

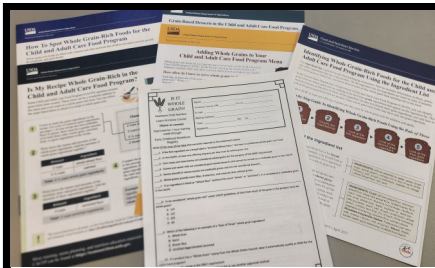
# Heartland Child Nutrition, Inc.

Sponsor of the USDA Child & Adult Care Food Program

A newsletter for ND Child Care Providers participating in the Heartland Child Nutrition USDA Food Program



## Summer 2026



A new learn-at-home will be delivered by your Regional Representative soon! Is it Grain? will provide one hour of ND Early Childhood Registry credit. For all learn-at-

home information contact Tanya in the HCN office (701.250.0140) or email (tanya@heartlandnutrition.org)



What is an owl's favorite kind of music?  
Hootenanny!  
What do you call an owl at a hospital?  
Doctor Hoo



**EFFECTIVE JUNE 8, 2026**

Whole, reduced-fat (2%), low-fat (1%), and fat-free (skim) can be served to 2 year-olds and up. Whole milk is still required for 1-2 year-olds. If you have any questions please call the Heartland office (701.250.0140)



### Bubble Dough

- 1 cup cornstarch
- 1/2 cup dish soap (preferably clear)
- Optional: food coloring
- Optional: glitter or essential oils

In a mixing bowl, add 1 cup of cornstarch and gradually pour in 1/2 cup of dish soap. Stir gently to combine. Mix until the dough comes together. If too dry, add a bit more soap; if too wet, sprinkle in more cornstarch. If using food coloring, add a few drops and knead until evenly distributed. Roll the dough into shapes or use cookie cutters for designs. Experiment by blowing bubbles with a straw dipped into the dough. Store the bubble dough in an airtight container at room temp for up to a week.



# MealTime Memo

June  
2026



**KEEP IT FRESH: STORING  
FRUITS & VEGGIES SAFELY**



When you handle and store fruits and vegetables correctly, they stay fresh and safe for the children in your care. This *Mealtime Memo* gives tips for cleaning and storing produce to help prevent waste and keep food safe.

## Cleaning Produce

Before you prepare fresh fruits and vegetables:



- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Rinse all produce under cool, running water— never soak it in a sink or container of water. This includes fruits and vegetables with peels or rinds you don't eat, such as melons, squash, pineapples, and oranges, since bacteria on the outside can spread to the inside when you cut or peel them.
- Use a clean produce brush on firm items, such as potatoes, cucumbers, and cantaloupe.
- Do not use soap, bleach, or produce washes. Water alone is best.
- Check for bruises, mold, or dirt. Cut away bad spots or discard the food item if it is completely unsafe.
- Do not rewash packaged produce labeled "ready-to-eat," "washed," or "triple-washed."

**Pro Tip:** Wash fruits and veggies before you use them, not before storing them. Pre-washing can make them spoil faster.

Wash fruits and veggies just before you use them.



## Where to Store Produce

Knowing where to keep fruits and vegetables helps them stay fresh longer. Here is a guide:

### On the Counter

- Keep bananas and tomatoes at room temperature.
- Let avocados, mangoes, melons, peaches, plums, and pears ripen on the counter. Once ripe, move them to the fridge to stay fresh longer.
- Put fruit in a paper bag with a ripe banana to ripen it faster and check daily.



### In the Pantry

- Store potatoes, sweet potatoes, onions, garlic, and winter squash in a cool, dark, dry place like a pantry.
- Keep onions separate from other produce—they release gas that can make other veggies spoil faster.



### In the Fridge

- Keep cut, peeled, or cooked fruits and vegetables in a covered container, labeled with the date the produce was prepped or cooked.
- Refrigerate within four hours of cutting or cooking and store at 41 °F (5 °C) or colder.
- Keep raw foods (like meat, poultry, or seafood) away from and below produce to prevent cross-contamination.
- Store washed produce above unwashed or raw items.



## Keep Fruits & Veggies Apart

Some fruits give off a natural gas called ethylene that can speed up ripening—and even spoil other produce faster.

- **Ethylene-producing fruits:** oranges, pears, apples, peaches, berries
- **Ethylene-sensitive vegetables:** cucumbers, asparagus, lettuce, broccoli, peppers, green beans

For best results, store ethylene-producing fruits away from ethylene-sensitive vegetables—preferably in separate fridge drawers. This helps produce last longer and reduces waste.

*Happy Summer*



Like us on  
Facebook



P.O. Box 1218, 521 Main Ave, Suite 420  
Bismarck, ND 58502-1218  
701-250-0140 or 800-366-6793  
hcn@heartlandnutrition.org  
www.heartlandnutrition.org

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.