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Pack a Sack (Lunch)

Michigan State University

Cooperative Extension Service

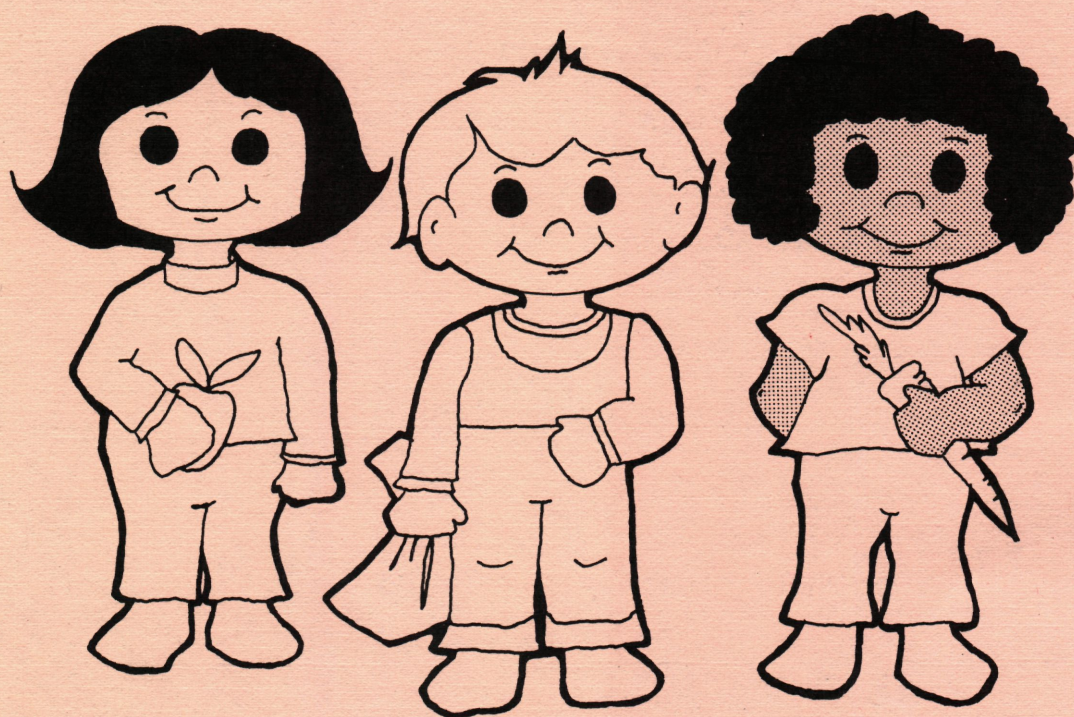
Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

August 1985

12 pages

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PACK·A·SACK

(LUNCH)

Extension Bulletin E-1907
Cooperative Extension Service
Michigan State University
August 1985 (New)

Are you concerned or confused about what to put into a sack lunch? Here are some hints to assist you in packing a lunch that is nutritious and delicious for your child.

AWARENESS OF NUTRITION

How big we finally grow up to be depends on:

1. heredity (genes passed to us by parents)
2. environment (how we are brought up)
3. food (we need 40 or more nutrients daily)

