



Walk Kansas

a fitness challenge

K-State Research and Extension

March 7 • 2010

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Welcome to Walk Kansas 2010

“Medicine can save your life, but it won’t make you healthy.”

The quote from John Krug, Barton County Walk Kansas participant, captures the walking program’s purpose. We make choices every day that influence our health. We decide how much to move our bodies, what type and how much food we eat, and we choose our reactions to stress.

By registering for Walk Kansas, you are joining more than 20,000 other Kansans who want to live more healthfully. The program provides basic goals for physical activity and healthy eating. You can also set personal or team goals that make the 8-week experience more beneficial for you. Your registration packet includes a daily log, S.M.A.R.T.

(specific, measurable, attainable, rewarding, timed) plan worksheet, activity guidelines and ways to measure your progress. The Web site www.walkkansas.org offers more information on health, physical activity, healthy eating strategies and current news topics. If you are unable to access the Web site, contact your local K-State Research and Extension office for information.

We have a great team at Kansas State University who support and contribute to the Walk Kansas program, including educators, scientists and administrators such as K-State President Kirk Schulz and his wife, Noel (pictured at right).

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Welcome to Walk Kansas 2010

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Living healthfully should be fun and energizing. Choose activities you enjoy and develop a more adventurous approach to new foods that provide good nutrition. Reach out to co-workers, family and friends for support.

Remember to log minutes of activity, fruits and vegetables consumed, and to choose whole grains as half your daily grain foods. Report this information to your team captain each week.

Our K-State team –along with local agents, staff and community partners –will be cheering you on as we make healthy lifestyle changes together. Have a great Walk Kansas experience!

- Sharolyn Flaming Jackson
Specialist, Family and Consumer Sciences
Walk Kansas Coordinator
K-State Research and Extension

How Much is Enough?

The amount of fruits and vegetables appropriate for you depends on your age, sex and level of physical activity. Most adults should aim for 1½ to 2 cups of fruits, and 2½ to 3 cups of vegetables each day. For more information on these recommendations go to: www.mypyramid.gov.

If you have questions about what counts as a cup or half-cup of fruits or vegetables, go to this link on the Walk Kansas site: <http://www.walkkansas.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabid=59>. Select "How to Count" pages. This information is also available from your local K-State Research and Extension office.

2010 Success Story

This program helped me visualize exactly how many servings of fruits, vegetables and grains I was actually eating each day, as well as amount of exercise. Since the first of the year, I have lost 27 pounds through watching what I eat and exercising.

- Walk Kansas participant

Prepare for the Spring Garden Season

The Kansas gardening season is about to begin. Before jumping right in, get your body warmed up for seedbed preparation and planting. Walk or do another activity that gets the blood flowing through your muscles to prevent soreness before you take on those early season gardening tasks.

Growing a successful garden begins with site preparation. An ideal site is protected from wind, gets full sun, is level, and has well-drained and fertile soil. You can improve soil fertility and make it easier to dig if you spread compost or aged manure over the garden and spade it in. Work the soil when it's dry and not frozen, fall or spring each year.

The soil should be crumbly when worked. Working wet soil damages its structure, creates a poor seedbed and results in clods that will dry like

bricks. Work the soil in the planting area as little as possible, but break up the larger surface clods. Soil particles the size of a pea are ideal for planting.

A *soil test* taken before planting will determine essential fertilizer needs. Contact your local K-State Research and Extension office to ask about soil testing.

Consider using *raised beds* for food crops. They typically have better soil aeration for good root growth, and they warm up quicker in the spring for early planting. (See "Raised Bed Gardening," MF2134.)

Using *black plastic mulch* over the garden will warm the soil faster than leaving it uncovered.

The actual dates to plant your food crops depend on location and current weather conditions.

The "Vegetable Garden Planting Guide," MF315, is a good general reference for planting decisions. Ask for a copy from your local K-State Research and Extension office or download from the link above.

- Gregg Eyestone
Horticulture Agent
K-State Research and Extension -
Riley County

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For more gardening information, consult the newly revised "Kansas Garden Guide," S51, available in mid-March. See an excerpt of this 84-page, glossy, full-color book at the link above, or ask to see a copy at your local K-State Research and Extension office. Public price is set at \$5.30 per copy. Order the "Kansas Garden Guide" or browse dozens of gardening fact sheets at: <http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/library>

Eat a Rainbow of Colors Every Day

Nature created fruits and vegetables in a rainbow of colors. By eating a variety of colors you can get the best all-around health benefits, including *phytochemicals* – natural compounds that protect against chronic disease.

In their natural form, fruits and vegetables are low in calories and sodium, have very little fat, and fruits offer natural sweetness. These foods are also good sources of dietary fiber. Fruits and vegetables provide a variety of tastes and textures, and consuming different colors actually increases your protection against disease.

As you record the fruits and vegetables you eat each day in your Walk Kansas log, think about the variety of colors represented in your diet. It's not enough to sip orange juice each morning, have a salad with mostly iceberg lettuce for lunch, and eat a baked potato and green beans for dinner. In most cases, the deeper the fruit or vegetable's color, the more powerful its disease-protection capabilities.

To eat a rainbow of colors, start by adding strawberries, blueberries or bananas to cereal; or have an omelet with spinach, mushrooms and tomatoes. Build a salad on leafy greens such as Romaine lettuce and spinach, and add at least three other vegetables. Include a variety of veggies on your sandwich, and eat carrots or an orange as a snack. For dinner, fix a baked sweet potato and broccoli. The key is to mix up your food choices and to try new vegetables.

An excellent resource on this topic is the fact sheet "*Color Me Healthy: Enjoying Fruits and Vegetables*," MF2649, available from your local K-State Research and Extension office or at: www.ksre.ksu.edu/library/fntr2/mf2649.pdf

Did you know?

Only 19% of Kansans eat enough fruits and vegetables each day?

Expand your vegetable choices and availability by growing them in your garden or in containers on the patio.

Look for more timely information on gardening in future Walk Kansas newsletters.

Rainbow Vegetable Sauté with Pasta

Makes 6 Servings

- 6 oz. uncooked, whole grain pasta
- 2 tablespoons vegetable or olive oil
- 1 cup coarsely chopped onion
- ½ cup coarsely chopped celery
- ½ cup sliced carrots
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium sweet pepper, coarsely chopped
- 1 medium zucchini, sliced
- 2 teaspoons oregano
- 1 teaspoon sugar or sugar substitute
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 4 cups Napa cabbage or Bok Choy, coarsely chopped
- 1 can (14.5 oz.) diced tomatoes
- Parmesan cheese, if desired

Directions:

- 1) Cook pasta according to package directions; keep warm.
- 2) Heat oil in large skillet; sauté onions, celery, carrots and garlic for 1 to 2 minutes.
- 3) Add remaining ingredients, except cabbage, tomatoes and pasta. Sauté vegetables until crisp tender. Stir in cabbage and tomatoes, and cook until thoroughly heated and slightly thickened.
- 4) Toss with pasta and serve. Garnish with Parmesan cheese if desired.

Nutrition Information per Serving:

Calories – 190; Fat – 5g; Carbohydrate – 34g; Fiber – 6 g; Protein – 6g; Sodium – 250mg

