

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF OUSD NUTRITION SERVICES

Harvest of the Month

It's back! No, not Poltergeist or The Terminator, but Harvest of the Month (HOM)! The popular program returns for its 3rd year in 32 Oakland schools featuring: educator and family newsletters, student workbooks, stickers, and the famous classroom taste tests of delicious, seasonal produce.

Harvest of the Month - a state-wide program, locally provided through a partnership of the Alameda County Public Health Department and OUSD Nutrition Services - was designed to increase students' exposure to, and preference for seasonal, fresh fruits and vegetables. And it's working! A qualitative evaluation conducted by the Public Health Department last year showed that Oakland students are indeed being exposed to a wider variety of fruits and vegetables through each month's featured har-

vest. No doubt it's because we try to provide more unusual produce, thereby exposing students to fruits and vegetables they might never have seen before, let alone tasted before. Swiss chard, anyone? How about garbanzo beans? Those are just two of the more unusual taste tests that will be featured this year.

We'll kick off the school year in October with jicama, and then grapefruit, beets, bell peppers, cucumber, berries, and corn on the cob will round out the rest of the offerings. Be sure to look for these fruits and vegetables featured on your school menu this year as well!

For a delicious recipe featuring jicama, next month's harvest, see page 4, and for more information please visit: www.harvestofthemonth.com.



Department Highlights

Nutrition Services is thrilled to unveil a speedy, new scan-able meal application aptly named Rocket Scan. This application will enable staff to process applications in a much more timely manner – whereas in the past approximately 200 applications could be processed per day, that number will jump to 550 applications

scanned per day, thanks to Rocket Scan. Not only will this save staff resources and allow students to receive benefits more quickly, using the new application will save Nutrition Services thirty thousand dollars this year! Now that's something we can all get behind.

Remember that stimulus check that you received last year?

Well the department is getting one as well. Three hundred fourteen thousand dollars will be awarded to Nutrition Services in stimulus funding this year – the 4th largest amount given to a school district in California (after San Diego, Long Beach, and San Bernardino) These much needed funds will be used to replace school site equipment. Hooray!

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Employee of the Month Program

We know that we have incredible employees here at OUSD Nutrition Services, and we're so proud and excited to show it. The Employee of the Month program will kick off for the new school year in October and run through June, 2010.

Do you know someone who deserves to be Employee of the Month? It's easy to nominate someone; just fill out a nomination form, which can be found at the High Street Office, and either drop it in the nomination box right there, or fax it to 510-879-1779.

Each winner will receive recognition via this newsletter, at High St. and at his/her respective work site, a certificate, a pin of excellence and a prize! Small tokens of our appreciation for jobs well done!

2008-2009 Winners:

Angela Nisby
Elenora Drawsand
Sandy Smothers
Sammy Liu

Who will our Employees of the Month be for the new school year?

Advocacy Corner

Do you want to help improve school meals? The Child Nutrition Act is up for reauthorization this year, presenting a unique opportunity for Congress to make improvements to the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, as well as the other child nutrition programs. We believe that the 2009 Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act could be significantly improved, and that it needs to be fully funded in order to improve the nutritional content and quality of the meals provided to students.

The following are OUSD recommendations for revisions:

1. Increase funding for better food.
2. Differentiate reimbursement and eligibility rates based on State's cost of living. Extend reimbursement and eligibility rates of Alaska and Hawaii to States like California with higher cost of living expenses.
3. Continue funding for equipment to allow for consistent facility and program improvement.
4. Improve Nutrition Standards.
5. Support changes in procurement procedures to allow for local sourcing.

6. Support Nutrition Education in the classroom.
7. Simplify paperwork requirements for program administrators and families.
8. Provide funding for staff training.

Please take a moment to send an email to Congress calling for adequate funding for school meal reimbursements, national school nutrition standards and defining appropriate expenses for school meal programs. For more information on reauthorization, and to send an email to Congress, please visit:

<http://schoolnutrition.org>

Since 1946 the Child Nutrition Act has allowed schools to provide nutritious meals to school age students, "as a measure of national security, to safeguard the health and well being of the Nation's children, and to encourage the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities."

Nutrition News You Can Use



How much do we really know about the food we buy at our local supermarkets and serve to our families?

