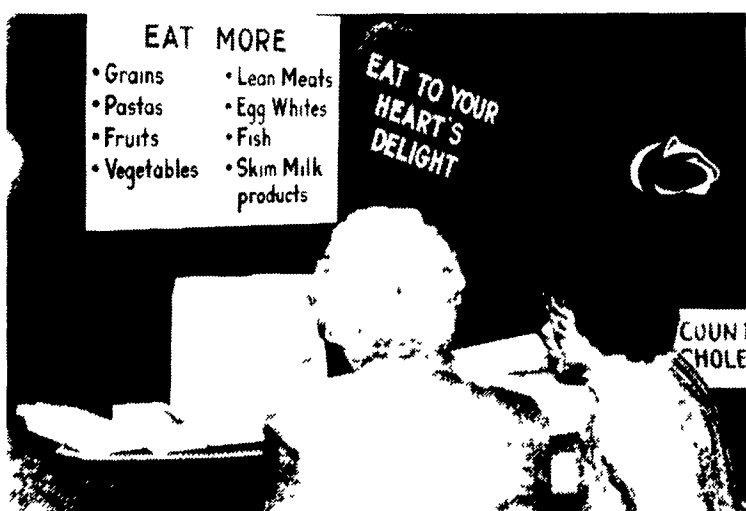


Farm Show visitors test stress, diet, on computers



Paula Mayewski, Lancaster County home economist, chats with Larry Ricker, Sussex, N.J., as he took time out from his Farm Show visit to have his stress factor determined by a computer program.



Learning about cholesterol in your diet was easy at the Farm Show through a computer program by PSU. Here, Montgomery County home economist Costelle Nelson works with a visitor who details her weekly eating habits to be analyzed by the computer.

Turkey: a nutritious product for all year

ITHACA, NY — Although many people may not want to think about turkey so soon after the holidays, it may be a good time to give the juicy bird a second thought for the new year.

More than 40 percent of Americans consider turkey to be a special occasion dish only. Yet when compared with other poultry and meat, turkey comes out on top when it comes to nutrition, economy, and convenience, according to a recent Cornell University study.

"Many cooks still think that to have turkey on the table one must go through a lot of hassle and end up with a lot of leftovers," says Charlotte Bruce, a research support specialist in the Department of Poultry and Avian Sciences in the New York State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell. Bruce and Robert C. Baker, a professor and chairman of the department, conducted the study to examine consumer attitudes toward turkey and its products.

"Just as no one worries about cooking an entire cow, you shouldn't think that to eat turkey you have to cook the entire bird," Bruce points out.

In fact, turkey meat comes in as many formats as chicken, if not more. Readily available turkey parts and products include breasts, half breasts, breast portions, breast slices, breast tenderloins, drumsticks, wings, wing portions, drumettes, ground turkey, hot dogs, ham, sausage, salami, and even pastrami.

Not only are many turkey products, such as ground turkey, turkey hot dogs, and smoked

turkey sausage, significantly less expensive than beef products, but they also have a nutritional edge over their beef and pork counterparts.

When 3½ ounces of skinless light turkey meat are compared to chicken, beef rib roast, lean pork loin, and lean ground beef, turkey has the highest percentage of protein with the lowest percentage of fat. Turkey also is lowest in both calories and cholesterol and has one of the lowest percentages of saturated fat.

Two ounces of turkey ham contain about 2.5 grams of fat, for example, while pork ham has more than twice that amount. Furthermore, turkey ham has 45 percent fewer calories, much less cholesterol, and costs about 25 percent less.

Likewise, turkey hot dogs have 35 percent less fat and 25 percent fewer calories than beef hot dogs, yet cost about 40 percent less.

"Turkey is not only high in protein and low in calories, fat, and cholesterol, but also it has more B vitamins, niacin, and riboflavin than any other meat," Baker says.

Despite these advantages, Americans ate only about 11 pounds of turkey in 1984, compared with 73 pounds of beef, 54 pounds of chicken, and 53 pounds of pork.

About 10 percent of consumers view turkey as a once- or twice-a-year whole roasted bird, Baker and Bruce report. About 60 percent said they never order it in restaurants, and many consumers are still unaware of many kinds of turkey products.

The Cornell study showed that most consumers surveyed had a preference for beef hot dogs over

turkey dogs. But, in a blind taste test conducted at Cornell, one brand of turkey hot dogs consistently rated the highest with three different groups of tasters, says Baker. He declined to specify the brand name.

"Many people don't realize it, but turkey can be substituted as a delicious, nutritious alternative for many other meats," Bruce points out.

Turkey ham, for example, tastes almost the same as traditional ham. Ground turkey can almost always be substituted for ground beef, and turkey pastrami and turkey salami make nutritional sense because they are so low in fat.

Bruce points out that some of these turkey products taste very similar to their beef and pork counterparts, while other processed turkey products such as pastrami and salami have their own distinctive characteristics.

Turkey parts often can be used in place of chicken. Barbequed, baked, and broiled turkey may be a refreshing change from chicken, and turkey breast fillets can be substituted for veal in many recipes.

"With its low cholesterol, low fat, and high protein, turkey is a wise meat alternative," stresses Baker. "Consumers should remember that the roasted turkey they eat once or twice a year is merely a sum of its parts — those parts are just as tasty as the big bird, yet are much easier to prepare."

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