



The Lunch Line

Bureau of Nutrition, Health and Transportation Services

The Iowa Department of Education

Please route to:

<input type="checkbox"/> Food Service Director	<input type="checkbox"/> Record Keeper	<input type="checkbox"/> Superintendent
<input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen Staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Principal	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

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F2S: Farm to School

School settings provide excellent learning opportunities about nutrition and healthy foods. Research is clear that good nutrition can improve student health and academic performance. Farm to School includes many types of programs and experiences for children to learn about food production, such as planting and harvesting a school garden, or learning where foods come from by featuring local food purchases as part of the Child Nutrition Program. Teachers, staff, parents, community members and students can work together to provide these opportunities.

Farm to School programs include locally grown items in school meals, farm tours, school fundraisers (sale of pumpkins rather than candy bars), nutrition education, food tastings, Ag in the Classroom, and/or school gardens.

The goals of Farm to School vary, depending upon the type of program or experience. Typical goals are educating students about food items and sustainable food production; broadening exposure to fruits and vegetables; retaining food dollars in community; reducing carbon emissions; and improving health. Concerns about obesity rates and environment have influenced districts to offer Farm to School programs to help students develop healthy food

decision-making skills. Farm to School programs include locally grown items in school meals, farm tours, school fundraisers (sale of pumpkins rather than candy bars), nutrition education, food tastings, Ag in the Classroom, and/or school gardens.

Nutrition education research has found children are more favorable to foods if there is engagement, such as growing vegetables in a school garden or tasting product directly on the farm. Farm to School can be part of all Child Nutrition Programs. Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) can include locally grown foods as part of the meal, a la carte, or snacks programs as long as there is compliance with procurement regulations regarding the process (ensure free and open competition for the district's business) and product (meet state regulations to ensure safety of product).

Farm to School presents challenges and rewards. Communication between district buyers and growers should define specifications and on-farm practices to

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ensure safety of food, as fresh produce is often served raw and to at risk groups. Small-medium sized farms don't typically invest in mechanical equipment, so growing and harvesting products can be labor-intensive and costs can be higher. Negotiations between producers and districts should factor in educational and marketing opportunities, as well as volume of transactions and unit costs.

FURTHER INFORMATION

National Farm to School at <http://www.farmtoschool.org/>

Iowa Farm to School

In 2007, Iowa lawmakers passed Farm to School legislation to establish a program that would link elementary, secondary, public and non-public schools with Iowa farmers. There are currently 9 active Iowa Farm to School Chapters throughout the state. For more information, go to: <http://www.agriculture.state.ia.us/AgDiversification/farmToSchoolProgram.asp>

Iowa State University Extension Local Foods Page at www.iastatelocalfoods.org

Includes a brochure specific for retail food services interested in purchasing from local sources (PM 2046); a checklist of questions appropriate to ask the grower to ensure safety of produce (PM 2046A); and a brochure about Procurement Regulations (reviewed by Department of Inspection and Appeals) (PM 2047). Links to a produce profitability calculator which can be used by operators in negotiations is also available.

Prepared by Catherine Strohbehn, PhD, RD, CP-FS; HRIM Extension Specialist, Iowa State University; February 2010



Iowa Team Nutrition Cycle Menus

The Team Nutrition 2009 grant has provided resources to develop a 5-week cycle menu for Iowa schools, which meet the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, the HealthierUS School Challenge criteria and include USDA foods and locally grown foods. These newly created "Chef Approved" menus will provide appealing, appetizing, and nutritious foods that students will choose to eat.

A committee has been working on the development of the menu which includes a Chef from the American Culinary Federation, ISU Extension Specialists, School Food Service Directors, Department of Education Consultants, and ISU Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Management staff. Recipes will be student tested with a survey of acceptance and piloted in several Iowa schools next fall. A food service training will be offered to schools interested in incorporating the new menus in 2011. The training will include enhancing knowledge and skills for presentation and preparation of healthy foods, ways to instill a culture of acceptance for healthy foods, tips for introducing new menu items and encouraging children to consume healthier food choices, promotion of USDA foods to students, staff and parents, steps to reach HUSSC criteria, ideas for incorporating locally grown foods and ways to enhance skills for communicating effectively to parents, students, administrators, teachers, and others.

