

Oldways Programs

Health Through Heritage



*PDFs and videos of most presentations will be available for downloading
at WholeGrainsCouncil.org/attend-our-conference sometime in December*

WHOLE GRAINS: BREAKING BARRIERS CONFERENCE

November 9-11, 2014, Boston, MA

OLDWAYS PROGRAMS

The Whole Grains Council is just one of many programs run by Oldways, a 501c3 nonprofit nutrition education organization. Since 1990, Oldways has been encouraging “health through heritage,” changing the way people eat with culturally relevant nutrition education programs.

In this section, learn more about the WGC’s sister programs:

- The Mediterranean Foods Alliance
- Oldways Vegetarian Network
- African Health & Heritage
- The Oldways Nutrition Exchange (ONE)
- Supermarket Dietitian Symposium
- Cheese of Choice Coalition
- Oldways Culinary Travels

Journalists seeking additional information about any of these programs can contact Rachel Greenstein, Communications Manager, at rachel@oldwayspt.org or 617-896-4888, or you may contact the Oldways manager listed after each program.

MEDITERRANEAN FOODS ALLIANCE

In a nutshell:

Oldways created the original Mediterranean Diet Pyramid in 1993, with the Harvard School of Public Health. Since then, we have carried out a wide variety of creative initiatives to popularize the Mediterranean Diet. Today, three programs form the core of our work with the Mediterranean Diet:

1. Our bi-weekly Fresh Fridays consumer email.
2. Our popular book, *The Oldways 4-Week Mediterranean Diet Menu Plan*.
3. Active outreach to doctors and dietitians, with support materials.

Details:

“The Mediterranean diet has long been celebrated as the gold standard of healthy diets for its highly palatable nature and favorable impact on the prevention of chronic diseases, promotion of greater longevity, and quality of life. A large body of scientific evidence has accumulated over the past several decades showing that Mediterranean-type diets are highly protective against the development of cardiovascular disease, metabolic disorders, and certain cancers.”

“The Mediterranean Diet and Your Health,” *American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine* (J. Brill. Jan/Feb 2009, vol 3 no. 1, 44-56)

Oldways helps both health professionals and ordinary people realize the potential of the Mediterranean Diet, as described above, with three programs:

Fresh Fridays e-newsletter

Sent out every other Friday to more than 11,000 opt-in subscribers, Fresh Fridays features short articles about the food traditions of the Mediterranean region, along with 3-5 recipes that illustrate these food traditions. Companies with an annual membership in the Mediterranean Foods Alliance may have their healthy Med foods featured periodically in Fresh Fridays recipes.

The Oldways 4-Week Mediterranean Diet Menu Plan

Available on the Oldways website and through Amazon.com, *The Oldways 4-Week Mediterranean Diet Menu Plan* includes positive and practical guidance for adopting a Med-style diet, along with daily menu plans and 57 delicious, easy-to-make recipes. A top-seller – ranking in the top 1/10 of 1% of all books on Amazon – this handy guide is endorsed by doctors and praised by individuals and families.

Materials for Doctors and Dietitians

Oldways offers a full suite of materials to support health professionals who are recommending the Mediterranean Diet to their patients. The materials include our Mediterranean Diet poster, refrigerator magnets, weekly grocery list pads, tear-off Med Diet Pyramid “prescription pads,” our trifold “Med 101” brochure, and of course our 4-Week Menu Plan, described above. Most of these materials can be co-branded with the name and logo of the doctor’s or dietitian’s practice.

Contact Cynthia Harriman, Cynthia@oldwayspt.org or 617-896-4820.

OLDWAYS VEGETARIAN NETWORK

In a nutshell:

To support the growing interest in plant-based diets, Oldways has created the Oldways Vegetarian Network (OVN). Its flagship initiative is *The Oldways 4-Week Vegetarian & Vegan Diet Menu Plan*, an 88-page guide to the delicious and satisfying tastes of a plant-based diet.

Details:

The future is green. Many well-educated health professionals are urging us to move plants to the center of our plates and the latest update on the 2015 Dietary Guidelines includes a call for Americans to reduce their consumption of meat and dairy and eat more plant-based foods.

Change is everywhere, from meatless choices in the supermarket aisles to veggie entrees on restaurant menus. Brooklyn has given us America's first vegan bar and Veganz, a 100-percent plant-based grocery chain, started in Germany, is scheduled to open its first US store in Portland, Oregon in 2016.

Oldways is supporting this momentum with our newest book, *The Oldways 4-Week Vegetarian & Vegan Diet Menu Plan*. This slim, approachable volume shows how simple and delicious going meatless can be, with tips and basic advice combined with daily meal plans and recipes any cook can make.

