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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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March is National Nutrition Month-Tips to Eat Right for Your Lifestyle

Brewster, NY— Eating right doesn't have to be complicated and eliminating favorite foods is not necessary. In fact, excluding favorites can be counterproductive. This March, for National Nutrition Month, the Putnam County Department of Health is joining the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, to promote the theme, "Eat Right, Your Way, Every Day." This message emphasizes that there is more than one way to plan a healthful diet.

"If an eating plan does not fit an individual's taste and lifestyle," says Allen Beals, M.D., Commissioner of Health, "it is doubtful it will be maintained for any length of time."

Tips for healthy eating include:

- Eat a variety of nutrient rich foods. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fat- free or low-fat dairy products, protein foods such as beans, fish, poultry or lean meat, and small amounts of healthy fats are all valuable parts of a healthy diet.
- Avoid or limit "empty calories". Soda, sugar, and high-sodium, processed foods add little nutritional value.
- Carry nutritious snacks with you. Single packages of whole grain crackers, peanut butter, nuts or cheese, fruit, hummus and carrots, hard- boiled eggs, low-fat yogurt or low-sodium soup are easy- to-transport ideas for nutritious "desk-top" dining, for students with little time or money, or an athlete with frequent refueling needs.
- Balance calories with physical activity to manage weight. Choose an activity you enjoy, or incorporate more movement into your daily activities.

By keeping these basic principles in mind, a busy professional, an athlete, a student, a vegetarian, and even time-crunched families can all successfully meet their nutrition and energy needs.

Pre-planning, getting children involved in age-appropriate food preparation or table setting, collecting and using quick and easy recipes, and making extra portions to use for a second meal are all additional tactics to help families share a healthy meal and avoid relying on fast food or take-out.

Growing and eating your own vegetables is an emerging trend that benefits health and fosters family involvement. The Putnam County Department of Health and Cornell Cooperative Extension are launching a new program in April, called “Garden to Table”, modeled after the Victory Gardens of the World War II era. This one-day presentation will offer tips on starting your own vegetable garden and is suitable for families with or without much property. Growing your own vegetables has multiple rewards: children tend to eat more vegetables when they grow their own, time spent gardening is healthy exercise, and the experience of gardening is one in which the whole family can participate. The event is planned for Saturday, April 20, from 10:00am -12:30pm, at 1 Geneva Road, in Brewster, N.Y. For more information about this program, or to register, visit www.CCE.cornell.edu/putnam or call (845) 278-6738.

For additional information on eating right and incorporating healthy lifestyle practices, please visit the Putnam County *Live Healthy Putnam* website at www.putnamcountyny.com/livehealthyputnam/index.htm or the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics website www.eatright.org .

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