



PBH[®]

**PRODUCE FOR
BETTER HEALTH**

**HAVE A PLANT[®]
INFLUENCER TOOLKIT**
SPRING 2023

Food Rooted In A Better Mood[®]

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Food Rooted In A Better Mood®

Fruits and veggies can lift your spirits! There can be immense joy in the sweet-tasting, healthy eating experience of fruits, and smart satisfaction associated with the success of preparing vegetables as a meal, or as part of a meal.



BY KATIE CALLIGARO
PBH MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS
DIRECTOR

Over the last year the world has much returned to a pre-pandemic hustle and bustle, with other challenges emerging. This can leave people feeling overwhelmed with the day-to-day management of work-life balance and healthy eating, concerns about inflation and more. But if there's one thing that remains constant: fruits and vegetables are available year-round and provide important nutrients Americans are lacking. AND, research shows there are many ways they can make you FEEL better too! Read on...

Did you know that eating fruits and vegetables is not only good for your health, but can also boost your mood? It's true. Not only is there scientific evidence suggesting cognitive health benefits of some fruits and vegetables, but we also know people who eat fruits and vegetables every single day report a greater sense of overall life satisfaction and happiness. I love this stat!

We at PBH have been talking about the concept of Food Rooted In A Better Mood® for a few years now. And you know we like a good play on words. Fruits and veggies are the plants that no one is eating enough of. And we know consumers KNOW that these plants are good for them. But still, 9 out of 10 Americans aren't eating the daily recommended amounts. So here's a plan. Have A Plant®. Not just for your health. But for your happiness!

I also like to point to the actual feelings that people have when they eat certain foods. People report experiencing joy when eating berries, for example, and pride when serving their family vegetables. The positive emotional connections people have with the experience of eating fruits and vegetables is one we can tap into as communicators, as leaders, as menu developers and counselors. Maybe it's using different adjectives



when describing a menu item, or in how you're writing a recipe description. Maybe it's as simple as showing more visuals of people happily eating these foods in consumer-facing collateral. But they also have to taste good for people to want to repeat the behavior, right? This is where the flavor combinations come in, or creative cooking techniques like grilling or smoking, that people start enjoying this time of year. Amy makes a great point in her article about the calming effect meal prep can provide. Creating habits that feel good, and that are EASY, are what we are trying to accomplish together. What can you do to tap into your expertise to bring this experience to life?

In this toolkit, you will find research tidbits, expert quotes, social media posts, in-store activation ideas for those working in retail, as well as culinary tips to help consumers eat and enjoy more fruits and vegetables every day for better health AND happiness.

If there is nothing else you do for consumers this year – whether in restaurants, in food service or retail establishments, on social media channels or in public and private practices, please: invite them to Have A Plant®. Their bodies, minds and souls will thank you!

Katie Calligaro
PBH Marketing & Communications Director



The Plant Prescription For A Better Mood



BY DR. TAYLOR WALLACE
PBH CHIEF FOOD & NUTRITION SCIENTIST

Food and mood. We intuitively know they're connected. That's why we reach for something sweet when we've had a bad morning or order coffee for the will power to finish a long workday.

We're a little duped by our instincts, though. The most important dietary drivers of our mood and cognitive abilities aren't these little pick-me-ups (tasty as they are). They're the choices we make, day in and day out, about how we fill our shopping carts, cupboards and plates.

It turns out that your love of roasted asparagus, your weekly veggie chili night, or your habit of eating sliced mango for breakfast is doing more than filling your belly, or even warding off cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Those fruits and vegetables may also be keeping you happy, chill, and able to think and remember clearly.

For example, research into the role of our dietary habits in the development of depression has taken off in recent years. Large studies that observe people and their diets show that a higher consumption of fruits and vegetables is associated with a reduced risk of depression. Another research group found that low fruit and vegetable intake was linked with poor mental health status and having been diagnosed with a mood or anxiety disorder. A cross-sectional European study found that the participants who reported eating more fruits and vegetables also were more likely to exhibit better mental health.

The takeaway here? Depression and anxiety are serious disorders that can require help from doctors and therapists. But whether you're dealing with a client who has been diagnosed with a mood disorder or just a case of the blahs, consistently meeting five servings of fruits and vegetables a day may help. When you're planning your own meals or creating recommendations for consumers, consider eating

Quotes

for you to use

"Whether you have a diagnosed mood disorder or just a case of the blahs, consistently eating at least five servings of fruits and vegetables a day may help."

