



State of North Carolina
Department of Health and Human Services

For Release: Immediate

Date: March 19, 2007

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**North Carolina joins national launch of a new public health initiative,
Fruits & Veggies—More Matters™**

RALEIGH—Although research indicates that more than half of adults know they need to eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day, fewer than 10 percent of all Americans actually do it. To encourage North Carolinians to eat more fruits and veggies, a new national public health initiative, Fruits & Veggies—More Matters™, was introduced at an event held at the State Farmers Market in Raleigh today.

Fruits & Veggies—More Matters™ was created to encourage Americans to eat more fruits and veggies in all forms – fresh, frozen, canned, dried and “100 percent” juice.

Increased daily consumption of fruits and vegetables appears to help prevent many chronic diseases. Replacing the old 5 A Day program, Fruits & Veggies—More Matters™ focuses on motivating people to simply eat *more* fruits and veggies at every eating occasion. The new initiative spotlights the taste, nutrition, abundant variety and different forms of fruits and vegetables, including fresh, frozen, canned and dried produce and “100 percent” juices.

“We want all North Carolinians to know about this important health initiative,” said Diane Beth, state fruit and vegetable nutrition coordinator. “While Americans seem to know about the health benefits of eating fruit and veggies, most people would need to at least double the amount they currently consume in order to meet the new dietary guidelines. The idea behind Fruits & Veggies—More Matters is that, whether a person currently eats 1, 4 or 8 servings of fruits and veggies a day, he or she will benefit from eating more—*more matters*.”

Speaking in support of the new initiative at the launch event were state leaders Steve Troxler, commissioner of agriculture; Dr. Leah Devlin, state health director; and Dr. Marcus Plescia, representing the N.C. Medical Society. Local farmer Fred Miller spoke about the importance of locally grown, nutritious produce, and Avien Blackman, Raleigh’s first “Fruits & Veggies Star Mom,” told how she learned to keep her family healthy by using fruits and vegetables in everyday meals and snacks.

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The event also featured nutrition experts, cooking demos, taste testings, food carving and garnish demos, door prizes, and activities for families.

The N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the N.C. Division of Public Health partnered to host the launching of North Carolina Fruits & Veggies—More Matters™. Other sponsors included the State Farmers Market, Food Lion, Duke University Dining Program, Inter-Faith Food Shuttle, Lowes Foods, N.C. Medical Society and Wake County Human Services.

Other events are planned throughout the week in Charlotte, Greenville, Wilmington, and in the counties covered by the Appalachian District Health Department.

The nationwide Fruits & Veggies—More Matters™ initiative is being led by the Produce for Better Health Foundation and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in partnership with The Culinary Institute of America and other organizations committed to achieving increased daily consumption of fruits and vegetables. In North Carolina, it is being led by state- and local-level partner organizations of the N.C. Fruits & Veggies Nutrition Coalition. More information about Fruits & Veggies—More Matters™ is on the web at www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org .

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