



UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA

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## NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**  
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### **The Lunchbox Makeover**

School is here and many of you may be wondering what to pack your children for lunch. Like most of us, you want quick and convenient items. Many lunches seem to be missing fruits, vegetables and whole grains and are usually packed with high fat, high salt and high sugar foods. A handful of foods tend to be most damaging to your children's health. By simply making a handful of changes you can create healthier lunches:

- Switch from fatty luncheon meats to low-fat alternatives such as lean and low-fat turkey breast, chicken breast, ham, bologna and roast beef.
- Use low-fat or fat-free dairy products. Encourage your children to choose from low-fat yogurts, cheeses and milk.
- Include at least one serving of fruit everyday. Try cutting melons into cubes or grab a bunch of grapes and pack in zipper lock bags.
- Use whole grain bread instead of white bread for sandwiches.
- Add vegetables like romaine lettuce, spinach leaves or cucumber slices to sandwiches.
- Add real fruit instead of fruit snacks like fruit chews, or fruit rolls. These foods are marketed to sound like they're healthy, but they're packed with sugar.
- Provide 100% fruit juice instead of fruit drinks.
- Appeal to your children's taste buds and appetite by adding contrast and variety.

Help keep your children's lunch safe by packing it in an insulated lunch bag or lunch box and include an ice pack or frozen beverage container. As a parent, you help guide your children's eating habits. Get them off to a healthy start!

Parents and child care providers can learn more about making healthy choices for young children through the Nutrition BEST program with the UCCE at (530) 889-7350 or visit us on the web at <http://ceplacer.ucdavis.edu>.

**Roger S. Ingram**  
**Acting County Director**