

Dear Family,

Did you know that by 2050, farmers will need to double food production to feed our growing world population? Your son or daughter might be a scientist, farmer, store owner, or equipment manufacturer who plays a role in solving this problem!

Our class has been learning about farms, modern food production, healthy food choices, and more. Here are just some of the topics we've covered. Encourage your child to share what he or she has learned.

- **Foods start at farms.** A farmer produces enough food to feed 155 people!
- After foods leave the farm, many are processed in different ways. **Processing** helps to preserve food for a longer shelf life, adds nutrients, and allows food producers to package foods in convenient forms.
- Farmers use **high-tech equipment** to grow the largest amount of food possible. This equipment can be anything from sophisticated tractors and plows to GPS systems.
- To be healthy, we need to **eat foods from different food groups**—grains, proteins, fruits, vegetables, and dairy. The new MyPlate food guidelines recommend that half your plate should be fruits and vegetables.
- Smart food choices give us **long-lasting energy**. Snacks are okay sometimes, as long as we eat a healthy, balanced diet most of the time and get plenty of exercise.
- There are lots of **convenient and practical ways to incorporate healthy choices into our diets**. For example, most frozen and canned foods are equal in nutrition to fresh foods. However they stay fresh longer, so they are easier to keep on hand and less food is wasted. That's important in feeding a growing world!

Of course the best place to build healthy habits is at home. Over the next few days, talk with your child about the food choices he or she makes, and encourage your child to try a new food. Look for opportunities to visit a farm and meet the people who produce our food. The more children know about a variety of foods and food sources, the better off they'll be in our growing world. **To learn more about feeding future generations, visit the Alliance to Feed the Future, www.AlliancetoFeedtheFuture.org**

Sincerely,

(teacher's name)

PS: Here's a kid-friendly recipe courtesy of the Alliance to Feed the Future. Try it for a snack tomorrow!



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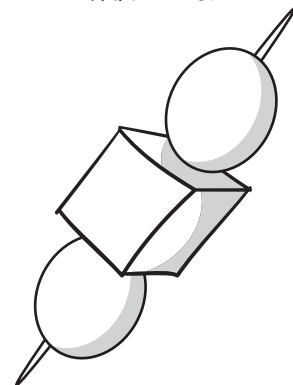


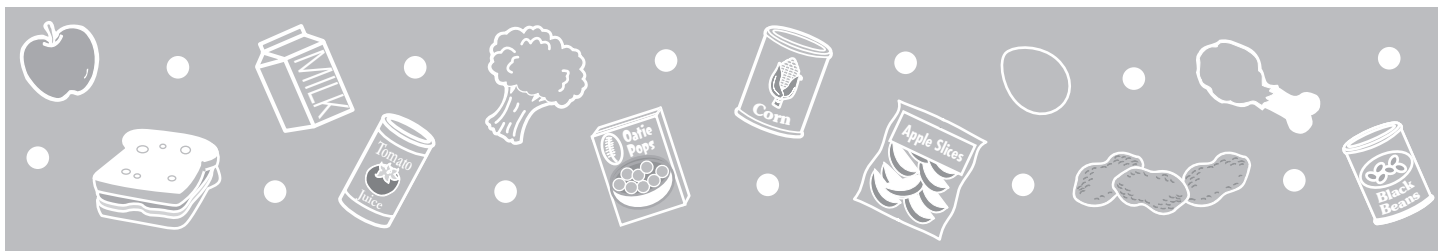
Time for Grape-n-Cheese Mini-Kebabs!

24 red or green grapes
12 part-skim mozzarella cheese
cubes

1. Slide 1 grape, 1 cheese cube and 1 more grape onto a toothpick.
2. In clock-like style, lay out a spiral of the kebabs on 2 snack plates—2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 o'clock.
3. What time is it? It's time to snack!

For other kid-friendly recipes, visit
Kidnetic.com.





Dear Family,

Your child has been learning all about **balance**—balanced meals, balancing healthy foods with occasional snacks, and balancing the number of calories we take in and use up. **Give your child a chance to show off his or her new knowledge by discussing questions like these:**

- Food labels provide much of the information you need in determining if a food contributes to a balanced meal. What helpful information do food labels contain?
- Oversized portions contribute to making our diets unbalanced. What can you do next time you get a super-sized serving?
- Many frozen, canned, and packaged foods provide healthy, convenient ways to add variety to our diets. Can you think of fruits and vegetables that are red? Orange? Yellow? Green? White? Have you eaten these fresh? Frozen? Canned?
- What do the new MyPlate food guidelines say? (*Half your plate should be fruits and vegetables.*) Think about your last meal: did it meet those guidelines? How could you change it? (For more information on MyPlate, visit choosemyplate.gov)

Continue these healthy discussions the next time you visit the grocery store or eat out. You'll be amazed at how much our children know about balance! **To learn more about the many associations and producers who help bring food to our plates, visit the Alliance to Feed the Future, www.AlliancetoFeedtheFuture.org**

Sincerely,


(teacher's name)



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FARM CREDIT
Lending support to rural America



Be Big on Balance!

I'm eating balanced meals.

I'm balancing the amount I eat with the calories I use up.

Signed

Date

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