



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, food safety, and more. Here are just some of the topics we've covered. Encourage your child to share what he or she has learned.

- 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.
- 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.
- Food gives us energy. Snacks are okay sometimes, as long as we eat a healthy, balanced diet most of the time and get plenty of exercise. **Smart food choices give us long-lasting energy.**
- **Food labels** provide much of the information you need in determining how a food contributes to a balanced meal.
- Not all **food terms** are equal. Some, like local and all natural, are widely used but are not defined by the government.
- **Food safety** is critical. Is your child preparing some of his or her own meals? Ask your child to share what your class has learned about cooking foods safely to eliminate the risk of food-borne illness.
- **Energy balance** involves balancing the number of calories we take in with the number we use up for exercise and daily activities.
- 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. Before your next trip to the grocery store, encourage your child to plan a healthy meal. Shop for ingredients and prepare the food together. 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 as part of a healthy dinner!



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Tasty Tortellini Toss

3 quarts (12 cups) water
9-ounce package fresh cheese or three-cheese tortellini, uncooked
2 cups cherry tomatoes
2 teaspoons olive oil
1/4 teaspoon garlic salt
1/4 cup loosely-packed, chopped fresh basil or parsley

1. Cook and drain the tortellini according to the package directions.
2. Place the tortellini into a medium-size bowl. Add the cherry tomatoes, olive oil, and garlic salt. Stir gently to coat all ingredients.
3. Add the basil or parsley on top and serve.

For other kid-friendly recipes, visit Kidnetic.com

Make this meal balanced! Add fruit, additional protein or dairy, and even another vegetable!