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## **Amplifying Life**

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### Healthy Food Choices

I talked in my first article about applying little improvements to our daily lives to make an impact on our personal well-being and quality of life. By making a conscience decision to be intentional about one single choice or habit at a time, it makes the change easier.

January usually brings an abundance of New Year' Resolutions. Sometimes eating habits or overall wellness are part of that list. Why not make this an intentional effort to eat healthier with choices that are realistic? Don't try to tackle the whole mountain of healthy eating at one time. Choose an area that you feel like you can improve on and make small goals to improve. What is one small way you can improve on? It takes repetition to make it a habit. When you feel like that smaller task is a habit, make it harder or add another healthy choice to your intentions.

You might consider adding one more fruit or vegetable to your daily meals. You might decide you should improve water intake, decrease soda consumption, or decrease the number of sweets you eat to name a few. Drinking eight glasses of water a day is easy to track. When you feel thirsty you have waited too long to have a drink of water. You might set a goal to be more aware of ingredients in the foods you purchase. This might mean when you buy peanut butter you compare to see which is healthier. Don't try the whole list, just choose one or two areas to begin with. This also depends are where your starting point is for this journey.

Think about fruits and vegetables that are in season. It is hard to think of fruits, vegetables and gardens when it is below freezing outside. Believe it or not, there are some that are currently in season and tend to have a price and quality that reflects it. Some examples of produce options now are bananas, apples, sweet potatoes, grapefruit, onions, and avocados to name a few. A full list of produce by season can be found on the USDA Snap-Ed webpage <https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/seasonal-produce-guide>. Fruits and vegetables that are in season during the summer months and available at the local store, farmer's markets, or even your own garden make it a great time to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Think about the rainbow when you are making fruit and vegetable choices. Each color group of fruits and vegetables offer their own set of vitamins, minerals, and health benefits. Choose a variety for your "rainbow" of fruits and vegetables to ensure

you are getting the vitamins and minerals your body needs. By choosing a variety of colors and textures you are addressing many health concerns in your own body. Good luck in your wellness choices. If you have any questions, feel free to call or email them in. Shandi Andres, Flint Hills Extension District, 501 W Main, Council Grove, KS 66846. (620) 767-5136 or [sdandres@ksu.edu](mailto:sdandres@ksu.edu)