

# NUTRITION FIRST NEWS



February, 2021

## Random Acts of Kindness

Doing small acts of kindness not only makes a big impact, but it also one of the best and simplest activities you can do with children. It teaches them about compassion and service and shows them how good it feels to be giving and kind. Whether you are donating to people in need or just making a friend smile, these gestures, no matter how big or how small, add up to make a difference. National Random Acts of Kindness Day is on February 17<sup>th</sup>; make February a special month for those around you by attempting to brighten someone else's day for no reason at all.

- Feed the birds.
- Offer to babysit for free.
- Donate books to a library.
- Wave at people passing by.
- Make someone else's bed.
- Call a friend just to say hello.
- Donate food to a food pantry.
- Give someone a compliment.
- Water your neighbor's flowers.
- Check in on an elderly neighbor.
- Rake or mow a neighbor's yard.
- Offer to walk the neighbor's dog.
- Smile at everybody. It's contagious.
- Let someone go ahead of you in line.
- Leave someone an encouraging note.
- Pick up litter on a walk or at the park.
- Reach out to someone new in school.
- Buy a coffee for the person behind you.
- Leave heads-up pennies on the sidewalk.
- Tell someone why they are special to you.



- Add quarters to someone's parking meter.
- Set the table for dinner or offer to clean up.
- Offer your seat to someone on a bus or train.
- Donate outgrown clothes to someone in need.
- Bring your neighbor's garbage cans in for them.
- Clean up your toys or room without being asked.
- Return someone else's cart at the grocery store.
- Take care of someone's pet while they are away.
- Make a get well or thinking of you card for someone.
- Send a thank you note to someone who has been kind to you

***Think of this list as a reminder that small acts of kindness matter. Being kind will make the world a better place.***



### Banana Boats

- 1 small-unpeeled banana
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup canned fruit salad in juice

With a sharp knife, cut across the end of the banana close to the tip. Peel this section back toward the stem. Scoop out about half of the banana and fill the cavity with fruit salad. (Serves one)



# Recent Facebook Posts

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*We understand that some of you don't follow Nutrition First on Facebook, and that's okay. But we want to make sure everyone has the latest information, so here are two of our posts from January 2021.*

Find us at [www.facebook.com/NutritionFirstOregon](http://www.facebook.com/NutritionFirstOregon)

**Whole Grains:** Whole grain breads, in particular, are hard to determine if they actually qualify as whole grain, even if they say whole grain on the label (per USDA definition). Grain and Seed breads are generally NEVER considered whole grains, as seeds are not whole grain, according to USDA. Here is the easiest way to figure it out – look at the ingredient list – is the first ingredient whole grain? (Whole wheat flour, whole durum flour, whole corn, whole rye flour, etc.) Next, does the bread have another grain ingredient? If not, you can stop here, as the bread is considered whole grain rich. If there is a second grain, and it is whole grain, enriched, bran, or germ, continue to the third grain ingredient. If there is no third grain ingredient, you can again stop here, as the bread is considered whole grain rich. If there is a third grain ingredient, it must be labeled whole grain, enriched, bran or germ. Clear as mud? Please, always feel free to call any of us here at the office.

**Mailed Menus:** About five years ago, we started telling all of you that you were welcome to email your menus to us. Flash forward to now, and we are overwhelmed by all the emailed menus. We have 450 plus providers but the same number of staff. We have one large printer only, so with five of us receiving menus, we are all waiting on each other to finish printing menus. In January, it took us two full days to print off all the menus, not to mention all the reams of paper and cartridges of ink.

We have always been pleased that we have consistently, month after month and year after year, been the first food program in Oregon to finish processing menus and get our reports in on time – although then we wait for Oregon Department of Education to finish on their end, as do the other programs.

We want to continue to process menus quickly and always on time. To accomplish this though, we have to ask you to go back to mailing your menus each month (you are still welcome to email your enrollments). Those providers who reside in Salem or close to Salem have access to our building which is well-lit and has mail slots in each door so you can drop off your menus 24/7. The rest of you can generally be sure that we'll receive your menus on time if you drop them in the mail on the first of the month. We will check postmarks.

We understand this will be a change for you, but it's easy enough to do and will help the whole program. Thank you in advance!