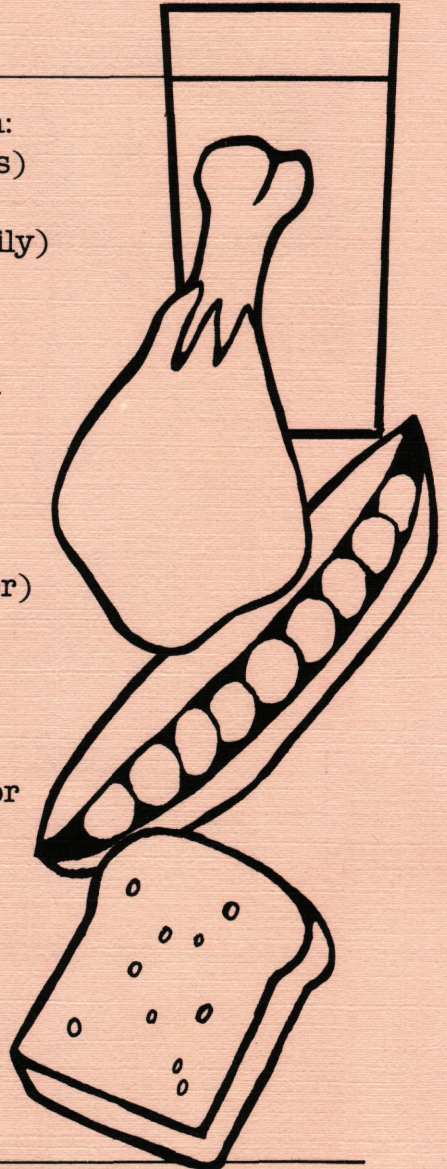
A satisfactory lunch should provide at least 1/3 of the day's nutrient needs. For the child 3-6 years of age, the following pattern will meet those needs.

1 Milk (often provided by the care giver)
o 3/4 cup

2 Meat or alternate (see
"Fillings" for ideas)
o 1-1/2 ounces

3 Vegetables and fruits (one fruit or
vegetable should be dark green
o or yellow*) 1/2 cup

4 Bread, whole wheat or enriched
o 1/2-1 slice



* A fruit or vegetable high in Vitamin C should be served daily.

LITTLE ONES

Certain foods are too hard for little children (three and under) to chew and others can be dangerous, especially in a group setting.

Foods that are small and round (peanuts, cherry tomatoes, peas, fruit pits, and raisins), or chunky and crunchy (carrots, celery, turnips, cauliflower and other hard raw vegetables) should be avoided, unless cooked until just tender. These then can be used as safe finger foods. Of course this depends on the size of the group and each individual child.

SURPRISES

On special occasions, include a favorite treat (does not have to be food) in the packed lunch. A message like "you are great," a short poem, a funny drawing, or a portrait on an open face sandwich. For the face, use peanut butter or cream cheese, carrot curls or parsley for hair, green pepper, apple, nuts and raisins for eyes and nose. Make a celery wagon with carrot slices and toothpicks for wheels. Put the message inside the wagon.

With all these new ideas, you cannot miss at making popular brown bag lunches. Be creative and use your imagination! Remember to let the children help! In fact, start by letting them color the pictures in this booklet.

POINTERS FOR PACKERS

USE something crisp, something chewy, something with color.

WRAP each food separately — use plastic bags, waxed paper, aluminum foil. Save food containers, plastic bags, etc. and re-use.

PACK soft foods on top.

USE insulated bags and vacuum bottles to keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot.

REMEMBER—plastic spoons, paper napkins, paper cups.

BREADS

Rye	English Muffins	Wheat Bread, enriched
Whole Wheat	Sprouted Wheat	French Rolls, or bread
Cornbread	Leftover Biscuits	Indian "fry" bread
Raisin	Pumpernickel	Tortillas—corn or wheat
Bagels	Spoonbread	Molasses, oatmeal or other
Sopapillas	Syrian "Pocket"	homemade quick breads*

FILLINGS

Cheeses	Cheddar	Munster	Provolone	Cottage
	Swiss	Colby	Jack	Mozarella

Meats and Alternates

Braunschweiger	Leftover ground roast beef, meat loaf
Salmon	Scrambled Egg
Egg Salad	Tuna Salad
Turkey	Peanut Butter and Raisins
Chicken	Peanut Butter, raisins, grated carrots
Beans	

SPREADS

Mayonnaise can grow harmful bacteria if not refrigerated.
For a sandwich spread use:

Margarine
Mustard
Avocado
Cream Cheese (can also grow bacteria, only not as fast)
Catsup
Relish

WAYS TO INTRODUCE A VARIETY OF NEW FOODS

- Offer only one new food at a time. (Maybe only as often as once every couple of weeks.)
- When you offer a new food offer it with familiar foods.
- If you offer a new food and the child won't eat it stay calm - don't coax or force.
- If the food is rejected wait a few weeks before trying it again; perhaps the child didn't want it for reasons that had nothing to do with the food such as:

his(her) mood

other foods served

period of slow growth

or perhaps it was the way it was cooked!

