

Cooking In the '90s

ADC Spouse Program Includes Easy Label-Reading Method And Cake Decorating



Julie Mayer, center, examines food labels with women in her group to determine if the item is a healthy choice.

LOU ANN GOOD
Lancaster Farming Staff
LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)
— Confused about the new food labels?

Perhaps you can read the labels but you're unsure of the guidelines for determining if a high nutrient food is worth the calories.

Now the National Dairy Council has an easy method to help consumers evaluate food labels.

During Atlantic Dairy Cooperative's annual meeting, Pat Kennedy, nutritionist with Dairy Council Inc., taught a session on Label-Ease.

It's a new method of evaluating a food by using your fingers on one hand to count the pros and cons of a product.

Sound confusing?

It isn't if you follow this easy method:

Raise a finger if the food has:

- 10 percent or more vitamin A
- 10 percent or more vitamin C
- 10 percent or more calcium
- 10 percent or more iron
- 10 percent or more protein
- 10 percent or more fiber

Lower a finger if the food has either:

- 10 per cent or more total fat
- 200 calories or more.

If any fingers remain up after this little test, the food is nutritious.

Perhaps that sounds a bit confusing at first, but if you try reading some labels from items in your cupboards, you will find it is quite easy.

At least that is what participants at the session found when they

divided into groups to read labels.

"It's fast and simple. You become a smarter shopper when you use this method," Kennedy said.

When shopping, she advises being discreet about finger counting. You can hold your hand inside your pocket to count instead of holding up your fingers for other shoppers to see.

When using this method disregard the bottom section of every label as this same information is on every label to list daily recommended amounts.

The middle section of the label is the place to concentrate for the good nutrients. This lists the nutrients for which many people do not consume enough. It is the part where you should start to finger count.

The top part lists the fat content or the negative aspects that result in lowering a finger when using the label-ease method.

Take a soft drink label. It has no fat, and no cholesterol, but neither does it have any food content. For its 168 calories, the beverage is not considered worthy of the calories.

This does not mean that you can never eat a food that isn't nutritious, but it does help determine if it is a good choice.

"There are 14 pieces of information on the new labels. You get a distorted picture if you look at only one part of the label," Kennedy said.

Nutrient dense foods means that a lot of nutrition is provided for the amount of calories. This can be determined by using this method



The ADC spouse committee includes, from left, Arlene Wilbur, Evie Landis, Sue Crow, chairperson; Debi Hackett, Sandy Wilkes, and Joyce Uhland.

of evaluating the food.

Although the new labels are much easier to read than the old ones, a drawback to the new labels is that it does not distinguish between natural and artificial sugar.

With this method, cereal is usually considered a nutritious choice. That is because most cereals are vitamin fortified.

Kennedy pointed out that cereal is not regulated as a food but as a drug because of its fortified vitamins.

Another aspect to consider when reading labels is to ask yourself if the food can be eaten as it is or is other food needed to make it an edible item?

For example, the label listing for a pancake mix must be read with the addition of eggs and milk if used. What use is powdered pancake mix?

Another feature of the women's session was a demonstration on

cake decorating.

Rosie's Creative Cakes

Farm wife Rosie Rohrer of Manheim demonstrated cake decorating during the spouse program at ADC.

Some fundamentals of cake making include the following:

- Always sift confectioners' sugar before using. The number of x's tells the number of times the sugar was presifted. For example 6-X sugar was sifted six times; 10-X sugar was sifted 10 times.
- Use pure cane sugar
- Butter gives a good flavor to frosting, but you cannot have a white frosting from it. The Crisco brand works best for frostings made with shortening.
- Add popcorn salt instead of regular table salt to frosting. Popcorn salt is finer and dissolves easily. Table salt gives icing "a case of the zits" shortly after a cake is frosted.
- Don't overbeat icing.
- To keep cakes from rising

more in the middle than on the sides, take strips of terry cloth soaked in cold water and fasten around the outside of the cake pan while baking. The cloth will not burn.

• A item called a cake leveler is an easy way to trim a hump from the cake.

• Dap icing on the center of the board to keep the cake in position.

• When doing a layer cake, the centers should be put together since the bottoms of the cake are easier to frost.

• Icing consistency is the most important essential for successful cake decorating. The right consistency is learned through experience.

• Pressure control when decorating must not be too slow or icing will glob.

• Do not use liquid coloring in icing. Use paste or powdered colors.

• Pound cakes carve better and are easier to frost.

Sanso Receives Extension Award

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Doris M. Sanso, head secretary of the Lycoming County Extension Office, was recognized at the annual meeting of the Alpha Omicron Chapter of Epsilon Sigma Phi on November 15. The event was held at the Nittany Lion Inn, at the Pennsylvania State University. Sanso was one of five receiving state awards from this national honorary extension fraternity.

Lycoming County Extension Director William E. Messersmith cited a long list of Sanso's qualifications before presenting her with the Certificate of Meritorious Service. Also in attendance were her parents, Anna and Lawrence Smith, RR 4, Montoursville.

The 1994 extension secretary was selected for excellence in the areas of responsibility, quality of work, attitude toward clientele, extracurricular activities, in-service training, extension activities, supervisory skills, cooperation with coworkers, and knowledge of extension goals. Sanso has worked in the Lycoming County Extension Office since October 1986, and holds the position of office manager. A long-time resident of DuBoistown with her husband Gene, Sanso brings a knowledge and awareness of the area to her job.



Doris M. Sanso, right, receives the prestigious 1994 Epsilon Sigma Phi Pennsylvania Extension Secretary Award from William E. Messersmith, Lycoming County extension director.



Alice Emmons, right, of Stockton, N.J. won the cake that Rosie Rohrer decorating during a spouse session at ADC.



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