- Dr. Taylor Wallace
PBH Chief Food & Nutrition Scientist

"Talking about food and preparing food are really wonderful activities for parents and kids to do together, and I think it can bring a lot of joy for both."

- Dr. Christina Roberto
Assistant Professor of Medical Ethics & Health Policy, University of Pennsylvania; Member of the PBH Scientific Advisory Council

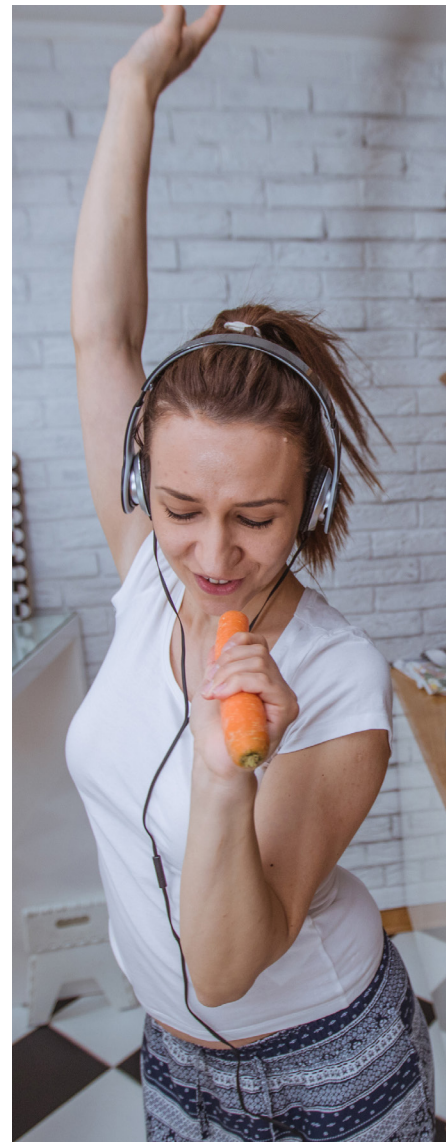
"Eating foods we know to be healthy can lead to positive emotions like pride. It can also support feelings of increased self-esteem, especially if the fruit and vegetable consumption can replace some 'guilty' food experiences."

- Dr. Jason Riis
PBH Chief Behavioral Scientist

some fruits and veggies uncooked: one recent study found higher mental health outcomes for those eating more raw fruits and vegetables.

Of course, the brain thinks as much as it feels, and, here, too, fruits and vegetables can play a role. Ongoing research in this area is increasingly valuable; cognitive impairment tends to affect the elderly and, by 2030, one in five Americans will be over the age of 65. Although findings on diet and cognition have been mixed, there is evidence that high vs. low intake of fruits and vegetables is associated with a reduced risk of cognitive impairment. In this case, more may be better, so bring on the berries! One meta-analysis of multiple studies found a dose-dependent response, finding that every 100g per day increase in fruits and vegetables was related to a 13% decrease in cognitive impairment and dementia risk. 100g is just two medium carrots, ½ an apple or 6 tangerine wedges, so why not aim for more?

In our culture, we are sometimes taught to think of our minds as separate from our bodies, like we're carting our brains around in rolling suitcases. But nutrition isn't just from the neck down. Every plump berry, tender broccoli spear or juicy peach that helps your heart or reduces your diabetes risk is also a bite that feeds your brain — a delicious dietary difference you can feel in your mood and thinking, too.



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Key Consumer Messages

Mental health is just as important as physical health. Eating delicious fruits and veggies can boost your health AND your mood!

Research suggests eating more fruits and veggies can help improve happiness, satisfaction, and emotional well-being.

There is joy in the sweet-tasting eating experience of fruit, and smart satisfaction associated with the success of preparing vegetables.

Eating more fruits and vegetables can help you have a more positive outlook on life and feel confident and proud that you are making the best food decisions.

There's lots of science behind it all, and it boils down to this: if you're human, your body and mind benefit from eating fruits and vegetables, resulting in better health and a better mood.

Celebrate loud and often when kids eat fruits and veggies! The pride and happiness this can instill will make them more likely to eat them again next time.