It's a simple question, but one that begets a complex answer, as featured in the movie *Food, Inc.*, released this summer. In the film, our nation's food industry is exposed, revealing surprising – and often shocking truths – about what we eat, and how it's produced. It's distressing, to say the least. But rather than become overwhelmed by the daunting challenge of changing an entire food system, we can all take small steps for making positive changes in our own eating habits, and have a positive effect on our food system as a result.

10 Things You Can Do To Change Our Food System

1. **Stop drinking sodas and other sweetened beverages.**
2. **Eat at home instead of eating out.**
3. **Support the passage of laws requiring chain restaurants to post calorie information on menus and menu boards.**
4. **Tell schools to stop selling sodas, junk food, and sports drinks.**
5. **Meatless Mondays—Go without meat one day a week.**
6. **Buy organic or sustainable food with little or no pesticides.**
7. **Protect family farms; visit your local farmer's market.**
8. **Make a point to know where your food comes from—READ LABELS.**
9. **Tell Congress that food safety is important to you.**
10. **Demand job protections for farm workers and food processors, ensuring fair wages and other protections.**

To learn more about these issues, visit www.foodincmovie.com or takepart.com

School Produce Markets



Have you heard?

Now students can earn fresh fruit for snacks, and parents, school staff and neighbors can buy fresh, pesticide-free fruits, vegetables, eggs, nuts, honey and olive oil at 12 OUSD schools every week!

The Oakland Farms-to-Schools Network has partnered with OUSD Nutrition Services to expand this program to promote healthier school environments and to increase OUSD families' access to healthy food in their neighborhoods.

These School Produce Markets will be open every week starting on October 6, 7, and 8. Come taste some juicy grapes and support your local school!

TUESDAYS

Franklin Elementary (2:00-5:45)
 Garfield Elementary (2:30-6:00)
 New Highland and RISE Elementaries (2:15-6:00)
 Bridges Elementary (2:30-6:00)

WEDNESDAYS

Manzanita Community and Manzanita SEED Elementaries (2:15-5:45)
 Global Family and Learning Without Limits Elementaries (1:00-5:45)
 Community United and Futures Elementaries (12:30-5:45)
 Esperanza and Korematsu Elementaries (1:15-5:45)
 Melrose Leadership Academy (12:30-4:00)

THURSDAYS

Hoover Elementary (2:15-6:00)
 East Oakland PRIDE Elementary (2:15-6:00)
 Parker Elementary (2:00-5:45)

Expect Success.

every student. every classroom. every day.



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OUSD Nutrition Services continually strives to create a world class Nutrition Services team that is recognized as the best in California. We will provide nutritious meals to satisfied customers each and every day, period.

Our goals are threefold:

- 1) to become recognized as the leading school nutrition services provider in the Bay Area,
- 2) to become the number one revenue generating Service Area for the District, and
- 3) to reach the 80% percentile in RATER.

We - administrators, supervisors, managers, and staff - are committed to expanding and improving our service and stand behind our product 100%.

Comments or suggestions about *Food for Thought*? We'd love to hear from you.

Please email ericka.doolittle@ousd.k12.ca.us

Seasonal Recipe: Black Bean-Mango-Jicama Salsa

READY IN: 10 minutes



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 large mango, chopped
- 1 cup black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 cup jicama, chopped
- 1/2 cup red pepper, chopped
- 1/3 cup red onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup freshly chopped cilantro
- Juice of 1 lime

DIRECTIONS:

Combine mango, red onion, black beans, cilantro and jalapeno in a medium bowl. Squeeze lime juice over mixture. Stir well, cover and refrigerate until ready to use.

This is a fresh, colorful salsa that packs a flavorful punch, and provides fiber, and vitamins A and C. It's delicious with chicken, pork or fish dishes. It's also a wonderful filling for tacos and a perfect fat-free dip for baked tortilla chips.

Employee Wellness



Last school year, we gave out pedometers and sent you on the road as part of the inaugural Walk to Denver program. And walk to Denver you did; together you logged over 18 ½ million steps between August and May. That's right, 18 ½ MILLION! We got fit, we had fun, we won prizes and... we hope you're

ready to do it again.

This time, however, it's not about seeing how long it takes to get to Denver, rather how far YOU can go in a short amount of time. We're calling it the Turkey Trot and it'll work like this: we'll pick two weeks this fall and send you on your way, and the top steppers at the end of those two weeks will walk away with a delicious Thanksgiving basket just in time for the holidays. So lace up those walking shoes, and stay tuned for details. The Turkey Trot is coming....gobble gobble!