

## **FEATURE – SESAME STREET AND WIC TEAM UP TO PROMOTE HEALTHY EATING HABITS**

INTRO: Some of Sesame Street's most noted muppets have collaborated with the National WIC Association in a campaign aimed at getting children and their parents to eat better. The USDA's Susan Carter has more.

THE GET HEALTHY NOW SHOW HOSTED BY SESAME STREET'S ELMO IS DESIGNED TO ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO EXPLORE NUTRITIOUS WAYS TO EAT AND DRINK SO THEY CAN PLAY, LEARN AND GROW UP HEALTHY. FELLOW MUPPETS...COOKIE MONSTER AND NEWCOMER BROCCOLI WERE ON HAND FOR THE LAUNCHING OF THE NEW HEALTHY HABITS FOR LIFE INITIATIVE.

Broccoli and Cookie Monster: "Orange carrots, green spinach, red radishes, umm, yellow squash, purple eggplant and blue blueberries. Me never realized that veggies came in so many colors."

ALTHOUGH IT TOOK A LITTLE PRODDING BY BROCCOLI...COOKIE MONSTER WAS QUICKLY HOOKED.

Cookie Monster: "Me convinced. Me try some anytime food right now."

WITH THAT SAID AGRICULTURE SECRETARY TOM VILSACK IS HOPING COOKIE MONSTER JUST MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET CHILDREN ON BOARD WITH CHANGING WHAT THEY EAT AND TRYING NEW HEALTHIER FOODS.

Secretary Tom Vilsack: "Today in America 35% of our children are at-risk of being overweight or are overweight."

ONE OF THE PARTNERS IN THE HEALTHY HABITS CAMPAIGN IS THE NATIONAL WIC ASSOCIATION.

Margaret Saunders: "We are so excited at the new WIC food package and the introduction of anytime foods, fruits, vegetables, whole grains. I'd like to think of them as every meal foods."

Secretary Tom Vilsack: "President Obama has challenged all of us by the year 2015 to end childhood hunger. This is a difficult time in America no question about it. There's more pressure on programs like WIC."

AS A MEANS OF ENGAGING THE HEALTHY HABITS FOR LIFE: GET HEALTHY NOW MESSAGE INTO EACH STATE'S NEW FOOD PACKAGES...MORE THAN 3 AND A HALF MILLION SESAME STREET KITS ARE BEING DISTRIBUTED TO WIC FAMILIES. FOR THE US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M SUSAN CARTER.