Insights From PBH Research



Those who reported eating fruits and veggies every day of the week were significantly more likely to report being happy and satisfied with their life.



65% of people who eat vegetables daily say they are happy vs 42% of people who do not eat vegetables.

68% of people who eat fruit daily say they are happy vs 33% of people who do not eat fruit.



People who eat the most fruits and vegetables pointed to several physical, emotional, and social benefits including pride in their choices, feeling good in their day-to-day activities, alleviation of physical illness, and confidence in their future health.



Those who do not eat fruits and vegetables are significantly more likely to report feeling hopelessness and disengagement.

REFERENCE: Produce for Better Health.

[Novel Approaches To Measuring & Promoting Fruit & Vegetable Consumption, 2017](#)

ONE APPLE HAS IT ALL



Beautifully balanced sweetness, uplifting floral aroma, satisfying crunch, and slices remain naturally fresh and white longer. Discover Envy™ apple at a quality grocer near you or visit envyapple.com/us



THE ULTIMATE APPLE EXPERIENCE

Share The Have A Plant® Love: Ideas & Inspiration

These themes were designed to help break through the clutter and serve as a guidepost to create content that tells a compelling story that gets people thinking about, choosing and eating fruits and veggies at every meal occasion.

APRIL

Sustainable Habits

When something makes you feel good, you want to do it again. When something tastes good, you want to eat it again. We know that fruits and vegetables are not only good for your health, but they also boost your mood. This month we'll tap into habits and experiences that can create sustainable change, keeping you feeling healthy and happy.

Promotion Ideas

Prioritize YOU With Fruit & Veggie Care!

Fruit & Veggie Care is not only a way to show our love for the growing processes and our Earth, but it can also be a way to take part in some self-care. Whether it's nourishing your body with delicious fruit and veggie-based recipes or creating fun ways to pamper yourself (hello, fruit & veggie face masks!), there are so many ways to prioritize YOU! Share unique ways fruits and vegetables can be used to care for the soul with your followers.

Create A Shopping Challenge

Challenge consumers to Shop Smarter, Not Harder! Show ways they can maximize their produce with multiple ways to use an item and/or share tips on how to save money in the grocery store (i.e. shopping the whole store for produce items).

Showcase Your Hauls

Share your favorite grocery store finds or your weekly grocery shopping hauls with followers for an easy way to create inspiration to #haveaplant!

Tap Into Habits & Experiences

Share how you tap into habits and experiences that can create sustainable change in your life. Maybe you cut up fruits and vegetables as soon as you get home from the store for easy snacking throughout the week, add a bagged salad on the side every time you order pizza, or keep a bag of leafy greens on hand to throw into smoothies, soups, sauces, etc.

Additional Weekly Themes

Fruit & Veggie Care

Let's do our part to care for the fruits and veggies we eat and enjoy every day from root to leaf.

Shop Smarter, Not Harder

If you love finding deals and steals, these tips for planning and shopping for plant-packed meals and snacks will up your game!

What's In Season In Spring?

Your guide to what's in season and all the tips and recipes you need for creating awesome spring-inspired plant-packed snacks and meals.

National Observances

Earth Month

National Garden Month

National Pecan Month

National BLT Month

National Soft Pretzel Month

National Grilled Cheese Month

National Poetry Month

Keep America Beautiful Month

National Garlic Month

National Soy Foods Month

National Burrito Day (April 6)

National Make Lunch Count Day (April 13)

Earth Day (April 22)

MAY

Food Rooted In A Better Mood®

It's National Mental Health Month and let's be real — we don't have to overthink this. They're just plants. It's easy to add fun and flavor to your everyday routine, so, give your mind a break.

We got you!

Additional Weekly Themes

Beautiful Brunch

Let's make fruits and veggies part of our brunch crew.

Playful May

Give yourself permission to act like a kid and take a grown-up twist on childhood favorites. Let's have some fun!

Mind-Blowing Hacks

We've got the simple hacks you need to cut prep time, prolong the life of your produce and cook like a culinary pro so you don't have to think about it. This is going to be easy!

Promotion Ideas

Host A Beautiful Brunch

With springtime pastels and the flowers starting to bloom, there are so many ways to make an aesthetically pleasing tablescape. As you're sharing plant-packed brunch recipe ideas with consumers, think of a few ways to add something extra to the table — think edible plant-based centerpieces!

