Montana Action Guide on Fruits and Vegetables

CDC's State Indicator Report on Fruits and Vegetables, 2018, shows national and state-level fruit and vegetable access and production data for 50 states and the District of Columbia. This guide provides actionable steps that public health practitioners, decision makers, and agriculture and food systems leaders can take to promote a healthy food environment and support fruit and vegetable consumption in Montana. Full Report: https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/data-statistics/2018-state-indicator-report-fruits-vegetables.html

Fruit and Vegetable Consumption in the United States Is Too Low

- Eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables can help protect against many serious and costly chronic diseases, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, some cancers, and obesity [1].
- Despite the health benefits, nationwide, only 12.2% of adults meet the daily fruit recommendation and only 9.3% meet the vegetable recommendation [2].
- States and communities can make fruits and vegetables convenient and affordable in the places where children and adults live, work, learn, and play [3].

Fruit and Vegetable Consumption in Montana

Only 10.7% of adults meet the daily fruit intake recommendation [2]

Only 8.3% of adults meet the daily vegetable intake recommendation [2]

Select Resources to Support Fruit and Vegetable Consumption

1. Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015–2020, 8th ed: https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/
2. Disparities in State-Specific Adult Fruit and Vegetable Consumption — United States, 2015. http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6645a1
3. CDC Guide to Strategies to Increase the Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables: http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/resources/recommendations.html
4. USDA WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program: https://www.fns.usda.gov/fmnp/wic-farmers-market-nutrition-program-fmnp
5. CDC Healthy Food Service Guidelines webpage: https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/strategies/food-serv-guide.html
6. CDC Early Care and Education webpage: https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/strategies/childcareece.html
7. USDA Office of Community Food Systems: Farm to School/Preschool: https://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-preschool
8. CDC Salad Bars to School webpage: https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/strategies/saladbars2schools.html
9. USDA Regional Food Hub and Food Value Chain Resources: https://www.ams.usda.gov/reports/food-value-chains

Improving Access to Fruits and Vegetables for Individuals and Families

Indicator	Montana	U.S.
Number of Farmers Markets per 100,000 Residents, 2017	6.7	2.7
Percentage of Farmers Markets Accepting the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Farmers Market Nutrition Program Vouchers, 2017	18.6%	30.8%
State Policy on Food Service Guidelines in Place, 2014	No	10 States

Potential Actions:

- Educate WIC clients on the benefits of using Farmers Market Nutrition Program vouchers at participating markets and provide nutrition education services to support fruit and vegetable consumption [4].
- Encourage farmers markets to locate in convenient places that are visible to the community and easily accessible [3].
- Connect with stakeholders to provide healthier foods in public places, including government buildings, hospitals, and park and recreation centers, by using food service guidelines [5].
- Share the health and economic benefits of healthy food service guidelines in the workplace—for example, enhanced healthy food options, positive impact on worker health, and strengthened local food system [5].

Improving Access to Fruits and Vegetables for Children

Indicator	Montana	U.S.
Has State Early Care and Education (ECE) Licensing Regulations That Align with National Standards for Serving Fruits, 2016	No	9 states
Has State ECE Licensing Regulations That Align with National Standards for Serving Vegetables, 2016	No	3 states
State Farm to School or Farm to ECE Policy in Place, 2002–2017	Yes	47 states
Percentage of School Districts Participating in Farm to School Programs, 2014	40.2%	41.8%
Percentage of Middle and High Schools Offering Salad Bars, 2016	76.9%	44.8%*

* Median across 48 states and D.C.

Potential Actions:

- Include best practices for serving fruits and vegetables at meals and snack times in state ECE licensing requirements, quality rating systems, provider trainings, and professional development opportunities [6].
- Provide trainings to school districts and ECE providers on how to source and purchase local fruits and vegetables and serve them in meals and snacks [7].
- Work with district administrators, school food service directors, and parent-teacher association wellness groups to place salad bars in school cafeterias [3,8].

Food System Support for Fruits and Vegetables

Indicator	Montana	U.S.
State Food Policy Council, 2018	Yes	32 states
Number of Local Food Policy Councils, 2018	1	234
Number of Food Hubs, 2017	2	212

Potential Actions:

- Link large-scale purchasers of fruits and vegetables—such as school districts, hospitals, and food retailers—with local farms and regional food hubs that aggregate and distribute produce [9].
- Support state and local food policy councils or coalitions that bring together diverse food system stakeholders and prioritize fruit and vegetable access and affordability, particularly among underserved communities [3].