

## GROWING HEALTHY FUTURES

### Get Ready for Farm Direct 2019!

What a season! The 2018 WIC Farm Direct Nutrition Program saw new materials, 53,000+ participants, and a 60% increase in the amount redeemed. The excitement continues this year with new education tools and over 700 local farmers ready to send fresh produce home with our families.

The new **I ♥ Vegetables** book (see side panel) is a comprehensive guide to buying, cooking, and loving vegetables. You are encouraged to distribute these books with Farm Direct checks to promote fresh produce and encourage check redemption. To help narrow down the extensive content, work with participants to see what sections they are most interested in. A few favorites are:

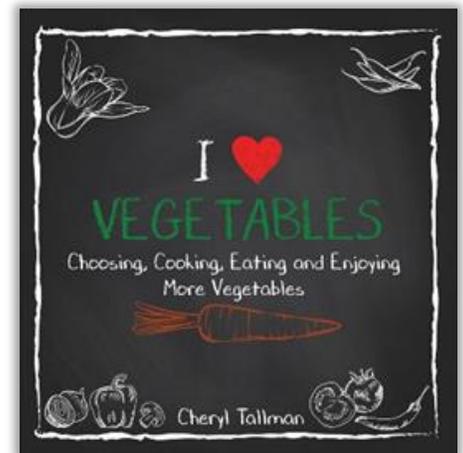
- Making the most of the farmers market
- Alphabetical vegetable guide (especially the “tips”)
- Roasting vegetables
- Recipes featuring other WIC foods such as the veggie oatmeal, broccoli cheese soup, and cucumber yogurt sauce
- Customizable salad featuring all the food groups

Another exciting addition to the FDNP lineup is a **new video** showing participants how to use their checks at the farmers market. The video, available in English and Spanish, was originally created by Jackson County WIC with funding from a 2018 FDNP Expansion mini-grant and adapted for statewide use this year. The video is available online to be shared during appointments, classes, in waiting areas, via social media, or anywhere participants may see it!



**Video:**  
[Using Your Farm Direct Nutrition Program Checks](#)

### New Farm Direct Education Resource!



The new **I ♥ Vegetables** book can help participants choose, cook, eat and enjoy more vegetables. This 60-page book includes:

- The importance of vegetables
- Shopping tips
- Food safety
- In-depth vegetable guide
- 28 Recipes with photos
- Step-by-step guide to steaming and roasting vegetables

The full-color books are available in English and Spanish and will be sent directly to your agencies by early May.

Your agency will receive enough books for most FDNP families to receive one.

# I'm glad you asked!

## *Is fruit bad for me because it has sugar?*



Sugar gets such a bad rap that some people hesitate to eat foods that contain natural sugars, especially fruit. There's plenty of research exposing the detrimental health effects of eating too much added sugar, but less so with natural sugars. Overall, fruit intake is associated with a lower risk of cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, and type 2 diabetes.

Another confusing point is that some fruits like watermelon and grapes have a high glycemic index, a tool that measures how quickly a food increases blood sugar. But more accurate than the glycemic index is the glycemic load, which factors the amount of carbohydrate per serving of a food and to what degree it will raise a person's blood glucose level after eating it. Because watermelon and grapes are fairly low in carbohydrate, their glycemic load is low. In general, most whole fresh or frozen fruits have a relatively low glycemic load.

Furthermore, whole fruits have a built-in stoplight. They are more naturally satisfying, whereas highly processed foods tend to be easy-to-digest and easy to overeat! Imagine how quickly one can gulp down a can of cola that contains 40 grams of processed sugar. Now think about how long it takes to chew through an apple that contains about 13 grams of natural sugar in addition to various fibers, vitamins, antioxidants, and water. The apple takes longer to eat and is more satiating, so you are less likely to reach for another.

**The takeaway:** Fruits contain natural sugar and many other beneficial nutrients, so they are a healthful addition to a daily diet. Go ahead and enjoy those farm direct cherries, berries, peaches and pears!

Learn more:

[www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/common-questions-fruits-vegetables/](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/common-questions-fruits-vegetables/)

## Shopping Tip



### Spend them all by fall.

There is diverse produce available throughout the Farm Direct season, but July-September typically offers the biggest variety. Although checks can be spent through November, some locations may close by October.

