



Press Release

For Immediate Release
Tuesday September 29, 2009

Contact: [CDC Division of Media Relations](#)
(404) 639-3286

Majority of Americans not Meeting Recommendations for Fruit and Vegetable Consumption *CDC Issues First State by State Report*

No U.S. state is meeting national objectives for consumption of fruits and vegetables, according to the first report to provide state-by-state data about fruit and vegetable consumption and policies that may help Americans eat more fruits and vegetables.

“State Indicator Report on Fruits and Vegetables, 2009” was released today by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Healthy People 2010 objectives aim for at least 75 percent of Americans to eat the recommended two or more daily servings of fruit, and for at least 50 percent of Americans to eat the recommended three or more servings of vegetables daily. However, CDC surveys indicate that only 33 percent of adults meet the recommendation for fruit consumption and 27 percent get the recommended servings of vegetables. The statistics are even worse for high school students – 32 percent report eating at least two servings of fruit daily and 13 percent say they eat at least three servings of vegetables each day.

“A diet high in fruits and vegetables is important for optimal child growth, maintaining a healthy weight, and prevention of chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and some cancers, all of which currently contribute to health care costs in the United States,” said Dr.

William H. Dietz, director of CDC’s Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity. “This report will help states determine what is taking place in their communities and schools and come up with ways to encourage people to eat more fruits and vegetables.”

The report highlights consumption and three key policy and environmental areas:

Healthier Food Retail: Retailers, such as supermarkets and grocery stores that stock a variety of high-quality fruits and vegetables are a critical asset for the health of residents.



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION**

SAFER • HEALTHIER • PEOPLE™



- Only eight states have a policy for healthier food retail improvements, which can help increase the number of full-service grocery stores in areas where they are unavailable, increase the availability of healthier foods in small food stores, and promote healthier foods through information at the point of purchase.

Availability of Healthier Foods in Schools: Schools are in a unique position to influence and promote fruit and vegetable intake among youth, school staff, parents, and other community members.

- Only 1 in 5 (21 percent) middle and high schools offer fruits and non-fried vegetables in vending machines, school stores or snack bars.
- 21 states have a policy to support farm-to-school programs that can increase access to fruits and vegetables as well as teach school children about nutrition and agriculture.

Food System Support: A systems approach to food considers many factors involved in getting fruits and vegetables from farms to consumers, including the roles of growers, processors and retailers. Food policy councils are organizations made up of many agencies and community organizations that look at access of fresh produce at the community and state levels. These councils make recommendations about policies and programs such as farm-to-school programs, community gardens, farmers markets and availability of fresh produce in supermarkets.

- 20 states have a state-level food policy council, and 59 local food policy councils exist across the nation.

“We have seen the tremendous benefit of state and local officials, health professionals, employers, food store owners, farmers, school staff, and community members working together on food and nutrition issues,” said Heidi Michels Blanck, Ph.D., CDC epidemiologist. “Their efforts can help to increase the availability of affordable healthier food choices such as fruits and vegetables.”

The *State Indicator Report on Fruits and Vegetable, 2009* is available at <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/indicatorreport/>.

CDC is a partner in the national fruit and vegetable program and provides resources for September National Fruits & Veggies – More Matters month at <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov>.

###

[U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](http://www.hhs.gov)



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION**

SAFER • HEALTHIER • PEOPLE™