Feeling Nostalgic?

Who doesn't love a cup of hot chocolate or nostalgic after school snacks? Give people permission to act like a kid and take a grown-up twist on childhood favorites. Inspire your followers with elevated versions of comforting classics — dip berries in Nutella, munch on Dunkaroo dip with apples, add dried fruit to gooey brownies — there are so many possibilities!

Kick Off BBQ Season

During a cooking demo, showcase how produce is a perfect accompaniment for all those tasty BBQ foods that are coming our way.

National Observances

National Mental Health Month
National Beef Month
National BBQ Month
National Loaded Potato Month
National Hamburger Month
National Egg Month
National Salad Month
National Salsa Month
National Strawberry Month
National Apple Pie Day (May 13)
National Pizza Party Day (May 15)
National Grilling Day (May 16)



JUNE

Effortless Outdoor Entertaining

What better way to boost your mood than enjoying fruits and veggies outside? Elevate your outdoor entertaining spread – from dried fruit paired with your favorite cheese for the perfect picnic to refreshing beverages mixed with 100% juice for a mid-day relaxation sesh.

Additional Weekly Themes

Plant-fusions

Bring some inspiration to your hydration by adding fruits and veggies to your everyday bottle of water AND by getting your nutrients in with all the juice!

Dressing Up Your Fruits & Veggies

From fruit-forward dressing to amping up the herbs, we're sharing the tips and recipes you need to make salads cool and to keep you coming back for more!

Fresh Food Hacks

We're keeping safety first this summer with all the hacks you need to keep your fruits and veggies fresh this outdoor entertaining season.

Promotion Ideas

Put Food Safety First

Share tips with consumers on how they can put food safety first this outdoor entertaining season. Provide infographics or handouts with proper temperatures for foods, how to wash produce or hacks for keeping cold food cold and hot food hot.

Get Creative With Plant-Fusions

Host a cooking class on how to make beautiful and delicious plant-fusions! Some ideas to feature – produce-infused cocktails and mocktails or branch out into oils, butters or syrups.

What's Your Favorite Outdoor Entertaining Hack?

Do you have a favorite outdoor entertaining hack? Even if it seems super simple, share it with your followers – they never tire of helpful hacks!

Who's Got The "Coolest" Salads?

See who can make the "coolest" salads. Host a friendly competition where participants are tasked with creating a totally unique salad. For some idea generators: turning salads into dips, create fruit-forward dressings, amping up the fresh herbs, etc. The prize? Enjoying these delicious plant-packed dishes!

National Observances

National Dairy Month

National Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Month

National Iced Tea Month

National Papaya Month

MyPlate's Birthday (June 2)

National Egg Day (June 3)

National Cheese Day (June 4)

Share The Have A Plant® Love: Ideas & Inspiration

Sample Social Media Posts • #haveaplant

Use these sample posts to easily share the fruit and veggie love — eating more plants is delicious and fun!

APRIL: Sustainable Habits

Instagram & Facebook: As the springtime 🌸 season is upon us, it's a great time to check-in with yourself on how you can keep feeling healthy and happy with habits and experiences that can create sustainable change. Do you have a routine or habit that involves #produce? Share in the comments below 🗨️ #haveaplant

Twitter: Springtime 🌸 is here! It's a great time to check-in with yourself on how you can keep feeling healthy & happy with habits & experiences that can create sustainable change. Do you have a routine or habit that involves #produce? Share in the comments below. 🗨️ #haveaplant

Instagram & Facebook: While #groceryshopping can get a little overwhelming, it can also be a great time to challenge yourself to shop smarter, not harder! 🛒 Not only will you save time, but you'll also save a little money along the way. There are so many ways to maximize the #produce in your cart! Here are a few ways we like to do so: <https://bit.ly/3WAZ4Df> #haveaplant

Who says #groceryshopping has to be hard?! 🛒 Shop smarter, not harder to save time & money along the way. There are so many ways to maximize the #produce in your cart! Here are a few ways we like to do so: <https://bit.ly/3WAZ4Df> #haveaplant

MAY: Food Rooted In A Better Mood®

Instagram & Facebook: You don't have to dig too deep to add fun and flavor to your everyday routine. Give your mind a break this Playful May and see how much fun you can have with fruits & veggies! ❤️ We've got all the ideas to embrace your inner child so you can put a grown-up twist on childhood faves: <https://bit.ly/3jJZCbD> #haveaplant