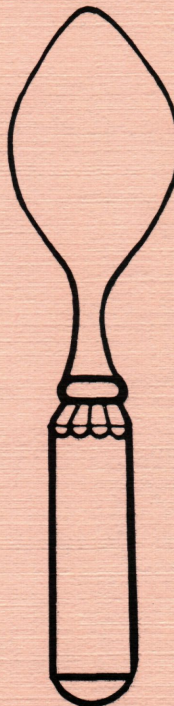
REMEMBER

- Likes and dislikes of small children can change suddenly - so don't fuss over them.
- Small children have small appetites and often can't eat as much as we think they should.



- Child-size eating utensils and plates, finger foods and plain, easily recognized foods all help the child in wanting to eat.

- Let your children see you eating **and** enjoying a new food - let them know that you hope they'll like it too.



RECIPES

Cheesy Dapper Apple Squares (12 - 15 servings)

- 1-1/2 cups flour
- 1-1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon soda
- 3/4 cup butter, softened

Combine

Reserve 1/2 cup crumbs
Pat remaining crumbs to
ungreased 13" x 9" pan

6 oz. (6 slices or 1-1/2 cups
shredded) American or
Cheddar Cheese (or enough
to generously cover the
crumb crust.)

Place over crumbs

- 2-1/2 cups (3 medium) peeled,
sliced cooking apples
- 3/4 cup sugar (I used less and
tossed in 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
powder)

Sprinkle over apples

Combine

Sprinkle over cheese

Reserved crumbs
1/2 cup chopped nuts (or
enough to top)

Bake at 350° for 35 - 40 minutes until deep golden brown. Serve warm.
Store in refrigerator



SANDWICH IDEAS INCORPORATED

Ham and Cheese - Spread bread with mustard. Cover with sliced ham or ham spread, sliced cheese and crisp lettuce leaves (greens can be packed separately so they do not get soggy).

Egg and Green Pepper — Combine 1 chopped, hard-cooked egg; 1 tablespoon green pepper, chopped; 2 tablespoons sour cream; salt to taste.

Swiss Cheese, alfalfa sprouts

Tuna Salad on roll

Turkey Salad sandwich

Baked Bean and raw vegetable sandwich

Chopped Egg sandwich

Swiss Cheese with lettuce on Roman Meal Bun

Beans (with cheese in a flour tortilla)



FINGER FOOD SALADS - VEGETABLES

Cherry Tomatoes (good source of Vitamin C)

*Carrot curls or sticks (Vitamin A)

*Celery curls or sticks

*Celery filled with peanut butter or cheese

*Turnip rounds

Zucchini circles

Raw potato sticks or chips (good source of Vitamin C)

Cauliflowerettes

Bell pepper strips (good source of Vitamin C)

Leaves of lettuce, spinach, or other greens

Asparagus spears

Vegetable kabobs

Alfalfa seed sprouts

Cabbage leaves (Vitamin C)

Radish slices

Cucumber rings

* May be inappropriate for the child under three.

DESSERTS

Make a fruit cup of any of the following fruits or serve plain.

Pears	Nectarine
Bananas	Cherries
Grapes	Peaches
Pineapple	Apricots
Apples	Plums

Berries
Orange, grapefruit, or
tangerine wedges (good
sources of Vitamin C)
Various Melons

Tasty and easy homemade
cookies and cakes.

