Nutrition Guidelines for the Caribbean

Esther Selman, MPH, CVFI
Dietitian/Health Educator
Certified Vegetarian Food Instructor
Certificate of Training in Adult Weight Management
Antigua & Barbuda

ST JOHN’S, Antigua – Government officials are banking on the information contained in the recently released Food Based Dietary Guidelines to address the high incidences of **non-communicable diseases to include obesity, diabetes and hypertension that affect residents**.

The guidelines, released on Wednesday, are aimed at promoting healthy eating habits and active lifestyles in order to prevent chronic **nutrition-related diseases** among the population.

*The Daily Observer, July 26, 2013*
Food Based Dietary Guidelines for BARBADOS
AMONG the goals of the newly-launched food based dietary guidelines (FBDGs) for Barbados is the reduction of the economic costs to Government because of chronic non-communicable diseases (CNCDs).

Nutrition Officer at the National Nutrition Centre (NNC), Dianne Broome, has also indicated that the guidelines were important to empower individuals, families, and communities to eat better across the island.

The seven guidelines are: 1. enjoy a variety of foods everyday; 2. eat vegetables everyday; 3. eat fruits everyday; 4. use high fibre foods everyday; 5. choose to eat less fat and fatty foods; 6. use less sugar, sugar containing foods, and sweet beverages, and 7. engage in physical activity everyday.

The Barbados Advocate, November 27, 2009
Dietary Guidelines for Dominica

• Start the day with breakfast
• Always try to eat a variety of foods everyday. Use the basket to help you make the choices.
• Eat more vegetables and fruits everyday.
• Reduce fat and oil intake.
• Choose less sweet foods and drinks.
• Use less salt, salted foods, seasonings and salty snacks.
• Make physical activity a part of your daily life.
• Drink water several times a day.
• If you use alcohol do so in moderation.

The Dietary Guidelines are in the shape of a basket.

Food Based Dietary Guidelines for Guyana

- Everyday, eat a mix of foods from the different food groups which are shown in our ‘stew pot’
- Grow, store and prepare foods in a clean and safe way
- Use less salt in your food
- Eat foods that are low in fat
- Use less fats and oils in preparing and cooking food
- Make physical activity and exercise a daily habit
- It is advisable not to drink alcohol, but for those who do, no more than one drink a day is recommended
Grenada

- Eat a variety of foods as shown in the diagram
- Eat larger amounts of fruits and coloured vegetables
- Eat less fatty, oily, greasy, and barbequed foods
- Use less salt, salty foods, salty seasonings and salty snacks
- Choose to use less sweet foods and drinks
- Drink more water. It’s the healthier choice
- Drink little or no alcohol
- Be more physically active. Get moving

- The Dietary Guidelines are in the shape of a nutmeg.
According to Dr. Pauline Samuda, a consultant for the FAO, “The dietary guidelines that were revealed here today are not from the United Kingdom, the U.S., Japan, Canada, or China. Neither are they from our neighbors in the region who have developed their own; they are from St. Kitts and Nevis, and are based on the health situation in the Federation. Importantly, representatives of the population within the Federation have had input in the development of these guidelines,” she said.

The high and growing instances of chronic illnesses within St. Kitts-Nevis, such as diabetes, hypertension, obesity, cancer, and physical inabilities, which have all been linked to dietary practices, were amongst issues that helped to shape the newly-launched guidelines. It is the Ministry’s expressed hope that the correct usage of these standards will see a significant reduction in the occurrences of the noted illnesses in the years to come.

The Guidelines are shaped like a ‘sugar mill’.
Dietary Guidelines of St. Lucia

- Always try to eat vegetables, starches, peas or beans every day.
- Eat more vegetables and fruits every day.
- Buy less fatty and greasy foods and when you cook, use less fats and oils.
- Use less salt, salted foods, packaged seasonings and salty snacks.
- Choose less beverages and packaged foods with added sugar.
- If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation.
- Keep moving - be more active every day.
- Drink water several times a day.

Dietary Guidelines for St. Vincent and the Grenadines

• Eat a variety of foods from the Foods Groups in the breadfruit.
• Eat more fruits and vegetables everyday.
• Reduce fats and oils by cutting back on fatty, oily and greasy foods.
• Reduce the intake of sugar: Use less sugar, sweet foods and drinks.
• When cooking, use less salt and salted seasonings. Eat less salted foods and snacks.
• Water is essential. Drink it several times a day.
• If you use alcohol do so sparingly both in drinking and in food preparation.
• Get moving! Increase physical activity daily.
• “St. Vincent and the Grenadines approved their FBDG in 2006.” FAO, 2009
• The Dietary Guidelines are in the shape of the BREADFRUIT.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Groups</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Sub-Groups</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Daily Servings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staples</td>
<td>To provide energy, fibre &amp; micronutrients</td>
<td>Root crops &amp; Tubers (ground provision), Starchy Fruits &amp; Grains/Cereals</td>
<td>Sweet Potatoes, Dasheen, Breadfruit, Plantains, Corn, Wheat flour, crackers</td>
<td>6-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legumes &amp; Nuts*</td>
<td>To provide protein, fibre &amp; micronutrients</td>
<td>Beans, Peas/pulses, Tree Nuts &amp; Peanuts</td>
<td>Red Beans, Pigeon Peas, Lentils, Cashews, Peanuts</td>
<td>2-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foods from animals</td>
<td>To provide protein &amp; micronutrients</td>
<td>Dairy, Poultry, Red Meats, Offal, Game Meats &amp; Seafood/Shellfish</td>
<td>Milk, Eggs, Chicken, Beef, Liver, Deer, Shark, Shrimp</td>
<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits</td>
<td>To provide energy, satisfy sugar cravings, fibre, micro-nutrients &amp; phytochemicals</td>
<td>Tropical fruits &amp; Imported fruits</td>
<td>Pomerac (Rose Apple), Mango, Apple, Pear</td>
<td>2-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>To provide fibre, micronutrients &amp; phytochemicals</td>
<td>Dark green, leafy, yellow &amp; fruit vegetables</td>
<td>Patchoi (Bok Choy), Bhagi, Watercress, Carrots, Pumpkin</td>
<td>3-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fats, Oils &amp; Substitutes</td>
<td>To provide energy, fat, micro-nutrients &amp; flavour</td>
<td>Solid (fats), Liquid (oils) &amp; fatty fruits</td>
<td>Butter, Ghee, Lard, Coconut, Avocado</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Caribbean Food Groups: A Guide to Meal Planning for Healthy Eating
“Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord.”

Isaiah 1:18