Twitter: Give your mind a break this Playful May & see how much fun you can have with fruits & veggies! ❤️ We've got all the ideas to embrace your inner child so you can put a grown-up twist on childhood faves: <https://bit.ly/3jJZCbD> #haveaplant

Instagram, Facebook & Twitter: Take a #mindful minute for yourself today! 🧘 It's National Mental Health Month and taking care of your whole body through mindful nourishment with fruits & veggies can help you stay focused, energized & bring more joy into your life. 😊 #haveaplant

JUNE: Effortless Outdoor Entertaining

Instagram & Facebook: Is it just us or does enjoying fruits & veggies outside make everything so 🍌 much 🍌 better 🍌?! Elevate your outdoor entertaining menus this summer with the power of produce — fruit & cheese boards, salads that slay, veggie-topped burgers — get inspired: <https://bit.ly/3lgwLpE> #haveaplant

Twitter: Is it just us or does enjoying fruits & veggies outside make everything so 🍌 much 🍌 better 🍌?! Elevate your outdoor entertaining menus with the power of produce — fruit & cheese boards, salads that slay, veggie-topped burgers — get inspired: <https://bit.ly/3lgwLpE> #haveaplant

Instagram & Facebook: Getting outdoors doesn't mean just your backyard! It's road trip season! 🚗🛖 Just because you're on-the-go, doesn't mean your fruit & veggie habits have to disappear. Stock up on hardy and non-perishable #produce to take with you! Bananas, applesauce, juice boxes, dried fruits are just a few ideas to add to your snack bag. #haveaplant

Twitter: Getting outdoors doesn't mean just your backyard! It's road trip season! 🚗🛖 Don't let your fruit & veggie habits disappear. Stock up on hardy & non-perishable #produce to take w/ you! 🍌, applesauce, juice boxes, dried fruits are just a few to add to your snack bag. #haveaplant

Social Media Graphics — Click to download

Instagram & Facebook



Twitter



What's In Season In Spring?

[Apricots](#)
[Artichokes](#)
[Asparagus](#)
[Barbados Cherries](#)
[Belgian Endive](#)
[Bitter Melon](#)
[Broccoli](#)
[Butter Lettuce](#)
[Cactus](#)
[Chayote Squash](#)
[Cherimoya](#)

[Collard Greens](#)
[Corn](#)
[Fava Beans](#)
[Fennel](#)
[Fiddlehead Ferns](#)
[Green Beans](#)
[Honeydew](#)
[Jackfruit](#)
[Limes](#)
[Lychee](#)
[Mango](#)

[Manoa Lettuce](#)
[Morel Mushrooms](#)
[Mustard Greens](#)
[Oranges](#)
[Peas](#)
[Pineapple](#)
[Purple Asparagus](#)
[Radicchio](#)
[Radish](#)
[Red Leaf Lettuce](#)
[Rhubarb](#)

[Snow Peas](#)
[Sorrel](#)
[Spinach](#)
[Strawberries](#)
[Swiss Chard](#)
[Vidalia Onions](#)
[Watercress](#)
[White Asparagus](#)

Remember, fresh, frozen, canned, dried, and 100% juice are all good choices.

Fruit Highlight: Envy™ Apple



Select

When picking Envy™ apples in store, keep an eye out for their fresh aroma, firm skin, and bright red color with a golden blush. Envy™ apples are available year-round at quality grocers. Whether you're looking for Envy™ apples loose or by the bagful, you can find them nationwide via the store locator (envyapple.com/us/store-locator/) or buy online on Amazon Fresh and Instacart.

Store

Available throughout the year, Envy™ apples are best stored in the crisper drawer inside your refrigerator. The cool temperature helps retain optimum flavor, aroma, and crunch.

Serve

You can enjoy an Envy™ apple on its own as a sweet treat, or as an ingredient to elevate your next salad, charcuterie, or light main.