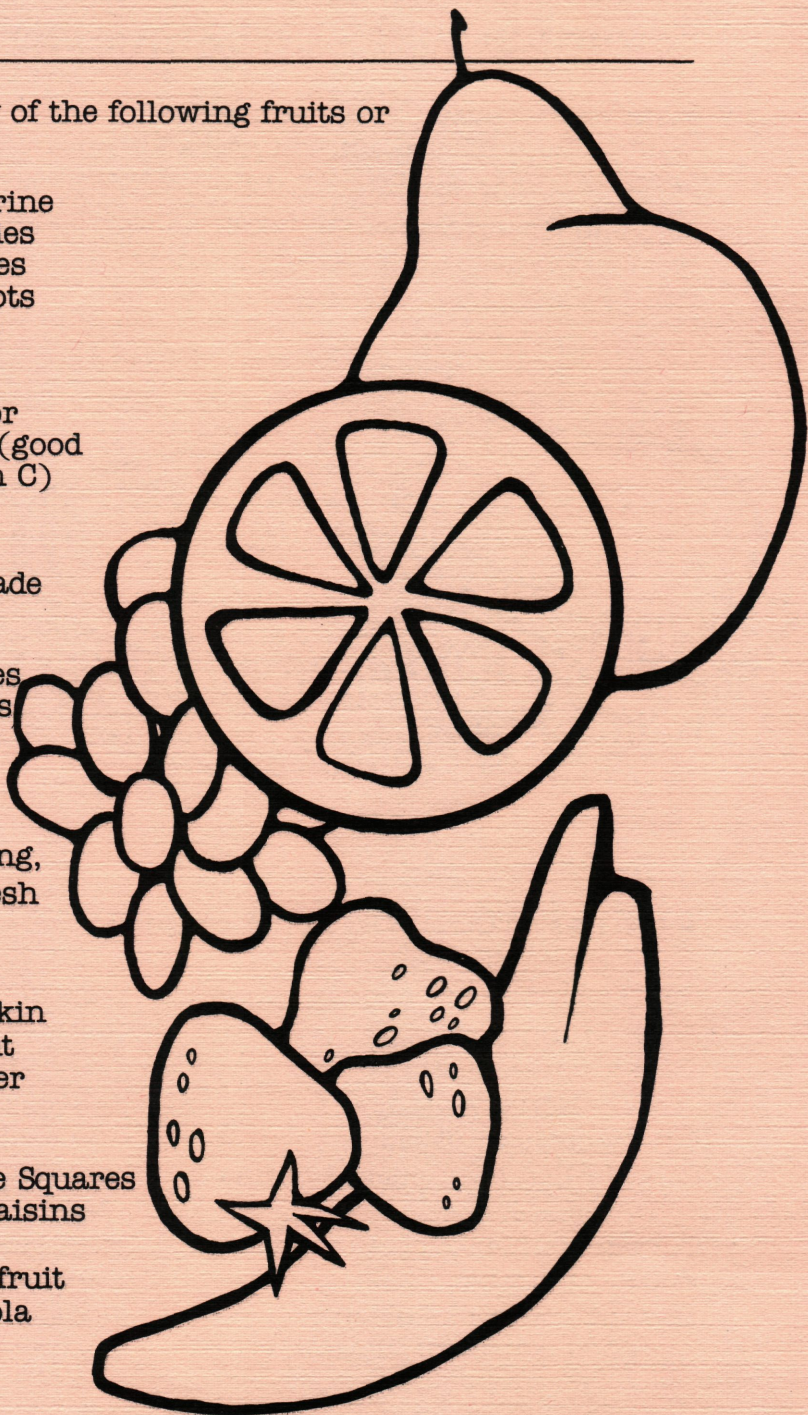
Peanut Butter cookies
Sesame Crisp cookies
Oatmeal Raisin Bars
Sunflower seed

Cake (Do not use frosting,
try using canned or fresh
fruit toppings).

Applesauce	Prune
Banana	Pumpkin
Oatmeal	Peanut Butter

Other Desserts

Cheesy Dapper Apple Squares
Rice Pudding with Raisins
Fruit Crisp
Cottage cheese with fruit
Easy Crunchy Granola



RECIPES

Seasame Seed Squares (20 small servings)

- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 1 cup powdered milk
- 1/2 cup shredded coconut
(unsweetened)
- 1 cup sesame seeds
- Sauce pan
- 8" x 8" square pan

Heat honey and peanut butter. Add powdered milk, coconut, sesame seed. Mix and pat into a square pan. Refrigerate to set. Cut into cubes.

