

Nutritional Labels On Menus Help Make Informed Choices

(KAIR)--The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently announced its rules for nationwide nutritional labeling on menus and vending machines. The new rules apply to restaurants, movie theaters, amusement parks, grocery stores, and anywhere else where ready to eat meals are sold.

K-State Research and Extension nutrition specialist Sandy Proctor says that making this information available is an important first step in helping consumers make an informed decision on their food choices. She says that the average person eats about thirty percent of their meals away from home, "So if we are not looking at the packaging that the food comes in, but rather buying it at a restaurant...or someplace where most of us buy food all the time, that information has not been required to be there".

Proctor adds that if this information is readily available, people may be more likely to avoid eating the wrong kinds of food. It will still be up to them to make the right choice, but people could be more likely to make a healthier choice if the facts are there for them to see easily.

Proctor thinks the new rules for nutritional labeling on menus and vending machines will someday be seen in the same way as nutritional facts labels. Those labels were not available years ago, and people simply did not think about what was in the package. However, those labels are now pretty routine.

More information on the final rules for nationwide nutritional labeling on menus and vending machines is available on the U.S. Food and Drug Administration website, www.fda.gov.

More information on health and nutrition is available at county and district Extension offices and on the Extension website: www.ksre.ksu.edu.

Many Signals Communications