



# NUTRI-NEWS



April 2009

“Balloons for a Balanced Lunch”  
NUTRI-SERVE FOOD MANAGEMENT, INC

Volume 20 Number 8



## Nutri-Serve’s Wellness Campaign—The Orange Flag – The Grain Group

Nutri-Serve has taken pride this year ushering in as part of our wellness campaign flags coordinated with the colors of the food groups of the Food Guide Pyramid. Our discussion on Nutri-Serve’s wellness campaign continues this month featuring the orange flag representing those foods from the grain group –or those foods made from wheat, rye, oats, cornmeal, barley or another cereal grain. “**Make half your grains whole**” is our theme meaning that half of the foods eaten from this food group should consist of whole wheat flour, cracked wheat, brown rice and whole cornmeal.

## Why is this food group important in a healthy diet?

Once thought of as a “fattening” food group we now realize that there are many health benefits linked to eating foods, particularly whole grains, from this food group. Whole grain consumption has been associated with a reduced risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and some cancers. It is also beneficial for digestive health and weight control.

Foods from this group provide **carbohydrates** for energy, **B vitamins** such as **thiamin**, **riboflavin** and **niacin**, trace minerals such as **iron**, **copper** and **zinc**. All enriched grain products are also fortified with **folic acid**, a nutrient shown to reduce some birth defects.

**How much should one eat of these foods?** It all depends on several factors such as one’s age, sex and physical activity. For children in grades K-12 it is a minimum 5-7 ounce equivalents\* daily of grains that is recommended.

\*In general, 1 cup of ready-to-eat cereal, or ½ cup of cooked rice, cooked pasta, or cooked cereal can be considered as 1 ounce equivalent from the grains group.

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