

# **March is National Nutrition Month**

Submitted by The Washburn County CHIP Steering Committee

Every year the month of March is considered National Nutrition Month by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND). The theme in 2018 is “Go Further with Food.”

This year people are encouraged to shop locally when purchasing their food, especially at local farmer’s markets. Shopping locally can be a great way to add healthful foods to your nutrition plan at an affordable price. It can also be a great way to positively help the local economy and environment.

When shopping for groceries, bring a list of what you need and what foods you know how to prepare. Talk to the local farmers and growers about different foods that you may not be familiar with. They can share with you how the food is grown and different ways to prepare it, so don’t be afraid to try something new. A list of area Farmers Markets can be found at [www.wifarmersmarkets.org](http://www.wifarmersmarkets.org).

Another way you can go further with food is to store your food correctly to reduce waste and lower your grocery bill. In the United States, about 31% of food is wasted and the average household throws away 28% of their fruits and vegetables. So before going to the store, check your refrigerator to see what you have on hand and plan meals around that to prevent waste. Another idea is to freeze what you are not going to use. For example, if you buy fruit in bulk like blueberries or strawberries, freeze the amount you won’t eat within 1 week. You can then add the frozen or thawed fruit to desserts, parfaits, or smoothies. Always remember to identify and date the food to ensure that you use the oldest foods first.

When purchasing food at the store you’ll want to make sure you know how to read the date label. The “**sell by**” date is meant for the store to know when they should stop selling that item. The “**best if used by**” date is the last date the product is at its peak quality. However, if there is any doubt about the safety of food, such as spots of mold, a funny smell, or change in consistency, it would be best to throw it away.

## **Available Local Food and Related Resources:**

Your Medical Provider, Chiropractor, Physical Therapist, Registered Dietitian, Hospital or Pharmacist.

Washburn County WIC (Women’s, Infants, & Children) 715-635-4400

Indianhead Community Action Agency (ICAA) 715-635-3975

Washburn County Health Department: 715-635-4400

ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Center) 715-635-4460

Local Veterans Service Office: 715-635-4470

Lakeland Family Resource Center: 715-635-4669

Local Food Pantries

School Meal Programs

## **State and Federal Resources:**

[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)

[www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)

[www.wifarmersmarkets.org](http://www.wifarmersmarkets.org)

## **Resources used in this article:**

[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)