Please contact Team Nutrition Project Directors, Patti Delger (patti.delger@iowa.gov) or Carrie Scheidel (carrie.scheidel@iowa.gov) if you'd like additional information.



HealthierUS School Challenge Expands to Secondary Schools

In the fall of 2009, USDA announced the expansion of the HealthierUS School Challenge to include secondary schools. The HUSSC is a voluntary national certification initiative that recognizes excellence in nutrition and physical activity in schools. Now all Team Nutrition schools can apply for one of the four award levels: Bronze, Silver, Gold, or Gold of Distinction. To qualify a school must meet tough nutrition standards, minimum average daily participation levels, and nutrition education and physical activity requirements. Currently Iowa has 5 award winning schools and 2 additional schools have recently submitted applications. If your school is working to provide a healthy school environment and wants to apply for an award, visit <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/healthierUS/index.html> for an online application tool and more information.

Julia's Tidbits

Recent Mailings – Be Sure YOU Have Read...

During March, the State Agency will be sending to participants in the National School Lunch Program three very important mailings. If you are the School Food Service Director/Cook Manager and/or have any responsibility for making decisions regarding the topics listed below, please review these carefully and/or share with the appropriate individual(s) within your school district.

ACTION MAY BE NEEDED

- Procurement Requirements—As a general rule, all procurement (purchases) in the School Nutrition Programs, whether for goods or services, must be competitive. SFAs shall comply with the requirements identified in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 210.21, Section 215.14a, and Section 220.16 located at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/regulations.htm>.
- Application for elementary school participation in the USDA Free Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program, priority by law to schools with higher percentages of students eligible for free or reduced price meals
- Application for School Food Service Equipment Grant, eligibility to apply restricted to those districts that did not receive one of the earlier ARRA Equipment Grants

Reminders – additional information in this issue

- The State of Iowa Healthy Kids Act Nutrition Standards are required by state law to be fully implemented beginning July 1, 2010
- Now is the time to be registering to attend one or more of the DE – ISU sponsored Summer Short Courses and/or the School Nutrition Association Iowa Conference

Announcement of Grant Award to the State Agency

The Iowa Department of Education is one of seven State Agencies (SA) to be awarded a USDA Method II Administrative Review and Training Grant. The funding will allow the SA to develop a variety of new tools/reports and enhance current data system functionality to assist in identifying SFAs that are at risk of high administrative errors and/or are not in compliance with the School Meal Initiative nutrition standards and/or are experiencing financial difficulties that impact program viability. To assist SFAs identified as at risk before major problems develop, part of the grant funds will be used to develop an internet-based, searchable resource/

reference library and associated tutorials. This will include providing easy and timely access to self-directed training modules covering administrative functions such as applications, certification, verification, meal counting/claiming, nutritional quality of school meals and financial management. Although targeted at addressing those high risk SFAs the web based resources will be available to all SFAs. Input from you will be needed for various aspects of this work and it will take some time for everything to be fully developed. Aspects of the project will be rolled out as the work progresses with the grant officially ending on September 30, 2012.

Show Me The Money!

Times are tight and pressures on schools in general and school meal programs in particular are rising. Serve more fresh fruit and vegetables! Include more whole grains! Keep labor costs down! Make more homemade food! Cut expenses! Increase participation! Don't raise meal prices! It could make a school meals director's head spin!

The National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) has developed training information to help School Food Authorities (SFAs) make decisions based on sound logic, reliable data, and careful budgeting. Each summer, the Bureau offers this two day training to focus attention on financial management issues that impact meal programs, including communicating with key stakeholders, identifying revenue and expenses, reviewing financial statements, and analyzing and applying the information. This year the training is July 8-9, 2010, in Ames. The cost is \$125 per person. You can register online at <http://www.ucs.iastate.edu/mnet/schoolfoods/register.html> SFAs have used the information they learned at the training to help make important decisions. Here are three real-life stories:

The board of a small district in NW Iowa had been reluctant to raise meal prices out of concern for families. But the program had been slowly losing money and reducing cash reserves to unhealthy levels. The business manager used the training information to analyze costs and revenues and developed a plan to address the problems with the food service director. When the board reviewed this black-and-white presentation, they recognized that the program they wanted at their district (healthy, homemade food) was more costly than the meal prices could support. The district raised meal prices and realigned labor, but retained the high quality school meal program they wanted. Participation has remained high and the program has begun to rebuild cash reserves.