[Exquisite Envy™ Peanut Butter Toast](#)

[Envy™ Apple & Spring Herb Ricotta Phyllo Tart](#)

[Envy™ Apple & Mandarin Macaroni Salad](#)

[Shaved Fennel & Envy™ Apple Salad](#)

[Cinnamon Sugar Envy™ Apple Chips](#)

[Hummus With Envy™ Apples & Roasted Jalapeno Relish](#)

Veggie Highlight: Artichoke



Select

Artichokes are available fresh and canned for good nutrition and convenience. If selecting fresh, choose artichokes that feel heavy and firm. Exterior should have a healthy green color, compact center leaves and an overall look of freshness (not dehydrated).

Store

For refrigerated storage, slice a dime width off the artichoke stem, sprinkle with water and refrigerate in an airtight plastic bag. It's best to cook them within five to seven days after purchase.

Cooked artichokes should be cooled completely and covered before refrigerated, where they can keep for up to a week.

Artichokes are great cooked the night before planned use. Reheat in the oven or microwave before serving, stuffing, grilling or using as an ingredient in another dish or eat chilled with your favorite dipping sauce.

Serve

[Mediterranean Power Bowl](#)

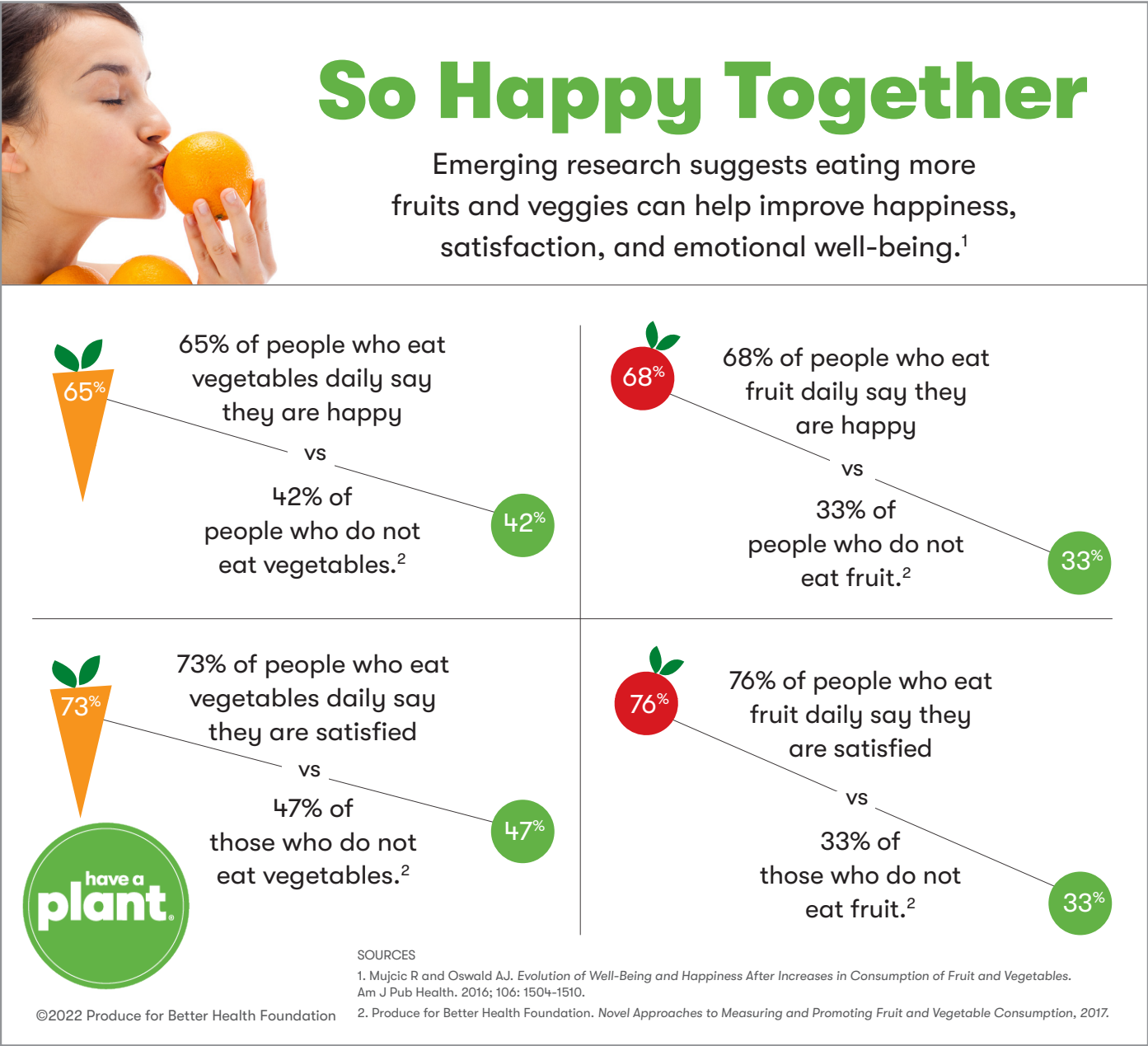
[Artichoke, Spinach & Jalapeño Cream Cheese Dip/Spread](#)

