



THE LAST range ON EARTH

An activity to teach mindful eating

Why is mindful eating important?

Experts agree that **what** we eat greatly affects our health. But what about **how** we eat? Do we think about our food while we eat it, or, too often, do we eat while we drive, type on a keyboard, read a book, watch TV, or play a computer game? Based on research from the WIN the Rockies project¹, eating while doing something else increases the chances of a person gaining excess weight², but regardless of how much we weigh, this distracted or mindless eating is an unhealthy habit.

This handout describes an activity that can help educators teach adults and youths – all of us – to become more mindful when we eat. Mindful eating is an important part of having a healthy lifestyle, and we need a healthy lifestyle to achieve a healthy weight³.

Especially for educators

If you have been looking for a way to teach other people about mindful eating, this activity is designed with you in mind!

Learner objectives

As a result of this experience and taking time to actively see, smell, feel, and taste an orange while they eat it, participants will

- Recognize the importance of taking time to enjoy the food they eat.
- Value food as more than something to fill them up.
- Appreciate that an ordinary food can be uniquely satisfying.

These perspectives and skills can help people eat more mindfully.

UNIVERSITY
OF WYOMING
Cooperative Extension Service

Deborah Johnson, BS,
Family and Consumer
Science Educator, Natrona
County (retired)

Suzanne Pelican, MS, RD,
Food and Nutrition
Specialist, Department
of Family and Consumer
Sciences, University of
Wyoming Cooperative
Extension Service

“Honor the gift of food.”

—Northwest Coast
Indian proverb and WIN
the Rockies¹ and WIN
Wyoming⁴ principle

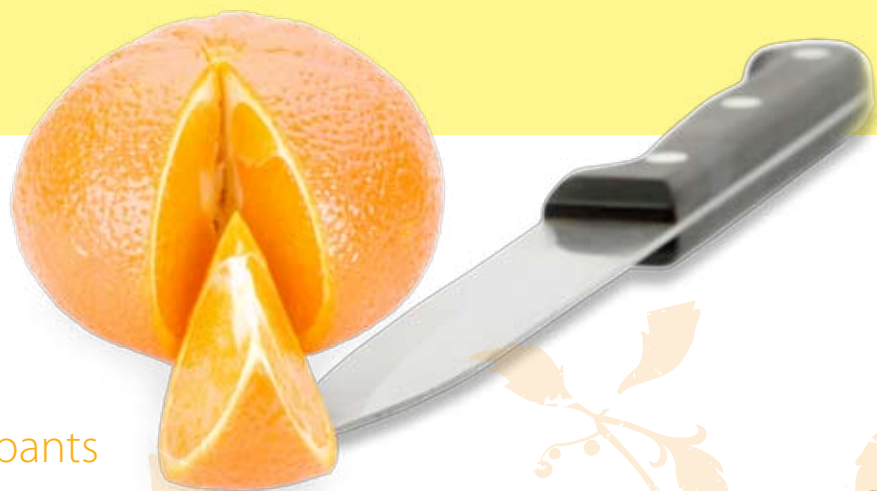
FOCUS
ON
HEALTH,
NOT
WEIGHT





What you will need

- Washed oranges, one for each participant. If oranges are too expensive, people can share.
- Paper towels or napkins.
- Paring knife for each participant. **Note:** If working with youths, sturdy plastic knives may be more appropriate.



Participant steps — Guidance to give your participants

1. Wash your hands.
2. Admire the color, shape, and texture of the fruit.
3. Oranges grow on trees in warm climates. Close your eyes and imagine where your orange grew. *Can you feel the warm sun? Can you smell the blossoms? Can you see the fruit on the trees?*
4. Open your eyes and smell the orange.
5. Place the orange on a napkin or piece of paper towel. Roll the orange firmly on the table to release the orange essence.
6. Pick up the orange again and smell the essence.
7. Use the knife to make several cuts, just through the peel. Create quarters by first cutting around the fruit and then cutting from top to bottom. **Note:** If working with youths, it may be best to have an adult or older youth make these cuts.
8. Take time to smell the orange again. *Does it smell stronger? Sweeter?*
9. Peel the fruit slowly, taking time to enjoy the aroma, texture, and color.
10. Separate a couple of segments. Examine their inner structure – hundreds of tiny juice-filled sacs.
11. Place a segment in your mouth, close your eyes, and bite down. Pay attention to how the juice bursts into your mouth and fills it with orange flavor.
12. Chew slowly and experience the texture of the membrane. *How is this different than drinking a glass of orange juice?*
13. As you chew slowly, pretend this is the last orange on earth. It's all yours!



