DEVELOPMENT OF 2019 FNRI MENU GUIDE CALENDAR: REINVENTING NUTRITIOUS AND EASY-TO-PREPARE FOODS FOR MEN IN UNIFORM


Background:

Diet and exercise are regimented among the army and the police. At age 20-55 years, they should be physically, mentally and emotionally well to sustain them in fulfilling their typical duties. Although there are no specific statistics for men in uniform, the 2015 National Nutrition Survey showed that among the 20.0 years old and over, the prevalence of overweight/obesity is 3 out of 10. Conversely, it is 1 out of 10 for the underweight. To function efficiently, their caloric and nutrient needs must be met through the provision of appropriate and healthy meals.

Objective:

This project aimed to develop the 2019 FNRI Menu Guide Calendar (MGC) for men in uniform.

Materials and Methods:

Two separate brainstorming sessions among selected men and women from the Philippine National Police (n=10), the Philippine Army (n=10), and a Key Informant Interview (KII)(PA, n=1) were conducted. Information derived like food preferences and food habits of men in uniform, and calendar format were utilized for a two-level recipe standardization process and the development of calendar layout and content. Recipes were evaluated by FNRI sensory panelists (n=10, n=50) using the 9-point hedonic rating scale. Photo documentation, formulation of 4-week 7-day cycle menus, estimation of energy and selected nutrients per serving portion of the recipes were conducted. Relevant health and nutrition articles were developed. A 2-level pre-testing (Key Informant Interview and Focus Group Discussion) in both urban and rural settings were conducted among nutrition experts and users - members of the PNP/PA to assess the calendar’s attractiveness, comprehension, acceptability and self-involvement.

Results and Findings:

The MGC highlighted 14 nutritious and affordable recipes/combo meals that meet the daily requirement of men in uniform on a per meal basis. The estimated raw food cost per meal ranged from P46.20 to P49.80. All recipes passed the acceptability test using the 9-point Hedonic rating. The 4-week 7-day cycle menu encourages consumption of the recipes that make use of readily available and affordable ingredients, easy to prepare dishes, and in consideration of religion and differences in dietary habits and food preferences. A list of substitute ingredients and quantification of recipes into 10 and 50 were also included. Articles on Pinggang Pinoy – Your Guide to Healthy Eating, Know Your Nutritional Status and Body Mass Index for Adults were integrated in the calendar. Participants of the KII and FGD rated the calendar Very Good and Very Satisfactory respectively.

Conclusion and Recommendation:

The calendar serves as a tool in planning, preparing and serving healthy, affordable and easy-to-prepare meals for the Filipino men and women in uniform. It can be used as a reference for those partaking meals in the mess halls, in combat troops or work station, in planning appropriate meals to address their food needs. The recipes can also be used by men and women of similar age groups, as well as for family meals.