[Fresh Cherry Detox Salad](#)

[Artichoke Spinach Tart](#)

PBH Happiness Research Infographic

Click on the infographic to download and share. Don't forget to use #haveaplant and tag @fruitsandveggies in all your awesome posts!



Retail Opportunity: Close The Gap Between Purchase & Consumption



BY ANNETTE MAGGI, MS, RDN, LD, FAND
PBH RETAIL SPECIALIST

A key retail finding in the [PBH Hacks To Habits](#) Insights Report is that shopping automaticity is stronger than consuming automaticity. Shoppers may be adding produce to the cart, but once fruits and vegetables are in the home, more ease is required to prepare and eat them, closing the gap between purchase and consumption. How can retailers help shoppers enjoy all the fruits and veggies they purchase at your stores? Consider these ideas for Spring 2023.



April: Sustainable Habits

While there are three parts of a habit, the action itself gets the most education attention. But for consumers to make a habit sustainable, it's really the trigger or cue before the action and the reward after the action that encourage repeat behavior and development of a sustainable habit.

In February, SpartanNash and Weis Markets partnered with PBH on promotional programs focused on creating triggers for new produce consumption habits. The campaign's key message was "Every time you ____, Have A Plant®." Examples included Every time you scramble an egg, Have A Plant® and Every time you brunch, Have A Plant®. To help your shoppers create sustainable fruit and vegetable purchase and consumption habits, create a similar campaign, posting in social media, on in-store signage and e-commerce banner ads.



May: Food Rooted In A Better Mood®

Kids' programming is on the rise in the retail setting and this audience will light up about eating their fruits and veggies if this programming is all about fun. PBH experience suggests messaging on produce items in the colors of the rainbow always does well in social and digital, making this an ideal foundation of a new kids' program, class, or cook-along. Or create young entrepreneurs by giving them all the tools and resources they need to set up their own fruit and vegetable stand. Kids could set them up in your parking lot on a Spring weekend creating a media event at the same time. The added attention these young consumers experience is sure to help them make produce consumption a lifelong habit.



June: Outdoor Entertaining

Warm weather just draws people outside, for a quick break, a casual dinner or a party. How do you encourage shoppers to automatically include fruits and veggies in all their outdoor occasions? Add outdoor food safety tips to your meal planning education and tools, expand fresh cut programs to include seasonal options, and create new video content on boards loaded with fruits and veggies. The goal is to make sure produce comes to mind first whenever consumers are thinking about outdoor eating occasions.

The Mood Boosting Benefits Of Meal Prep & Planning



BY AMY MYRDAL MILLER, MS, RDN, FAND
PBH CULINARY & FOODSERVICE SPECIALIST

When I was in college, I only pulled one all-nighter. I'm just not a last-minute person. For me, it causes too much anxiety and uncertainty. I really like to plan and be prepared, especially when it comes to meals. I find it helps save money, save time, and reduce stress. It also helps me build a sense of pride and accomplishment.

Here are five tips for helping people you work with do a bit more meal preparation and planning.



1. Make two lists before grocery shopping

Two lists? Yes! Encourage people to not only make a list of what they think they need to shop for but also an inventory of what they currently have on hand, especially when it comes to perishable fresh produce. I like to make my lists on my smart phone versus on paper so I can reuse the list for items I frequently buy. Doing a quick inventory of foods already in the refrigerator can help reduce food waste, which not only helps the environment but can also reduce the guilt people feel when good food goes bad and ends up in the trash. The [PBH Hacks To Habits](#) research shows food waste guilt is more common for people who eat the most fruits and vegetables. Why? Because they are the ones most likely to select and buy more fruits and vegetables at retail.