**Note:** We do not require original menus – they can be copies. And as you have to keep your menus for tax purposes for three fiscal years plus the current year, you are welcome to scan them to your computer or phone and keep them in a folder. You are not required to keep hard copies.

## *Yummy Potato Sculpture*

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*(Okay to play with your food!)*

- ✓ 8 potatoes
- ✓ 4 Tbsp. butter or margarine
- ✓ 4 Tbsp. milk
- ✓ 1 tsp. salt
- ✓ 2 egg whites, lightly beaten

Peel, boil and cool potatoes. Add milk, salt and butter and mash until smooth. Put mashed potatoes on a buttered cookie sheet and let the children use spoons, forks and craft sticks to form the potatoes into shapes. Use a pastry brush to coat sculptures with egg whites. Bake at 350 degrees until shiny and lightly browned



## Pumpkin Cranberry Nut Bread

- ✓ 1 2/3 cup enriched flour (use half whole wheat, if desired)
- ✓ 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- ✓ 1 tsp. baking soda
- ✓ 1/2 tsp. salt
- ✓ 1 tsp. Pumpkin pie spice or cinnamon
- ✓ 1/2 cup butter, room temperature
- ✓ 1 cup sugar
- ✓ 2 eggs
- ✓ 1 cup pumpkin puree, canned
- ✓ 1 tsp. vanilla
- ✓ 1/4 cup orange juice
- ✓ 1 Tbsp. orange zest
- ✓ 1 cup cranberries, fresh or frozen
- ✓ 1 cup pecans or walnuts, chopped

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a 9x5 inch loaf pan with non-stick cooking spray. In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and pumpkin pie spice or cinnamon.

In another large bowl, using an electric mixer beat the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time beating well after each addition. Add in the pumpkin, vanilla, orange juice and zest, mixing well. With the mixer on low, add the dry ingredients and mix just until incorporated. Coarsely chop the cranberries and fold in along with the nuts. Pour into the prepared pan and bake for 60-65 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

(Serves 12)



## Crispy Orange Tofu & Broccoli

- ✓ 1 pound tofu, extra firm
- ✓ 4 Tbsp. cornstarch
- ✓ 4 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- ✓ 2 cups broccoli florets
- ✓ 2 cups cooked brown rice
- ✓ 1 1/2 Tbsp. toasted sesame seeds.
- ✓ **Orange Sauce**
- ✓ 1 1/2 cups orange juice
- ✓ 2 Tbsp. fresh peeled minced ginger
- ✓ 4 cloves minced garlic
- ✓ 1 Tbsp. orange zest
- ✓ 1/4 cup soy sauce or tamari
- ✓ 1/4 cup rice vinegar
- ✓ 1/4 cup brown sugar
- ✓ 1 Tbsp. cornstarch

Press and drain tofu for at least 20 minutes. Cut tofu into 1 inch cubes and toss in cornstarch until well coated. Heat oil and sauté tofu cubes on medium high heat for 2-3 minutes on all sides until lightly brown and crispy. Don't crowd pan; sauté in at least two batches. Remove tofu to paper towels. Sauté broccoli in same pan until slightly tender. Remove broccoli and pour out any extra oil from pan. Mix together sauce ingredients in a bowl. Using the same pan, add sauce and cook until slightly thickened. Add tofu and broccoli, tossing until well coated. Serve with rice, topped with sesame seeds. (Meets requirements for vegetable, whole grain-rich and meat/meat alternate.)

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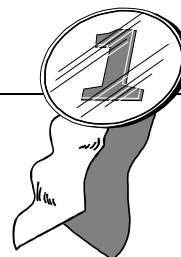
Nutrition First USDA Child Care  
Food Program is a program of the  
Mid-Willamette Valley  
Community Action Agency



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## MENU WINNERS

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- *The menu winner for Dec is **Elizabeth Parks of Albany***
- *The menu winners for Jan are: **Sierra Valencia of Beaverton & Rachel Stuckart of Keizer***
- *Keep those menus coming in on time – you might be next!*
- *Remember – to enter, menus need to be in an envelope with your name and address on the outside.*

*Thanks and Good Luck!!*

**"Good nutrition is the right of all children."**

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