“Here is an easy-to-follow guide for healthy eating, with helpful tips for preparing and cooking nutritious vegetarian meals.”

—Joan Sabaté, MD, DrPH, Professor of Nutrition, Loma Linda University

“I have long been grateful to Oldways for shining the light on traditional diets as the best source of food wisdom. This new, clear guide to plant-based eating brings the discussion full-circle, providing structure and inspiration to people who would like to reduce (or eliminate) the meat factor from their plates. With the beautifully presented information here, we can trust that we are in good hands, and proceed smartly and more deeply into the delicious world of garden- and orchard-based cuisine.”

—Mollie Katzen, author of *Moosewood Cookbook*, and *The Heart of the Plate: Vegetarian Recipes for a New Generation*

The OVN is a primary resource for reliable nutrition information on vegetarian and vegan diets and plant-based eating. Think of us as a source for the latest science behind plant-based diets and a connection to individuals who can lend credible quotes. We stand ready to help journalists develop stories that bust the myths and knock down barriers that interfere with eating more plant foods. Our team includes dietitian Sharon Palmer, author of *The Plant-Based Diet* and *Plant-Based for Life*, who is available for OVN interviews.

Contact Georgia Orcutt, gorcutt@oldwayspt.org or 617-896-4861

A TASTE OF AFRICAN HERITAGE

In a nutshell:

A Taste of African Heritage is a national cooking program –offered at more than 100 locations across the country – that combines cultural history, nutrition and six cooking lessons on healthy, heritage-inspired meals to improve the health and well-being of African Americans.

Details:

Many people are unaware that traditionally, African American ancestors ate a plant-based, whole food diet that was extremely high in flavor and nutrition. In fact, many of today's healthiest foods have their roots in African heritage—leafy greens, sweet potatoes, millet, watermelon, okra, lentils and peas, and flaxseeds to name just a few.

That's why Oldways developed the African Heritage Diet Pyramid, which celebrates and educates about traditional foods and diets across the African diaspora—from Africa to South America, the Caribbean, and the American South.

To bring the African Heritage Diet Pyramid to life for people everywhere, Oldways has developed **A Taste of African Heritage**, an empowering and culturally-relevant national cooking program that combines cultural history, nutrition, and cooking lessons on healthy, heritage-inspired meals to dramatically improve health and well-being. Over the six weeks of the program, students reconnect to a long tradition of healthy, garden-to-table eating that has the power to heal and inspire, helping people to claim health by reclaiming history.

"African-American foodways have, for many years, been perceived negatively because less-healthy 'special occasion' dishes are now marketed more as everyday foods," says Vivien Morris, RD, who is an African Heritage Diet Advisor and class instructor. "But we are celebrating the real traditional African-American culinary heritage, which is wonderfully health-promoting."

We have found that it takes just six weeks to change your plate and your life. Reporting from our 2012-2014 classes shows that:

- Over 50% of graduates report cooking at least 5 times per week
- Over 50% have increased their vegetable intake
- Over 75% are eating leafy greens “at least 3-4 times per week”
- 2 out of 3 graduates have lost weight over the six week course
- And over 35% have seen a decrease in blood pressure status

A Taste of African Heritage is being delivered in over 100 communities nationwide, with the help of outstanding volunteer teachers and organizations, and it has been covered widely by local and national journalism, including: The Associated Press, The Washington Post, NPR Houston, NPR Cincinnati, Food & Nutrition Magazine, and many more.

So, what exactly does this program cover? Here's a small sneak preview at some of the topics discussed each week:

A Taste of African Heritage (cont.)

Class 1: Herbs & Spices

Have you ever tasted *Berberé* before? If you've eaten at an Ethiopian restaurant, chances are you've enjoyed this staple spice. In our first class, we showcase four aromatic spices from our African heritage regions – African, South America, the Caribbean, and American South – combining them in an unforgettable meal that showcases how spices can be used instead of excess salt, to build flavor..

Class 2: Leafy Greens

Did you know that there are over 150 types of edible greens in West Africa alone? Or that early African American cooks actually had a name for their greens water, saving it after cooking for its nutritional power? In this class, participants get an in-depth look at what puts leafy greens in a category all their own, nutritionally and historically.

Class 3: Whole Grains

Africa has more native grains than any other continent. It has its own species of rice, along with millet, barley, teff, several varieties of wheat, and dozens of other wild grains and cereals. In Lesson 3, classes whip up three vegetable-and-spice-infused whole grain dishes that take between 5 and 20 minutes to prepare. How's that for fast food?

