Mystery WIC Bag Recipe Contest

Submitted by SDSU Research Foundation WIC Program

Concept:
Teams of WIC employees were challenged with creating and preparing a recipe “on the spot” from a bag of WIC-allowable food items. In addition to the recipe, the teams had to come up with a marketing message for their finished recipe in the form of a skit, song or poster to share.

A Nutrition Education Coordinator came up with the idea for this staff meeting activity as part of the Healthy Habits campaign.

Timeline:
Describing the activity, presenting the materials and instructions, and completing the team work took approximately 1.5 hours.

Process:
Teams of six employees were divided in two groups. Three employees were tasked with recipe development and preparation, and three were tasked with marketing message development and delivery.

The Recipe Group had to use all of the ingredients in the mystery bag to create an appetizer, salad, or snack to serve four.

The Marketing Group was in charge of creating the team name and developing a poem, song, skit or combination of these to market the recipe. Each group had to incorporate a Healthy Habits message.

Each team was scored on originality, presentation, and practicality for participant use.
Materials:
In each team’s bag there were 4 to 6 items found in the WIC food package, including one item from each group: fruit/veggie, whole grains, dairy, and protein. Examples:

- peanut butter
- whole wheat tortilla
- oats/cereal
- peach
- red pepper
- parsley
- string cheese
- baby food
- black beans
- spinach
- tofu

A “free” table contained common pantry items (salt, pepper, sugar, etc.) as well as small appliances (blender, food processor) that could be used in recipe creation.

“The staff enjoyed this activity that provided opportunities for teamwork and for exploring the use of some new WIC foods. We would consider doing something like this again!” – WIC Program Director