Food for thought —

Questions to ask participants to guide discussion and convey other important meanings

Was the orange satisfying? Why or why not?

Do you usually eat an orange in this way?

What would happen if you ate food this way more often?

How often do you eat because you are hungry for food? How much is to fill a need that has nothing to do with food?

Imagine your orange really is the last one on earth, and it's your job to keep the memory of the orange from being lost from the world. Think about what you would say to another person. How would you describe the experience so he/she could appreciate an orange?



"I like this activity. Oranges are so much more than a rich source of vitamin C: The spray that can zing you when you peel it, the essence of orange and the 'fresh' that fills your nose, the juice that covers your fingers as you peel it. . . ."
- Judy Barbe, registered dietitian, Western Dairy Council

Fruit facts⁵

Did you know . . . ?

Botanically speaking, the orange we commonly eat or make into juice is *Citrus sinensis*. The bitter orange, also called Seville, is a different species.

Orange varieties include navel, Pera, Valencia, Hamlin, Moro, and Jaffa.

Orange trees are evergreens that can produce leaves, flowers, and fruit all at the same time.

In addition to being refreshing and delicious, oranges are packed with folate, vitamin C, potassium, fiber, and substances called phytochemicals, which help prevent disease.

History and geography

Oranges may have first grown in China 4,000 years ago.

About 2,000 years ago, oranges began to spread beyond China, probably first to India. They expanded

west to the Mediterranean, where orange trees spread across North Africa into Spain and Portugal.

Columbus carried seeds of orange and lemon trees to the West Indies.

Oranges today

Brazil is the leading orange-producing country in the world, followed by the United States, Mexico, Spain, Italy, China, Egypt, Turkey, Morocco, and Greece.

Florida and California are the leading orange-producing states in the United States. These two states produce nearly 25 **billion** pounds of oranges each year!

There are many ways to say "orange," for example: In Dutch – *sinasappel* (*see-nohs-ap-pel*); Italian – *arancia* (*ah-rah-n-chah*); Spanish – *naranja* (*nah-rah-n-ho*); German – *orange* (*oh-rong-je*).



Orange Peel Bread

Candied orange peel – instructions

Remove the peel from two large or three small oranges and place the peel in a saucepan. Reserve the segments to eat later or use in another recipe. Cover the peels with water, bring to a boil, and boil on high for two to three minutes. Rinse well. Chop fine or pulse in a food processor until pieces are small but not mushy. Add 1 cup sugar and simmer until the mixture is thick, about seven to nine minutes. Cool.