Class 4: Beans (and Peas) And Rice

There are more than 13,000 varieties of beans on the planet. Incorporating them into your weekly menu vastly widens the list of dinner possibilities. Lesson 4 teaches about the incredible nutrition, flavor and affordability of rice and beans enjoyed all over the world, helping to make this dish a new staple at participants' tables.

Class 5: Tubers and Stews

If you're unfamiliar with the word "tuber", look no further. Lesson 5 takes you through familiar and unusual tuber territories, showing that "mashed potatoes" aren't just an American pastime *and* that potatoes make for a fabulously healthy meal when mixed with herbs, vegetables, and—traditionally—peanut butter.

Class 6: Fruits, Vegetables and a Healthy Lifestyle

Picture yourself walking through a market in Ghana or Jamaica. Suddenly you're met by a sea of colors – reds, oranges, yellows, and greens. What kinds of produce would we find? Many you'd recognize, but you might not prepare them in the savory traditional ways we share in Lesson 6. With African heritage as our guide, fruits and vegetables have never been tastier.

Please visit the **A Taste of African Heritage** webpage for more details about the program (<http://oldwayspt.org/programs/african-heritage-health>). If you are a journalist interested in attending any local classes, please contact Rachel Greenstein at rachel@oldwayspt.org.

Contact Sarah McMackin, sarahm@oldwayspt.org or 512-330-0111

OLDWAYS NUTRITION EXCHANGE

In a nutshell:

The Oldways Nutrition Exchange (ONE) is a free, online resource offering themed toolkits and our ONE-Stop Resource Directory to supermarket dietitians and other healthcare professionals. ONE provides comprehensive, relevant information to help these health professionals educate customers and patients about healthy foods and eating habits.

Details:

ONE's 2,800 opt-in subscribers include three-quarters of the known universe of supermarket dietitians – a highly influential group that promotes healthier food options to consumers at the point of purchase. Our network also includes dietitians, doctors, nurses and others working in hospitals, clinics, private practice, schools, and foodservice.

Since its beginnings in October 2012, ONE has produced 38 themed toolkits. Every month we publish a kit comprising about 10 resources, each exploring a topic of interest. For example, we've explored health issues such as diabetes and hypertension, consumer trends such as healthy snacking, as well as providing timeless strategies for eating healthily on a budget.

Our network of professionals uses these materials (over 28,500 resources have been downloaded so far) to develop web and print articles, in-store consultations and tours, and media appearances as well as printed handouts for the public. Our retail dietitians alone represent more than 70 chains with an estimated 115 million shoppers each week.

"I use ONE resources for our in-store overhead announcements and other events both in-store and in the community. ONE gives me ideas for these events including themes, recipes, and ways to educate consumers about healthy eating. By having these resources right at my fingertips I can use my time to interact more with our customers."

Stephanie Perez, RD, LDN, Shoprite, Philadelphia, PA

Our latest tool is the ONE-Stop Resource Directory – a central hub where healthcare professionals can readily find health and nutrition materials created by companies, trade boards and other food-related non-profits. The Directory makes it easy to find this information all in one place, without spending hours surfing individual websites.

Whether it's our Toolkits or our One-Stop Resource Directory, Oldways Nutrition Exchange lives up to its name – it truly is the place where health and wellness information and professional contacts are exchanged by those in healthcare and the food industry alike.

Contact Deborah Plunkett, Deborah@oldwayspt.org or 617-896-4850.

SUPERMARKET DIETITIAN SYMPOSIUM

In a nutshell:

Oldways' Supermarket Dietitian Symposium is an annual conference that shines a light on the key role played by supermarket dietitians, and facilitates dialog between supermarket RDs and food manufacturers/commodity boards.

Details:

Advice on weight loss, gluten-free diets, diabetes management, or feeding a picky toddler may be as close as your neighborhood grocery store. Dietitians who work in supermarkets can reach millions of consumers through their in-store programs, columns in weekly circulars, blogs, and media appearances. As their numbers grow from coast to coast, they expand their power to impact public health by offering free services to the community.

Oldways' annual Supermarket Dietitian Symposium, now in its fifth year, focuses on the work these dietitians do and calls for all retailers to include them in their programs. The event also encourages discussions, and probes for actionable solutions that can influence shoppers to be more conscious of their plates by promoting healthy and sustainable food choices. The goal is to help supermarket dietitians drive sales of better-for-you foods, and provide them with the tools, skills, and knowledge to maximize their impact and influence in the retail environment.

