

Choose *MyPlate* as your guide to eating healthy

By: Mary Jo Gerhardt

Food Service Director

MyPlate will replace the *MyPyramid* image as the government's primary food group symbol. *MyPlate* is an easy-to-understand visual cue to making healthier food choices consistent with the *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. With so many food options available, it is often difficult to determine the best foods to put on our plates when building a healthy meal. *MyPlate* is a quick, simple reminder for all of us to be more mindful of the foods we are eating. As long as their plate is half full of fruits and vegetables, and paired with lean proteins, whole grains and lo-fat dairy we're good to go.

Take action on the Dietary Guidelines by making changes in these three areas.

Balance Calories

- Enjoy your food, but eat less.
- Avoid oversized portions.

Foods to Increase

- Make half your plate fruits & vegetables
- Make at least half your grains whole grains
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk

Foods to Reduce

- Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals—choose the foods with the lower numbers
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks

For more information, you can go to www.choosemyplate.gov . There you will find practical information to help build healthier diets starting at the grocery store, preparing meals at home or eating out in a restaurant. Suggestions on how to make positive lifestyle changes are included as well.