



Background

- Since 2004, the Health Promotion
 Department of HSE West in partnership with
 the Organic Centre, Co Leitrim has
 supported active involvement to change
 patterns of food intake through a community
 food and gardening initiative
- In 2007, the Department of Food and Agriculture match funded the HSE contribution





Project outline

- Six sites
 - 3 Urban based in Sligo/Donegal
 - 3 Rural based in Sligo/Leitrim
- Participants (approx 12 each site)
 recruited through variety of community
 and statutory contacts/ groups.
 Particularly focused towards those
 managing on tight budget
- Participants have included clients of disability services and asylum seekers



Project outline

- Hands-on experience with professional gardener
 - March October
 - Sessions 2-3 hours once a week
 - Theory discussions and handouts induded
 - Finish with harvest event / celebration
- Cookery classes provided by Eat Well Be Well tutors on 2 occasions throughout the course
- Participants get to harvest, take home, and use the produce that they help grow
- Project w as again replicated successfully in 2007
- Project co-ordinated by multi-sectoral Steering group





Aims

- To increase knowledge, awareness and skills among target groups in relation to fruit and vegetable production, preparation and consumption and to promote positive health and well-being
- Linked to recommendations of Cardiovascular Disease strategy, Obesity Taskforce report and the National Health Strategy





Objectives

- Improve participants' knowledge skills in vegetable and fruit growing
- Enhance participants' skills in preparing and cooking fruit and vegetables
- Increase participants consumption of fruit and vegetables
- Increase participants knowledge of the nutritional value of fruit and vegetables
- Develop more positive attitudes towards consumption of fruit and vegetables
- Provide opportunities for physical activity outdoors
- Provide opportunities for positive social interaction and development





Examples of Community Food Initiatives

- Community Gardens
- Training / Education programmes
- Food Co-ops
- Allotments
- Community Cafes
- School Initiatives
- Community Kitchens



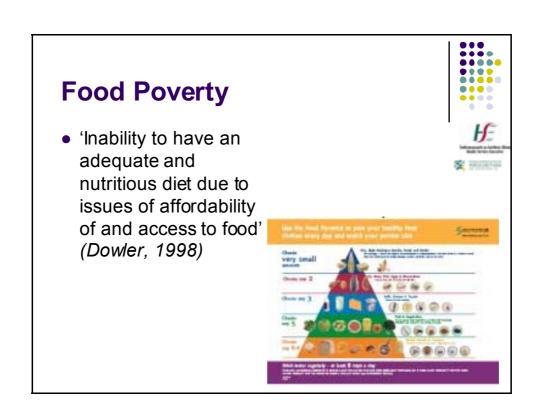


Impact of diet on health

- Poor diet risk factor for malnutrition, coronary health disease, cancer and diabetes
- Modern malnutrition is combination of obesity and imbalance of nutrients
- Poor diet is related to 30% of life years lost in early death and disability (WHO, 2002)







At risk groups

- · Low income households
- Lone parents
- Children and young people
- Older People
- Disabled People
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Ethnic groups
- Homeless communities
- Travellers



Benefits of fruit and vegetables



- Reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke and some cancers
- Increasing fruit and veg is 2nd most important cancer prevention strategy, after reducing smoking
- Can help reduce blood pressure
- Help achieve other dietary goals including increasing fibre intake, reducing fat intake, aiding weight management and substituting for high sugar foods



Benefits of Community Food Projects

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- Environmental less waste, reduced food transportation
- Economic
- Community
 Development regeneration
- Educational
- Health physical activity, nutrition, mental health

