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NEW DATA SHOW THAT WOMEN OF CHILDBEARING AGE NEED MORE VEGETABLES, WHITE POTATOES ON THE PLATE

APRE's latest NHANES analytical data are consistent with IOM findings that women ages 19-50 do not get enough key nutrients from vegetables

(Boston, MA) March 30, 2015 – A new study presented today at Experimental Biology 2015 confirms that vegetable consumption is very low among women of childbearing age (WCBA), and that the **nutrient-rich white potato** is an important vegetable to this population's diet, particularly among subgroups with the lowest intake.

The results are consistent with the Institute of Medicine findings that mean total vegetable consumption of women ages 19 to 50 years is extremely low—with intakes at just 50% of the 2.5 cup equivalents per day recommended for most WCBA by the *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (DGA). The 2010 DGA recommends about 5 cups of starchy vegetables per week, or approximately three-fourths cup per day, as part of a healthful diet.

"A nutritious diet and healthy lifestyle are crucial before, during and after pregnancy to optimize the health for both mother and child," stated **Maureen Storey, PhD**, co-author of the study and president and CEO of the **Alliance for Potato Research and Education (APRE)**. "The results of APRE's study show that the intake of key nutrients from vegetables and white potatoes by women of childbearing age in general, and by non-Hispanic black women in particular, are well below adequate levels for the nutrition they need."

APRE researchers examined total vegetable and white potato (WP) consumption of WCBA, using the most recent data available from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) and the Food Pyramid Equivalents Database 2009-2010 and 2011-2012. The study authors found that, on average, WCBA consumed 1.36 cup equivalents of total vegetables. Depending on physical activity levels, the *2010 DGA* recommend 2.5 to 3 cups of vegetables a day for WCBA needing 1,800-2,400 calories per day; this recommendation includes 5 to 6 cups of starchy vegetables a week. Non-Hispanic white women, Hispanic

women, and women of other races consumed an average of 1.39, 1.43, and 1.46 cup equivalents of vegetables, respectively. On average, non-Hispanic blacks consumed 1.11 cup equivalents of vegetables—significantly fewer than women of all other races. WCBA consumed about 0.31 cup equivalents of WP. According to the data, said Storey, white potato consumption is low for WCBA—about 2 cups a week, on average, or about 0.3 cups equivalents per day. Contrary to media reports, French fried potatoes are consumed in moderation—average consumption is about one-half cup a week—and can easily be incorporated into a healthy, well-balanced, nutritious diet.

Storey noted that the mean intakes of key nutrients, including potassium, dietary fiber, vitamin D, iron, and folates are lower than current recommendations for women 19-50 years old. Average intakes of potassium and dietary fiber are about half of the recommended intakes, while mean vitamin D intake is less than 30% of the recommendation.

The new study also shows that non-Hispanic black WCBA have significantly lower intake of key nutrients of concern such as potassium, dietary fiber, calcium and vitamin D. Lower consumption of potassium is especially concerning for non-Hispanic blacks because this population is already at greater risk for high blood pressure and stroke.

Affordable white potatoes are an important vegetable source of essential nutrients, such as potassium and dietary fiber. A small Russet baked potato with skin provides about 760 mg potassium and 3.2 g dietary fiber; even without the skin, the flesh of the white potato provides about 540 mg potassium and 2 grams of dietary fiber. A small serving of French fried potatoes provides 411 mg of potassium and 2.7 g fiber.

The APRE data analysis, "**Total Vegetable and White Potato Consumption by Women of Childbearing Age**," co-authored by Storey and Patricia Anderson, MPP, an independent consultant, will be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal.

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The **Alliance for Potato Research and Education (APRE)** is a not-for-profit organization 100% dedicated to expanding and translating scientific research into evidence-based policy and education initiatives that recognize the role of all forms of the potato—a nutritious vegetable—in promoting health for all age groups. APRE is actively building the science foundation concerning the nutritional benefits of the white potato; creating partnerships with critical health professional organizations in the United States and Canada; and informing dietitians and health professionals by providing them with the latest scientific research and information on potato nutrition, consumption, and affordability.

For more, visit www.apre.org

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