Most participants spend *all* their checks, but last year over 10,000 only spent *some* - meaning 1-6 checks instead of 7.

To avoid forgetting Farm Direct checks participants could:

- Keep checks securely in a purse or wallet so they aren't left at home
- Confirm participating location times and dates and mark a planned visit on a calendar
- Set a phone reminder for July or August

Unless saving checks for late season produce or Thanksgiving side dishes, let's encourage participants to spend them all by fall!



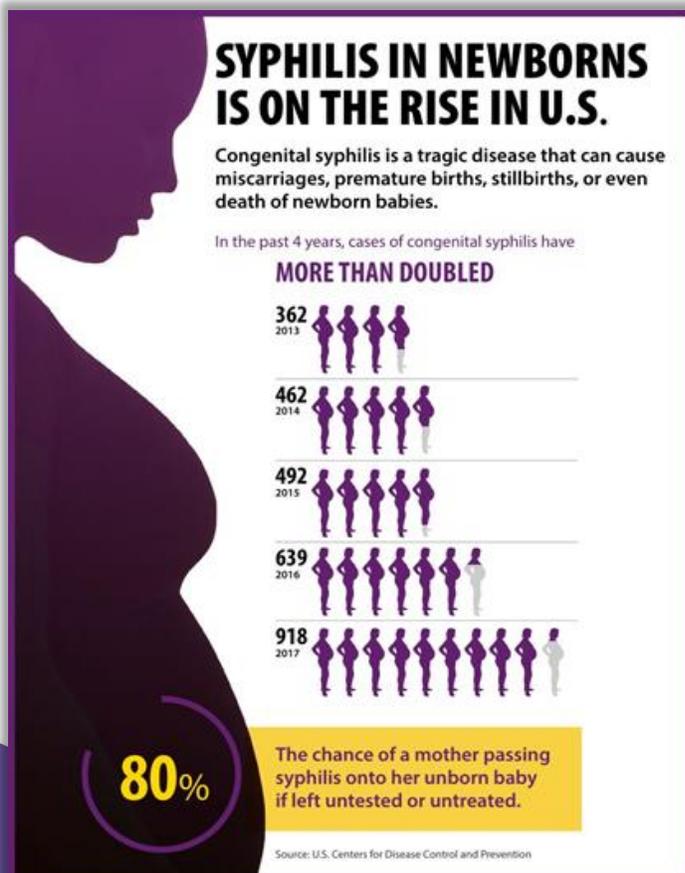
# Syphilis in newborns is on the rise

by Jillian Garai, STD/HIV Prevention Nurse, and Tim Menza, STD Program Medical Director

April is STD Awareness Month and the Oregon Health Authority's STD Program is raising awareness about the risk of congenital syphilis. Congenital syphilis is the disease that occurs when a mother with syphilis passes the infection on to her baby during pregnancy. Up to 40% of babies born to women with untreated syphilis may be stillborn (born dead) or die from the infection as a newborn. Infants born with congenital syphilis might have health problems like skin rashes, yellowing of the skin or whites of the eyes, enlarged liver and spleen, or low blood count. Untreated babies that survive the newborn period can develop problems later on, including developmental delays or seizures.

The keys to congenital syphilis prevention are early prenatal care, testing, and treatment. It is important that all pregnant women be tested three times: at the first prenatal visit, the beginning of the third trimester, and at delivery. Prompt and complete treatment decreases the chance of passing the infection to the baby.

There were 11 congenital syphilis cases reported in Oregon in 2018, a 38% increase above the 2017 total, and 41 cases of syphilis during pregnancy. We can help prevent further increases in congenital syphilis by increasing awareness among health care providers and pregnant clients.



Umatilla Morrow Community Head Start WIC works with OSU Extension and Food Hero

Watch this [video](#) to learn how WIC partnered with other programs to help our families learn about using more fruits and veggies.

The [Food Hero website](#) is a great place to find recipes for using all those FDNP fruits and veggies.

## Issuing FDNP checks at a farmers market?

When issuing checks offsite you will need to post the new **Offsite Program Notification**.



This required posting includes notification of program availability and a nondiscrimination statement. More information about how to customize and print this notification is coming soon. *This is not required if issuing FDNP checks at the clinic.*