Peanut Butter Bread

- 2 cups flour, whole wheat
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup peanut butter
- 1 cup milk
- 1 egg, well beaten

Sift dry ingredients into bowl. Add peanut butter, blending with fork. Stir in milk and egg. Pour into greased loaf pan 9" x 5". Bake at 350° for about 50 minutes.

RECIPES

Pumpkin Bread

3/4 cup honey	2-1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/3 cup corn oil	1-1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
2 eggs	1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1 cup canned pumpkin	1/4 teaspoon cloves
1-1/2 cups whole wheat flour	1/2 cup shelled pumpkin seeds
3/4 teaspoon salt	

Mix together honey and oil in bowl. Add eggs and beat well with egg beater. Add pumpkin and stir well. Sift dry ingredients together and add to pumpkin mixture, mixing well. Stir in pumpkin seeds. Pour into greased 5" x 9" loaf pan. Bake 1 hour at 325° or until cake tester comes out clean. Remove from oven. Turn out on wire rack and allow to cool before slicing.

Fruit Salad (1/2 cup servings) (13-16 servings)

2 cups sliced peaches (canned or fresh when in season)	1/2 cup flaked coconut
1 cup diced apples	1 cup seedless grapes (optional)
2 cups orange sections, cubed	1 banana, sliced

Drain peaches. Cut apples into small bite size pieces (do not peel unless child is under 2). Peel and section oranges than cut into small bite size pieces. Slice the banana. Add grapes if in season. Mix all fruits together then lightly mix in the coconut.

Make this for dessert or dinner and serve leftovers next day for lunch. Any number of fruits can be used in combination. In summer make a melon ball fruit salad for a cool nutritious dessert.

RECIPES

Melon Ball Salad Serving size depends upon size of melons.

1/2 Watermelon	1/2 Cantaloupe
1/2 Honeydew melon	2 Bananas
1 cup seedless grapes	

Sunflower Seed Cookies* (8 dozen cookies)

1 cup margarine	2 eggs
3/4 cup firmly packed brown sugar	1 teaspoon vanilla
1-1/2 cups flour	3 cups rolled oats
3/4 teaspoon salt	1 cup sunflower seeds
1 teaspoon soda	

Cream margarine and sugar. Add eggs and vanilla. Beat well. Add flour, salt, soda, and rolled oats. Mix thoroughly. Blend in sunflower seeds. Form into rolls about 2 inches in diameter wrapping with plastic wrap or wax paper. Chill thoroughly. Slice off cookies and bake on ungreased cookie sheet at 350° for 10 minutes. Makes 8 dozen cookies.

* Make a double batch and freeze half the dough in rolls and save for later. Just slice and bake.

Cheese Puff Cookies (12 - 15 cookies high in protein and calcium)

1 heaping cup of grated cheese (Cheddar or Swiss)	1/2 cup flour water	2 tablespoons of but- ter or margarine
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With your fingertips, mix lightly the cheese, flour, butter, and enough water to make a stiff dough. Roll dough into small 3/4 inch balls. Place on a greased cookie sheet and bake at 400 degrees until lightly browned, about 10 to 15 minutes.

1/4 cup finely chopped bell pepper can be added for flavor, crunch and Vitamin C.

RECIPES

Peanut Butter Log One 10-inch log, one dozen

- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 2 1/2 - 4 Tbsp. non-fat dry milk
(more as needed)
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1 Tbsp. honey (optional)

Blend peanut butter and honey. Mix in as much powdered milk as you need to make the mixture easy to handle and stiff. Knead in the raisins evenly along the dough as you form it into a one-inch thick, 10-inch log; roll in coconut, chopped nuts, or sesame seeds.

Chill and slice or pull apart when your child asks for it.

You can roll this out and use cookie cutters for different shapes.

Courtesy of Washington State
Department of Social and Health
Services, Olympia, Washington

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Issued in furtherance of cooperative extension work in agriculture and home economics, acts of May 8, and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Gordon E. Guyer, Director, Cooperative Extension Service, Michigan State University, E. Lansing, MI 48824.

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