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A larger district recognized that costs were exceeding revenues, but the picture was very complex with many steps needed to make corrections. The accounting staff recalculated meal equivalents according to the NFSMI model (a big job for this district), which helped the SFA to identify the places where corrections needed to be made. This helped support the need for price increases to cover costs, not only for meals, but also for catering and ala carte items. Realistic cost saving programs were instituted that have turned this district from a significant loss per meal to a slight loss in last year, and reporting the program well on the way to better financial health this year.

A small district in southern Iowa has been losing enrollment, but students in the elementary educational program have consistently scored in the top quarter of all students. The school meal program has been supported in part by the general fund to keep meal prices low, but the board realizes that the district's money situation will be a big factor in hard decisions related to retaining their strong elementary program. It is critical that the meal program be as self-supporting as possible and that budget projections be accurate. The district has used information from Financial Management training to identify costs and revenues and has implemented cost savings and revenue improvement plans. The meal program has good participation, serves good food the kids like, and is meeting the budgeting targets needed to help support the board's decision.

Consider attending the Financial Management Workshop this summer so that your school can make informed decisions about school meals.

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Victories

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program introduce children to new and different fresh fruits and vegetables like kiwi, star fruit, pomegranate, rutabaga, and kohlrabi. Teachers are encouraged to participate with their students. Teachers model healthy eating by eating the fresh fruits and vegetables in front of the children. They can help monitor and direct the food distribution, and use the opportunity to talk with students about nutrition, health, hygiene, and manners.

In Marshalltown, Ann Feilmann, Food Service Director sends out information about new and different fruits and vegetables in advance to the teachers in the elementary buildings that participate in the program. This allows the teachers to know what fruits and vegetables will be offered and provide some nutrition education on what is

being offered and create a positive environment to experience the new choices. An example of this is when radishes were offered. Typically, a student may not be too fond of trying a radish without some grimaces, but if the teacher shares information about radishes in advance and encourages students to try some with a positive attitude, the student is more likely to give the new and different fruit and vegetable a try!

Healthy Kids Act Nutrition Calculator

The Healthy Kids Act Nutrition Calculator is available on the Department of Education's website at www.tinyurl.com/iowa-HKA. The calculator will determine whether a food product meets the Healthy Kids Act Nutritional Content Standards for a la carte, vending, and regulated fundraising items sold to students during the school day. These standards will go into effect July 1, 2010.

Using information from a food product's nutrition facts label, enter all required fields into the Nutrition Calculator (calories, total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sodium and sugar) and click the "Check It!" button to see if the food item meets the nutrition standards.

A food product must meet all categories even though one category may be exempt. For example, fat may be exempt for a specific food product, but all other categories (i.e. sodium) need to meet the standards.



Other strategies to help Food Service prepare for Healthy Kids Act:



1. Use the To-Do List (www.tinyurl.com/iowa-HKA)
2. Communicate with the Food/Beverage Industry
3. Make Reimbursable Meals a Focus
4. Jazz Up Reimbursable Meals – Sandwich/Deli Bar, Salad Bar, Yogurt Bar, To-Go Foods
5. Creatively Market Healthy Choices to Students
6. Sample/taste test new foods with students and prepare specifications for new foods

Please contact Patti Delger at patti.delger@iowa.gov or Jennifer Neal at jenny.neal@iowa.gov for additional information.



Who Do You Call When You're Having Problems With Passwords?

When you login in to update an application, enter claim information, etc., and you get an error message...who do you call?

Department of Education
CNP 2000 Program
The System could not Log you on.
Please check your user name and password and try again.

A screenshot of a login interface. At the top, there is a purple gradient bar with the word "Login" in white. Below this, the text "Username:" is followed by a white rectangular input field. Underneath, "Password:" is followed by another white rectangular input field. At the bottom center, there is a small, rounded rectangular button labeled "Login".

When you login in to update commodity orders and you get an error message...who do you call?

A screenshot of a web application error page. At the top, it says "Iowa Department of Education" in blue. Below that is "IDOE Web Application Server". A security warning states: "This Site is Secured By Encryption. DO NOT USE YOUR REFRESH, BACK, OR FORWARD BROWSER BUTTONS WHILE USING THIS WEBSITE! Please enter a Login ID/Password and click on the submit button." There are input fields for "Login ID" and "Password", and a "Submit" button. A link for "Forgot Password" is also visible. At the bottom, a red arrow points to the error message: "User ~~xxxxxxx~~ Not Authorized."