Journalists seeking stories about positive changes in our food system will want to learn more about what supermarket RDs do – such as the successful weight loss programs, store tours created especially for kids, and effective community partnerships between hospitals and supermarkets – and why we need to expand the dietitian presence nationwide.

The symposium is coordinated in partnership with Barbara Ruhs, MS, RD, LDN, a former supermarket dietitian, who is available for interviews on the growth of dietitians in supermarkets, a look at how their work can influence consumers, and the potential for positioning these influencers worldwide. Contact Georgia Orcutt.

Contact Georgia Orcutt, gorcutt@oldwayspt.org or 617-896-4861

CHEESE OF CHOICE COALITION

In a nutshell:

The Cheese of Choice Coalition is a world-wide initiative to champion knowledge about – and enjoyment of – traditional cheeses, at a time when some regulatory bodies may seek to limit the production of such cheeses.

Details:

Since the dawn of civilization, humans have been making milk – which otherwise spoils almost instantly without refrigeration – into delicious cheeses, using knowledge passed down from generation to generation about how to encourage the proliferation of “good” bacteria that crowd out “bad” bacteria.

For many decades now, however, food regulators have tended to view all bacteria as “bad” and even scientific understanding is now growing of the role that “good” bacteria play in supporting digestive health, a regulatory cloud hangs over traditional cheesemaking.

What will be the fate of traditional cheese? Will Roquefort be gone forever? What about cheeses aged on wood? What about raw milk cheese? To the dismay of cheese enthusiasts everywhere, questions continue to mount.

Support for traditional cheese is here. To address these issues, the Cheese of Choice Coalition is bearing the banner of traditional cheese worldwide and jumping into the fray. Originally founded in 1999 by Oldways, the American Cheese Society, the Cheese Importers Association of America and Whole Foods Market, the Coalition has been revitalized in 2014 at a time when regulatory uncertainty threatens traditional production and aging methods. The CCC offers a strong voice of industry support and consumer education.

Through a combination of advocacy, education, consumer outreach, and community engagement, the CCC works to preserve long-honored cheesemaking traditions and to ensure that enthusiasts everywhere continue to have the freedom to choose their cheese of choice. As with all Oldways programs, the CCC brings a research-based approach to promoting real cheese as a nutritious food that is part of a healthy diet.

Contact Brad Jones, brad@oldwayspt.org or 617-896-4822

OLDWAYS CULINARY TRAVEL

In a nutshell:

Once a year, Oldways travels to some area of the world (often in the Mediterranean region) to introduce travelers to the foods, flavors and traditional producers of that region. Our next Oldways "Culinaria" will be to Turkey, visiting Istanbul and Ephesus, from March 15-22, 2015.

Details:

Oldways "Culinarias" are extraordinary culinary tours, planned with our firm belief that the heart of any culture can be illuminated by exploring its food, wine, and culinary traditions. Our respected place in the culinary world, and our long-standing relationships with international chefs, restaurateurs, and food and wine producers, mean that we're able to create one-of-a-kind travel itineraries of unprecedented reach and depth that embrace traditional food and wine customs, educational programs, and elegant culinary activities.

Four Good Reasons to Travel with Oldways:

Congenial Travelers. Oldways trips are filled with a diverse group of ages and backgrounds – all sharing a common love of food and culinary traditions. We limit group size to just the right number so that you can interact with a variety of interesting people, without feeling that you're part of an anonymous crowd.

Culinary Experts to Guide You. Imagine how much you can learn about the foodways of a region, with someone along who can explain local ingredients at mealtimes, interpret the wares on offer while you walk through a vibrant public market, guide you through a tasting of unfamiliar spices, or do a cooking demo on the spot. Each Oldways Culinaria features a well-known culinary expert, such as a chef or cookbook author, intimately familiar with the foods and flavors of the area.

Historic and Cultural Context. While the focus is on food during Oldways trips, you'll also learn about the historic and cultural context that helped shape local culinary traditions. Visits to museums, ancient ruins, and artisan crafters provide a useful counterpoint to food-related activities. On every trip you'll enjoy fascinating facts from local historical guides – plus insights from Oldways staff, based on our two decades of international culinary travel.

Rare and Special, Outside-the-Guidebook Experiences. Oldways Culinarias take you beyond the realm of other tours, to little-known local producers, farms, vineyards, cheesemakers, and bakeries. You'll dine at restaurants not yet discovered by the guidebooks – and perhaps even meet the chef! Our network of international contacts enables us to put together an itinerary unlike any other.

Contact Abby Sloane, asloane@oldwayspt.org or 617-896-4875.