

HELPING CLIENTS GO “GREEN”

Jackie Newgent, RD, CDN

Consumers have always looked to RDs to eat lean. But now we are a credible authority for helping these same consumers “go green,” too.

Al Gore said the following about the serious consequences of global warming in his book *An Inconvenient Truth* (Rodale, 2006), “The truth about the climate crisis is an inconvenient one that means we are going to have to change the way we live our lives.” After seriously thinking about this in how I live my life, I realized that I can make a significant, positive impact on others’ lives, too. And the more I implemented “green” practices in how I eat, drink, cook, shop, work and live, I now see so many ways that we all, as nutrition professionals, can help impact climate change. We can help all that we touch to live healthier, eco-friendlier, sustainable food lives.

This “green” opportunity is one I believe we must seize. In fact, the American Dietetic Association has identified sustainable food systems as a priority in our commitment to helping people enjoy healthy lives. And being a role model, especially as a food and nutrition expert, is one of the best ways to embrace sustainable food systems.

While this article could be turned into a full-length film (hello, Al Gore!), I’ve compiled just a few of my favorite eco-friendly tips below to help you positively impact those you teach, counsel, or otherwise nutritionally guide.

“Green” Nutrition Advice:

Dining out:

- Recommend going to restaurants that support local farmers (or have their own farms!) or which purchase fresh produce from area greenmarkets. (See Eco-friendly Resources.)
- Suggest ordering tap water (in lieu of anything in a bottle).
- If wine or beer (in moderation, of course) is part of the dining experience, promote going local — we now have delicious options to choose from, such as wine harvested on Long Island or beer brewed in Brooklyn.
- For lean beef eaters, encourage requesting small portions of medium-rare steaks or medium hamburgers rather than well-done meats. Choose organic meats when possible, too.

Food shopping:

- While counseling about label reading, also suggest checking out manufacturer information. If deciding between nutritionally equivalent brands, recommend choosing the one that traveled the shortest distance.
- Encourage portion control, but also package control. Buying in bulk uses less packaging material.
- Eating healthier can mean more food purchasing for your clients—since they may be cooking more often. Suggest bagging all those groceries in reusable bags or totes. Visit www.reusablebags.com for more details.
- Boosting fruit and veggie intake is often a goal. Planning menus around fresh, seasonal and locally-grown produce supports that goal. Recommend shopping at stores that help support local farmers (such as Whole Foods Market), visit area farmers markets, and/or join a community supported agriculture (CSA) program: www.justfood.org/csa/locations.

At home:

- If advising clients about which instructions to use from a box, suggest they use the microwave instead of oven or stove-top instructions. Microwave ovens can reduce energy use approximately 2/3 compared with conventional ovens.
- Trying to encourage lower-sodium cooking? Suggest growing and eating plenty of fresh herbs.
- When encouraging someone to cook and eat more veggies, also encourage them to use green energy so they won’t worry about using electricity from their kitchen appliances. (See Eco-friendly Resources.)
- During fluid intake discussions, recommend keeping a refillable beverage bottle, mug or thermos at home or work. Show clients your refillable bottle!

According to Environmental Defense, the average American creates 9.44 metric tons of carbon per year. Want to know your “carbon footprint?” Go to www.fightglobalwarming.com/carboncalculator.cfm, www.climatecrisis.net/takeaction/carboncalculator or www.zerofootprint.net to find out. Share these tools with clients.

Eco-friendly Resources

- green book: *The Big Green Apple: Your Guide to Eco-Friendly Living in New York City*, by Ben Jervey, www.amazon.com
- green eats & education: Council on the Environment of New York City, www.cenyc.org
- green restaurants: listing of chefs/restaurants that shop at the Greenmarket: <http://cenyc.org/site/pages/GMKT/chefs.pdf>
- green food systems: *Healthy Land, Healthy People: Building A Better Understanding Of Sustainable Food Systems For Food And Nutrition Professionals*, www.eatright.org/ada/files/Sustainable_Primer.pdf
- green foodservice: *A Guide to Serving Local Food on Your Menu*, www.glynwood.org/resource/guidelocalmenu.pdf
- green nutrition professionals: The Hunger and Environmental Nutrition Dietetic Practice Group, www.hendpg.org
- green (or wind) power: ConEdison Solutions®, www.ConEdSolutions.com
- green organizations: Environmental Defense, www.environmentaldefense.org or www.fightglobalwarming.com; Natural Resources Defense Council, www.nrdc.org; Sierra Club, www.sierraclub.org
- See page 6 for information about local NY farmers’ markets.

Jackie Newgent, RD, CDN, is a culinary nutritionist based in Williamsburg, Brooklyn and author of *The All-Natural Diabetes Cookbook*. Visit her web site: www.jackienewgent.com.

VISIT THESE LOCAL NYC FARMERS' MARKETS

Manhattan:

Union Square, East 17th Street & Broadway
Open year round: Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat, 8 am – 6 pm

Queens:

Jackson Heights, 34th Avenue (77th & 78th Streets)
June to November: Sunday, 8 am – 3 pm

Brooklyn:

Greenpoint-McCarren Park (Larimer & Driggs Streets)
Open year round: Saturday, 8 am – 3 pm

Bronx:

Bronx Borough Hall, Grand Concourse (156th & 158th Streets)
July to November: Tuesday, 8 am – 6 pm

Staten Island:

St. George, Borough Hall Parking Lot (St. Marks & Hyatt Streets)
May to November: Saturday, 8 am – 2 pm

For a complete listing, download the "Greenmarket Map 2007" at
<http://cenyc.org/site/pages/GMKT/map2007.pdf>.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Check out the GNYDA's Fall schedule of events!
For more information, or to register online, visit www.gnyda.org



NOVEMBER 7, 2007

Fall 2007 Meet and Greet Roundtable Forum

Presented by the Pediatric Nutrition Special Interest Group

Time: 6:30- 9:00pm

Location: Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
430 East 67th Street (York & 1st Avenue)
Rockefeller Research Library-116A (1st Floor)

NOVEMBER 10, 2007

Fall Dietetic Internship Fair

Presented by the Student Committee

Time: 12:30- 3:30pm

Location: New York University Department of Public Health, Nutrition and Food Studies
35 W. 4th Street (Washington Square East & Greene Street)
10th Floor - Rooms 1078 and 1080

NOVEMBER 13, 2007

Healthy Choices for Children: Linking Research and Practice in Childhood Obesity Prevention

Presented by the American Dairy Association and Dairy Council, Inc. with The Genesee Dietetic Association

Time: 8:15am- 4:00pm

Location: R.I.T. Conference Center
5257 West Henrietta Road, W. Henrietta, NY 14586