to support people experiencing food insecurity in Canada because of COVID-19. The following link provides details on how to apply for this funding. [Local Food and Infrastructure Fund](#).

