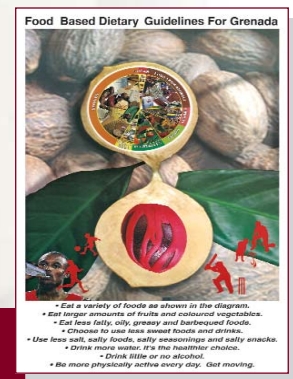
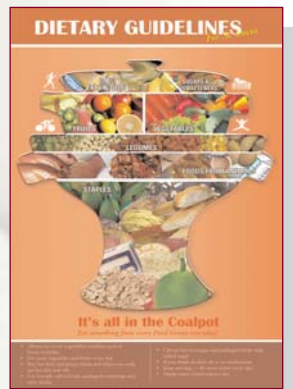
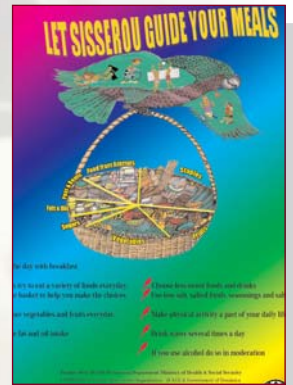
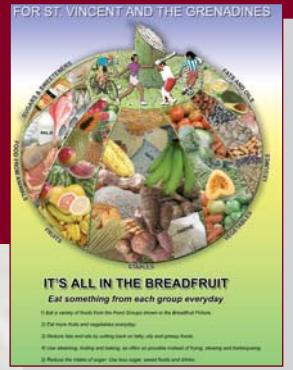


A manual from the English-speaking Caribbean



Developing Food-based Dietary Guidelines



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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
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Foreword

A fundamental goal of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is assisting the countries of the Caribbean in developing national strategies, methods and tools to improve diets. Food-based dietary guidelines (FBDGs) are a key source of information that governments can use for educating the public on ways to do this. Using language and symbols that the average person understands, FBDGs provide relevant dietary advice for preventing common diet-related health and nutrition problems.

This manual's aim is to offer practical advice to nutritionists and others working in related fields for producing national FBDGs for the general public. It explains the rationale behind national FBDGs and outlines the steps needed for producing FBDGs. It also gives advice on ways to communicate this information to the public.

This manual is one result of a FAO technical cooperation project (TCP) for capacity building in nutrition education.¹ The project was conducted by FAO's Sub-Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean and Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division in collaboration with the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (referred to as CFNI) and the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama (referred to as INCAP), both institutions of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). The TCP was initiated at the request of the governments of the Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and the work was carried out during the period September 2004–June 2007.

The general approach to developing FBDGs described in this manual was elaborated by FAO and the World Health Organization in 1995. The specific methods to be used in each step in the process that are described in this manual were first developed by INCAP. These have been applied and adapted for use in Caribbean countries by CFNI and FAO. FAO collaborated with experts from both PAHO institutions in carrying out the project.

¹ "Capacity building for the development of food-based dietary guidelines to promote healthy diets and lifestyles", TCP/RLA/ 3002 (A).

FAO would like to express its appreciation to the primary authors of this manual, Pauline Samuda and Verónica Molina, who also served as technical advisors and trainers for the project. Based on their experiences as national coordinators for the project to develop their national FBDGs, four nutritionists – Theresa Marietta Regis (Ministry of Health and Environment, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Betty Finlay (Grenada Food and Nutrition Council, Grenada), Jacqueline Lancaster Prevost (Ministry of Health and Social Security, Dominica) and Merlyn Severin (Ministry of Health, Saint Lucia) – provided valuable suggestions and insights for the manual. FAO would also like to thank Christa de Valverde, who served as a consultant for the methodology on field testing of the FBDGs and Maria Protz, who acted as a consultant for developing communication strategies.

Carmen Dardano, Nutrition Officer in the FAO Sub-Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean in Barbados, had primary responsibility for coordinating and providing technical support in the project and contributed to this manual. Ellen Muehlhoff, Senior Officer, FAO Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division, formulated the TCP in collaboration with Carmen Dardano and Pauline Samuda. Janice Albert, Nutrition Officer, FAO Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division provided technical backstopping for the project, co-authored this manual and oversaw its production. Peter Glasauer provided valuable comments about the manual. Bernhard Reufels, Harripaul Bridgemohan, Melinda Mills and Joanna Lyons of FAO provided invaluable assistance in the administration of the project.

We hope that the information provided in this manual and the knowledge and skills that are obtained through following the steps of developing FBDGs will strengthen efforts to improve nutrition and health among people in the English-speaking Caribbean today and in the future.

Barbara Graham

FAO Sub-Regional Representative for the Caribbean