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## **Embrace A Mindful Approach to Snacking with Wholesome Mini-Meals**

*Sargento and nutrition expert encourage healthier snack choices despite 'grab-n-go' mentality*

**PLYMOUTH, Wis. (Sept. 1, 2011)** – For many adults, laxidassical summer schedules, vacations and holiday celebrations attribute to diet derailment, especially when it comes to snacking. To help Americans get back on track as they transition into hectic school and work mode, Sargento Foods Inc. encourages adults to use “mini-meals” to balance daily food intake, incorporate essential nutrients and stabilize energy levels.

“Eating a larger meal, usually consisting of unhealthy convenience foods, in the middle of the day does nothing for our metabolism or energy levels,” says Sargento spokesperson and author of the new book, *“My Plate for Moms: How to Feed Yourself & Your Family Better,”* Elizabeth Ward, MS, RD. “Incorporating nutritious mini-meals, multiple times a day, helps avoid those mid-afternoon slumps and fill in dietary gaps.”

While snacking intake averages out to about 580 calories each day<sup>1</sup>, several key nutrients like calcium, vitamin D, potassium and dietary fiber, which can be easily integrated into mini-meals, are still lacking in many peoples’ diets<sup>2</sup>. Sargento cheese snacks are an easy way for people to start filling in those nutritional holes with smaller snacks throughout the day. Individually wrapped snacks, like Sargento String Cheese, Colby-Jack, and the Reduced Fat and Reduced Sodium Sticks, give snackers portion-controlled options that help limit calorie intake and provide busy Americans with healthier on-the-go options.

“Incorporating snacks like natural cheese, either as a stand alone or in combination with other nutritious foods, such as fruit or nuts, is an easy way to turn snacking into a well-rounded mini-meal. Sargento Reduced Fat Colby-Jack Sticks and Reduced Sodium Mild Cheddar Sticks are perfect examples of snacks that add essential nutrients like calcium and protein to adults’ diets and help boost energy levels,” adds Ward.

To get your fall snacking habits back on track, Ward suggests the following tips:

- **Say Goodbye to Snacking Guilt:** There's no need to feel guilty about snacking. Frequent mini-meals may actually prevent cravings and binges and help keep your energy level stable.
  - **Snack Idea:** For your morning or afternoon fix, try Sargento Cheese snacks. I like them because they are a more wholesome on-the-go option than sweets or other processed cheese snacks. Plus, they're 100 percent natural and come in a variety of flavors, including String Cheese, Colby Jack, and the Reduced Fat and Reduced Sodium Sticks. Pair a Sargento Reduced Fat Colby Jack Stick with carrots or celery sticks for an energy and protein-filled bite.
  
- **Learn to Listen:** It's important to snack throughout the day, but be intuitive and wait until your body tells you it's time to eat. If you feel hungry soon after a meal, wait a few minutes, or drink a glass of ice water first to make sure it's not a false alarm. If you're still hungry 20 minutes later, it's truly time for a mini-meal.
  - **Snack Idea:** For a delicious snack with varying textures, serve yourself hummus with mini pretzels, cherry tomatoes, or sliced red bell pepper.
  
- **Make it Count:** Make the most of mini-meals. Since you're eating more often, make sure snacks fit into your daily calorie allowance, and include calcium, vitamin D, potassium and dietary fiber, nutrients that are lacking in our diets, according to the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
  - **Snack Idea:** For a refreshing smoothie rich in calcium, potassium, and fiber, blend a frozen banana with a cup of low-fat skim milk. Pump it with even more protein and flavor by adding a tablespoon of peanut butter.
  
- **Switch It Up:** Successful snackers know that variety is key to healthy eating. Keep mini-meals interesting by switching up your snacks. Blend different flavors and textures to please your palate.
  - **Snack Idea:** To spice up snack time, make your own cheese and vegetable kabob. Try alternating cherry tomatoes with cubes of your favorite Sargento cheese stick on a skewer.

Always natural and never processed, Sargento offers a variety of wholesome snack options, including its new Natural Blends line, which can be found in the refrigerated cheese section of major grocery retailers.

For information on Sargento products, please visit [www.Sargento.com](http://www.Sargento.com).

### **About Sargento Foods Inc.**

Sargento Foods Inc. has demonstrated its passion for cheese and cheese-based meal solutions throughout its history. Founded in 1953 in Plymouth, Wis., Sargento is a leading manufacturer, packager and marketer of natural shredded, sliced and snack cheeses, cheese appetizers, ingredients, sauces and other culinary solutions. Sargento is owned and operated by the Gentine family, and has net sales of more than \$900 million. For more information, please visit [www.sargento.com](http://www.sargento.com).

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[http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/Market/Snacks-deliver-a-quarter-of-US-calorie-intake/?c=6u2inRXkpuYHSYDNqZ39hgDK3Gyeo494&utm\\_source=newsletter\\_daily&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Newsletter%2BDaily](http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/Market/Snacks-deliver-a-quarter-of-US-calorie-intake/?c=6u2inRXkpuYHSYDNqZ39hgDK3Gyeo494&utm_source=newsletter_daily&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Newsletter%2BDaily)
2. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010 (January 31, 2011) "Chapter 4: Foods and Nutrients to Increase".  
<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/DietaryGuidelines/2010/PolicyDoc/Chapter4.pdf>