

Submitter: Mr Tozie Zokufa

Author: Tozie Zokufa

Co Author:

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Food-based dietary guidelines (FBDGs) are short, positive, science-based messages that aim to create awareness, educate and equip consumers to change their eating behaviour. The need for specific FBDGs is propelled by persisting health risk factors and dietary intakes in South Africa.

Rates of obesity are high and under-nutrition is also a concern. Globally, there are now more overweight people than underweight people.

To confront this growing problem, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that people eat more fruits, vegetables, nuts, and whole grains, as well as transitioning away from saturated animal fats to unsaturated vegetable oil fats.

Studies have found that those who eat plant-based diets tend to have a lower risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes and cancer. Only 17% of South Africans eat a vitamin A rich fruit or vegetable daily. Researchers “found evidence for the existence of a positive association between well-being and fruit-and-vegetable consumption.”

Available data indicate that on national, household and individual levels in South Africa, quantities of available and consumed vegetables and fruit are much lower than the recommendations for children and adults, and the contribution of vegetables and fruit to nutrients in the diets of children is low.

In this poster we recommend that people eat more fruits, vegetables and pulses and support the Green Monday campaign, which promotes eating and serving of plant based meals on Mondays.