

## March – National Nutrition Month

The lousy winter in Iowa may have been a barrier to your healthy eating plans. Now that Spring is surely around the corner, resolve to get on track. Here are some shopping tips to get you started.

- Fill your cart with produce. Non-starchy vegetables are very low in calories. A low-calorie diet is based on fruits and vegetables.
- Meat, seafood – think lean. Select extra-lean ground beef. Use white meat poultry without the skin. Use low-fat cooking methods: bake, broil, grill, microwave, steam or poach.
- Dairy – keep it skim or low in fat. Beware of cheeses that are high in fat. Choose light, nonfat yogurt but also be aware of added sugar.
- Grain foods – keep them whole. Grain products should have a whole grain listed as the first ingredient on the label. Grains you cook, pasta, rice and oats, are lower in calorie density than those with less water content such as bread, crackers and ready-to-eat cereals.
- Snacks – think out of the bag. Choose healthful snacks that use fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Think “out with the bag” and limit high-calorie foods that are sold as snacks.
- Read the label. Be aware of serving size and servings per container. Be aware of calories per serving. Many items labeled “sugar-free” or “fat-free” are not usually low in calories.

Taken from *Food for Fitness and Fun*, March 2008, Iowa State University Extension Families website