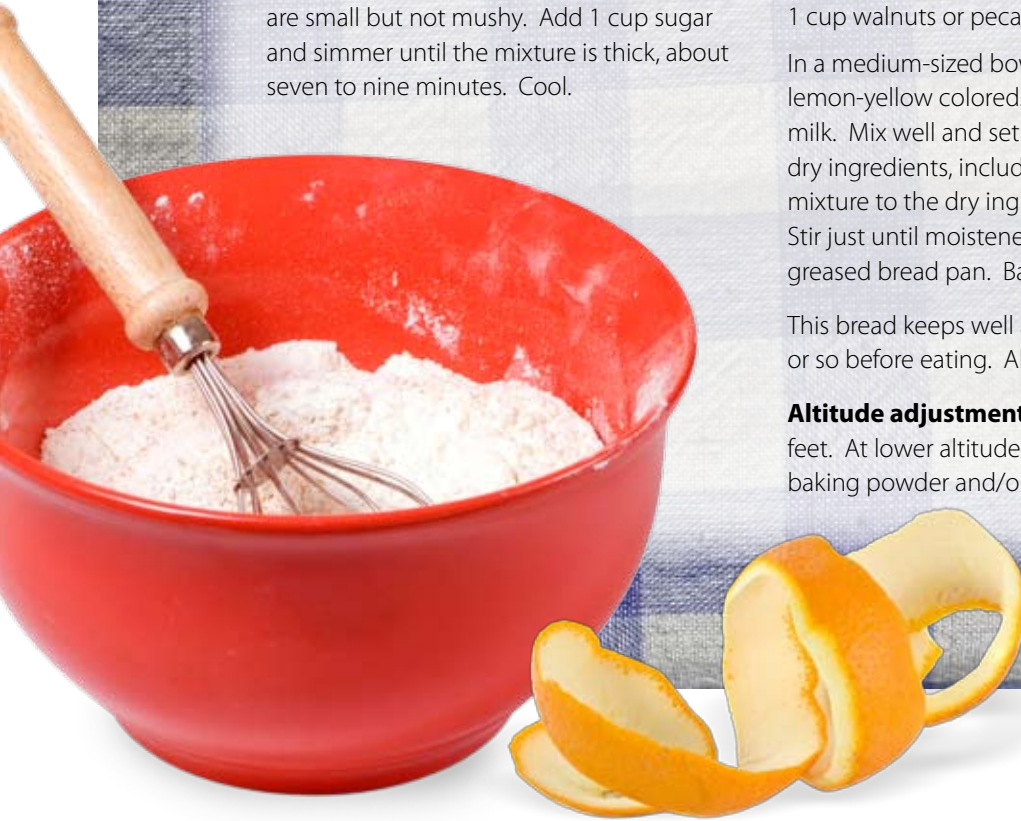
Bread – instructions

1 large egg
¾ cup evaporated skim milk
1 cup white flour
½ cup whole wheat flour
½ cup quick cooking oats
1 ¾ teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup walnuts or pecans, chopped

In a medium-sized bowl, beat egg until thick and lemon-yellow colored. Add candied orange peel and milk. Mix well and set aside. In a large bowl, combine dry ingredients, including nuts. Add the orange peel mixture to the dry ingredients, using a few swift strokes. Stir just until moistened. Pour into a 5-inch by 9-inch greased bread pan. Bake at 325 for 50 minutes.

This bread keeps well and is more flavorful if it sits a day or so before eating. Also delicious toasted!

Altitude adjustments: This recipe was tested at 5,000 feet. At lower altitudes, you may need to increase the baking powder and/or sugar somewhat.



A downloadable version of this publication is available at www.uwyo.edu/CES/PUBS/MP112-5.pdf.

¹ Wellness IN the Rockies (WIN the Rockies) was a research, intervention, and public service project in Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho, funded 2000-04 by USDA/IFAFS award #0004499. For more information, go to www.uwyo.edu/wintherockies.

² Liebman M., Pelican S., Moore S.A., Holmes B., Wardlaw M.K., Melcher L.M., Raidl M., Wheeler B., Haynes G.W. Dietary intake-, eating behavior-, and physical activity-related determinants of high body mass index in the 2003 Wellness IN the Rockies cross-sectional study. *Nutrition Research*. 2006; 26:111-117.

³ As defined by Joanne Ikeda, retired from the University of California–Berkeley and UC–Berkeley’s Center for Weight and Health, “a healthy weight is the weight you achieve when you have a healthy lifestyle.” Accordingly, for some people, their healthy weight will be within a so-called “normal” range of Body Mass Index (BMI) while the healthy weight for others will be outside that range. From this perspective, body weight is one important indicator of health, but there are other

important indicators, too. These include blood pressure, levels of fats in the blood (for example, triglycerides and high-density lipoprotein [HDL] and low-density lipoprotein [LDL] cholesterol), fruit and vegetable intakes, frequency and duration of physical activity, etc. Additional publications in the *Focus on Health, Not Weight* series provide information on other aspects of healthy lifestyles related to physical activity, food and eating, and body image.

⁴ WIN Wyoming <www.uwyo.edu/winwyoming>, a network of educators and health educators who embrace a health-focused (versus a weight-focused) approach to well-being was the genesis for the WIN the Rockies project.

⁵ These facts were compiled with information from these sources: “Fun facts about oranges,” 2000 fact sheet from Dole Food Company’s Nutrition and Health Program, accessed at www.dole5aday.com/FoodService/pdfs/FACTSHEET_Oranges.pdf; and “Orange” in *The Oxford Companion to Food* by Alan Davidson, Oxford University Press, New York, 1999, pp. 558-559.

Senior Editor: Steven L. Miller • Graphic Designer: Tana Stith

Issued in furtherance of cooperative extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Glen Whipple, director, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming 82071.

The University of Wyoming is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.