

## What are the benefits of eating more fruits and vegetables?

*Eating fresh fruits and vegetables as a snack helps young children develop healthy food habits and provides more nutrients for growing children. A potential benefit of eating more fruits and vegetables is reducing the risk of certain chronic diseases.*



*Colorful fresh fruits and vegetables provide vitamins, minerals, fiber, and other nutrients. A few of the nutrients found in fresh fruits and vegetables includes: vitamin C to help heal, fiber to improve bowel function and decrease risk of coronary heart disease and vitamin A for healthy skin and eyes.*

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## Illinois State Board of Education

[www.isbe.net/nutrition](http://www.isbe.net/nutrition)

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## Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

At My School!!!



## What is the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program?

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program makes fresh fruits and vegetables available to students a minimum of two times per week during the school day, at times other than during the meal periods at no cost to the students. Schools can receive a grant to participate in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program and receive funds for the fresh fruits and vegetables and for allowable operational expenses.

## What is the purpose of the program?

The purpose of the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program is to provide free, fresh fruits and vegetables to students. The program is a wonderful chance to expose children to a wide variety of fresh



fruits and vegetables. Another integral part of the program is nutrition education, which enhances the effectiveness of the program.

## How are the fresh fruits and vegetables distributed to the students?

Each school can find a system that works for them. Schools may want to distribute fruits and based on the ages of the students. In the lower grades, it may be easier to serve the students in their classrooms, while the older students may enjoy a fruit/veggie stand where they can help themselves. The USDA encourages schools to develop innovative and varied methods to offer the fruits and vegetables to students.



## When and where can fresh fruits and Vegetables be offered?

Schools may offer fresh fruits and vegetables purchased with the grant funds in classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, or elsewhere at any time during the school day except during meal periods. They can also be used in classroom activities and nutrition education.

## What can school staff do to help?

You can help students through role modeling. While the program is targeted at students, it recognizes the important connection between students, teachers, and school staff. Teachers and school staff are encouraged to eat the fresh fruits and vegetables along with the students. Another way school staff can help is by integrating nutrition education into the classroom and/or stressing the importance of wellness through healthy eating choices and physical activity.



## What can parents or the community do to help?

Parents are wonderful volunteers to assist on a daily basis with preparation and delivery of the fresh fruits and vegetables or for special events. Parents might also be wonderful resources for nutrition education. The community can also be a great resource when it comes to nutrition education. Making partnerships with the local hospitals, colleges, extension offices and other groups or agencies is a great opportunity to enhance the program through nutrition education.

**FRESH**  
FRUIT &  
VEGETABLE  
**PROGRAM**