2. Prep fresh produce after shopping

This is an especially powerful habit to help people develop. The [PBH Hacks To Habits](#) research showed that people who have a shopping habit don't necessarily have a consumption habit. They may be good at buying fruits and vegetables, but once they bring them home, they may not actually eat them. Why? There are many likely reasons, but ease and convenience at the likely top reasons.

Taking some time to prep produce when you bring it home can make it easier to cook with and eat it later in the week. Cutting up fresh veggies and placing them in sealed containers in the fridge makes it easy to use them. It may also prompt family members to grab a fruit or veggie snack if the work has already been done for them. I love to listen to smooth jazz music while I'm prepping my produce. The music is soothing, which gives my brain time to contemplate how I'll use the produce in meals the next few days. But what if you work with people who don't like cutting and chopping? Simply encourage them to buy fresh-cut produce as well as frozen and canned fruits and vegetables.

3. Use online tools for inspiration

I love creating meals from foods I have on hand, but many people find this a very intimidating task. Online tools like Yummly's Pantry Search tool allows you to enter ingredients you have on hand to find recipes that use those ingredients. Simply Recipes, a recipe website that promises "Less Stress. More Joy," has a What's for Dinner section of their site that offers endless inspiration for stressed home cooks pressed to answer one of the most annoying questions a mom can ask herself at 4 pm on a busy weekday.



4. Stock your pantry with staples

Savvy home cooks always keep a variety of ingredients in their pantries or kitchen cabinets that can make last-minute meal prep easier. Items like canned tomato products, diced chiles, canned chickpeas and beans, dried fruit, dehydrated potato flakes, biscuit mix, spice blends, vegetable stock, California extra virgin olive oil, and jarred salsas, olives, pepperoncini and pasta sauces, as well as rice, many shapes of dry pasta, and canned tuna are just a few examples of the items you can almost always find in my pantry. I'm embarrassed by how large my spice collection has grown, but I'm also humbled by one of my favorite "flavor fix" spice blends that can make a pantry meal of pasta, pureed tomatoes, and beans an exciting offering in my home

and that's taco seasoning mix. I often also rely on Italian seasoning and chile-lime seasoning to boost flavor in many plant-forward meals.



5. Have a plan for the days when the plan falls apart

Life happens, right? Some days, no matter how hard you've prepared and planned, issues crop up that can wreck a great plan. When this happens encourage people (or yourself) to breathe for a moment, and then either grab the phone to place an order or grab the keys and go out to eat. Eating well doesn't mean only eating at home. Restaurants offer convenience, enjoyment, and entertainment, and many of them are striving to boost fruit and vegetable consumption. Restaurants also offer opportunities to try new fruits and vegetables, or familiar favorites prepared in new ways that can inspire new culinary creativity in future home meals.

For all of us working to inspire people to eat more fruits and vegetables more often we can never lose sight of the powerful impact our words and actions can have on people's emotions. Fruits and veggies can boost happiness and using multiple strategies to prepare and plan meals that incorporate more fruits and vegetables in all their glorious forms can reduce stress, save time and money, and instill powerful feelings of pride and confidence. I look forward to hearing how you are promoting the mood boosting benefits of meal preparation and planning!

Spring Vegetable & Envy™ Apple Orzo



INGREDIENTS

- 2 cup orzo pasta
- ¼ T chopped parsley
- 1 Envy™ apple, small diced

FOR THE ASPARAGUS

- 1 bunch asparagus, ends trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 T extra virgin olive oil
- ½ tsp kosher salt

FOR THE MUSHROOMS

- 4 cups sliced shiitake mushrooms
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ½ tsp kosher salt

FOR THE VINAIGRETTE

- 2 T extra virgin olive oil
- 3 T lemon juice
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 40 turns fresh cracked pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Toss the asparagus in olive oil and salt and spread out on a sheet tray. Roast in the oven until just tender, but still has a slight crunch.
3. Toss the mushrooms in the olive oil and salt and spread out on a sheet tray. Roast in the oven until golden brown and tender.
4. Whisk together the vinaigrette ingredients until well combined.
5. Cook the orzo in salted boiling water (should taste like the ocean) until tender. Drain well and then toss with the vinaigrette. Fold in the asparagus, mushrooms, apples, and parsley. Serve warm.



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