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The Place of Avocados in the National Nutrition Program

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The demonstration included naming the foods necessary for good nutrition. The foods were taken from a market basket and displayed on a table as each class of foods was listed. There were eleven classes of foods. A chart listing three meals, breakfast, lunch and dinner including the food nutrients supplied by these meals was displayed. A chart giving the food value of the avocado was used to illustrate the contribution avocados make to the daily diet.

The new yardstick for good nutrition was determined at the National Nutrition Conference for Defense held in Washington, D.C., May 26, 1941. The yardstick for good nutrition measures foods which build and repair the body, keep the body in good running order, give energy for work and play, help prolong the prime of life and are a basis for good health.

Today we will not only talk about the foods which measure up to the yardstick for good nutrition but will also demonstrate the foods necessary for adequate nutrition. I have here in a market basket foods which should be included in the daily diet. These foods are: (1) Milk—Each child should have one quart of milk a day, other members of the family, one pint or more. (2) One or more servings of green leafy or yellow vegetables should be included in the daily diet. We have carrots and spinach, illustrating a leafy green or yellow vegetable. (3) There should be a serving of tomatoes, oranges or grapefruit. The display of oranges demonstrates one serving or more of this class of food. (4) A potato a day is necessary. (5) There should be another fruit or vegetable. Avocados or any other fruit or vegetable should be included in this class of foods. (6) One egg a day or at least 3 or 4 a week is part of the measurement of the new yardstick for good nutrition. (7) A serving of lean meat, fish, poultry, nuts or legumes. (8) At least two servings of whole grain cereal. (9) Fats in the form of butter or oil are necessary. (10) Some sweets which we will illustrate with honey or molasses are the next designation of the new yardstick. (11) The last measure for adequate nutrition is water. At least six or more glasses a day.

You are a group of avocado growers and are interested in knowing the place avocados play in the yardstick for good nutrition. Avocados contribute nutrients in the form of calories, protein, calcium, iron, Vitamin A, Vitamin Bi or thiamin chloride, Vitamin C or ascorbic acid, as well as riboflavin which are emphasized in the new yardstick for good nutrition.

AMOUNT OF FOOD ELEMENTS REQUIRED

The moderately active woman has the following daily requirement: 2500 calories, 60 grams of protein, 800 milligrams of calcium, 12 milligrams of iron, 5000 International Units of Vitamin A, 1500 micrograms of thiamin (Vitamin B₁), 70 milligrams of ascorbic acid (Vitamin C), 2200 micrograms of riboflavin and 15 milligrams of nicotinic acid. This chart which I have placed before you illustrates three meals including an average breakfast, lunch and dinner. The foods included in the basket are orange juice, rolled oats, whole wheat toast, butter, egg and coffee. The lunch included ham sandwich made with whole wheat bread, lettuce and tomato salad, and a glass of milk. The dinner is made up of roast beef, potato, buttered broccoli, persimmon salad, whole wheat bread and butter and lemon pie. These foods would furnish an adequate amount of calories, protein, calcium, iron, Vitamin A, Vitamin B₁, Vitamin C and Vitamin B₂ or riboflavin for the daily diet. You are of course interested in knowing what part avocados would play in the new yardstick for good nutrition. One-half of a 4-inch avocado would furnish the following nutrients: 225 calories, 2 grams of protein, 45 milligrams of calcium, 6.30 milligrams of iron, 110 International Units of Vitamin A, 125 micrograms of Vitamin B₁, 7 milligrams of ascorbic acid or Vitamin C, 140 micrograms of riboflavin. One-half of a 4-inch avocado furnishes 7.5% of the daily requirement of calories for a moderately active man, 2.8% of the daily protein, 5.6% of the daily calcium, 52.5% of the daily iron, 2.2% Vitamin A, 6.7% Thiamin chloride (Vitamin B₁), 9.3% ascorbic acid (Vitamin C), and 5.1% of riboflavin (Vitamin B₂).

The avocado contributes to 8 of the nutrients in the yardstick for good nutrition. We have before us 11 classes of food including milk; leafy green or yellow vegetables; tomatoes, oranges or grapefruit; potatoes; another fruit or vegetable; one egg; lean meat, poultry, fish, legumes, nuts or lentils; whole grain cereal and bread; fats; sweets; and water. These foods are necessary because they contribute nutrients in the form of calories, protein, calcium, iron, Vitamin A, Vitamin B₁, ascorbic acid (Vitamin C), Vitamin D and riboflavin or Vitamin B₂. All animals including man need to build and repair their bodies, keep them in running order and have energy for work and play. Calories are necessary for heat and energy. Protein builds and repairs the body as does calcium and iron. The vitamins are protective and regulating factors while water regulates and builds body tissues by furnishing two-thirds of the body weight.