Above are a couple of the error messages you may receive when attempting to "login" to Nutrition Programs web applications. Whether the issue is not remembering your password or what you think is your current login information is prompting errors, call Ellen Miller, Information Technology Specialist, at 515-281-4542 or email your questions to ellen.miller@iowa.gov.

Resource Highlight



What is it? It is a series of nine 30 minutes training programs on a DVD from the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI).

Why is it important? Children can and should have access to healthy foods and be able to make healthy food choices wherever they are- at home, in school and out in the community. The DVD is unique as it takes an integrated look at children's total food experience.

How does the DVD help? Each episode focuses on healthful food and cooking techniques used by culinary professionals to produce high quality foods that are flavorful, appealing and nutritious at school, in restaurants and at home. Each episode will feature a school who is putting these principles into practice.

View each of the nine webcasts on the NFSMI website <http://nfsmi.org/>. Click on School Nutrition Programs and then click on *Cooks for Kids* on the left menu bar.

"USDA Foods" Fact Sheets

Google is an amazing search engine. Prior to "Google", information was sent in the mail only to become outdated, misfiled, thrown away, or just simply lost. Now, in the year 2010, everything is at our fingertips. If we have a question about food storage tips, we can Google "Food Storage Tips." If we want to know the nutrients in any of the USDA foods, we can Google "USDA Foods Fact Sheets." The first site to appear in the long list 214,000 items is the correct site, "NSLP Commodity Fact Sheets."

These updated fact sheets provide information on all of the commodities. You can find the nutrients, preparation instructions, cooking instructions, uses and tips, as well as component contribution. For example, the crediting information for Turkey Ham is: 1.7 oz turkey ham water added provides 1 oz-equivalent meat/meat alternate.

The next time you have a question about USDA foods, either Google USDA Foods Fact Sheets or click on the link below. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/schfacts/default.htm>

Please note: Fact sheets for those products where commodity foods have been diverted for processing at the request of the Commodity Advisory Council may be found on the DE website at [2009-2010 Iowa Commodity Processors Fact Booklet](#)

Upcoming Workshops

School Lunch Short Course Schedule:

Manager's Update	June 16, 2010
Serv Safe®	June 21, 2010
HACCP Work Day	June 22, 2010
Healthy School Meals-SMI Workshop	June 23-24, 2010
Financial Management Workshop	July 8-9, 2010
Procurement Workshop	July 21-23, 2010
Food Buying Guide Workshop	July 26, 2010
New Manager Orientation	July 27-28, 2010

Plan to increase your confidence, learn new skills, and network with other food service professionals! Summer School Lunch Short Courses are being planned and registration is now available at <http://www.ucs.iastate.edu/mnet/schoolfoods/register.html>. Please read the detailed description available at the registration page before you begin registration.

New last year, we are again offering a course to help you plan meals that will meet the SMI guidelines and nutrition targets, entitled Healthy School Meals. This course will contain hands-on practice in all areas of menu planning and documentation of reimbursable meals. Our Manager's Update this year will focus on purchasing equipment, and on planning involved in meeting the Healthy Kids Act.

We at the Bureau of Nutrition, Health and Transportation Services hope to see you this summer! If you have questions not answered in the description, please call Sandra Fiegen at 563-452-3390 or email sandra.fiegen@iowa.gov.

What is a Usage Report?

Ever wonder how many cases of chicken nuggets or pounds of lettuce you purchased last year or this year to date? You can ask your distributor for a usage report. This report will tell you what you have purchased and allow you to project how many cases you may want to put on your bid for the upcoming year. The report will also tell you if you have received different types of chicken nuggets which may indicate substitutions or product changes that have happened during the year. Ask your distributor for your usage report and discover what it tells you about your buying habits.

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If you have questions or grievances related to compliance with this policy by the Iowa Department of Education, please contact the legal counsel for the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, telephone number 515/281-5295; or the Director of the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Citigroup Center, 500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago, IL 60661, telephone number 312/730-1560, fax 312/730-1576, email: OCR.Chicago@ed.gov