

Mush-On

Alaska School Nutrition Association Newsletter

Conference Wrap-Up and Beyond

It was fun seeing everyone at our annual conference in February. I appreciate everyone making the journey to Anchorage. We had some great presentations but the ones that seem to be the big hits were the farmers, our wonderful speaker Dayle Hayes and the innovation stations.

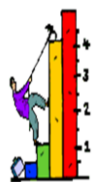
We were very fortunate to have the release of the new meal patterns just before the conference. The SNF Webinar during our luncheon gave us all a good view of the changes that are happening and the ones that are on the horizon. If anyone needs more information or clarifications, the web is full of helpful links and we are listing some of them in this newsletter and on our website.



I'd like to thank those that were brave and shared information with our group. The conference is the one time during the year where we have so many people gathered together in Alaska with the same goals and professional attitudes geared toward providing Alaska kids with healthy meals. It was refreshing to hear all the positive strides being made in so many school districts. It is time for our programs to toot our own horns LOUDLY and to continue to combat against misinformation. We stand proudly among all the other professionals that help to educate students.



Please continue to share experiences, pictures and success stories on our facebook page. This is a great way to show the public what our programs are about. We are not only changing what we put on the trays we are changing the climate surrounding our profession! Link to our: [facebook page](#)



I'd like to raise the bar and challenge our members. Through SNA, our members can become certified and/or credentialed. In Alaska we currently have the following: 4 members with Level 1, 0 with Level 2 and 3 with Level 3 Certification. AKSNA has 3 members with the School Nutrition Specialist Credential, SNS. I know we can increase these numbers and in doing so we help ourselves, we improve the view of our profession and gain increased credibility in our schools, community and state. As I love to say, **"there is strength in numbers."**

The following link is to the SNA page that lists the requirements to become certified. SNA has 3 levels of certification and many of our members already have the necessary qualifications for level 1. It is just a matter of going through the process and sending the information to SNA. I urge you all to check into becoming certified. The SNA certification is recognized nationwide as a mark of professional achievement in school nutrition. [SNA Certification](#)

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Conference Wrap-Up and Beyond cont.

I have checked into hosting the SNS Credentialing Exam here in Alaska. We meet all the requirements and now all we need are people with the qualifications, preparation and desire to sit for the exam. The SNS exam and the requirements are more complex than the certification process. The exam does have eligibility requirements and candidates must meet the qualifications in order to sit for the exam. To successfully pass the exam one must be willing to put in the time with the study guide and practice tests. In the end the successful candidate earns the SNS credential marking a great achievement and reflecting the professional ability to manage school nutrition programs. The SNS is recognized nationally as a mark of excellence and reflects depth of knowledge and skills required to perform the specific job activities related to managing and directing school nutrition programs. [SNS Credentialing](#) Anyone interested in pursuing this career path please contact our new Membership Chair, Sandy Daws or myself.



Finally, I'd like to say how happy I am with our members showing a deeper interest in our association. We have several people that are being added to our committees and becoming more involved with AKSNA. There is always room for additional people and we have many areas to be involved with. Is there anyone out there with hidden ambition to be a moviemaker? We have the best stories of all the states, right here in Alaska!

Ann Pennington
AKSNA President

AKSNA 2011-12 Calendar:

April, 2012
AKSNA Spring Membership Drive

April 26-28, 2012
National Leadership Conference (Louisville, KY)

May 7-9, 2012 - Anchorage
Cooks' Training/ServSafe Class
8:00-4:30; Univ of AK-Anc

May 7-11, 2012
School Nutrition Employee Week

May 16-18, 2012 – Fairbanks
Cooks' Training/ServSafe Class
8:00-4:30; Univ of AK-Fai

May 18, 2012 – 1:30pm
AKSNA Executive Board Meeting

May 22-24, 2012 – Sitka
Cooks' Training/ServSafe Class
8:00-4:30; Mt. Edgecumbe HS

July 15-18, 2012
Annual National Conference (Denver, CO)

School Nutrition Employee Week – May 7-11, 2012 *(as posted in SNA News)*

Your Employees Serve Up Excellence. It's Time to Say Thanks!

Want to show appreciation for your dedicated school nutrition staff? Do you need ideas or resources to help you give them the recognition they deserve? School Nutrition Employee Week (SNEW) is just around the corner. It's time to think about how you will recognize your favorite school nutrition professionals! SNA has a special website dedicated to recognizing these important people and their outstanding commitment to kids and school nutrition. On the site, you can:

- Find creative SNEW celebration ideas including a sample press release and proclamation
- Submit the names of your favorite school nutrition employees to be posted on the online appreciation wall
- Check out the honored employees from across the country and get inspired by their stories

Reward your staff with special tokens like items from the "Serving Up Excellence" line at the Emporium - <http://emporium.schoolnutrition.org/>.

Please visit www.schoolnutrition.org/snew to find out more.

Alaska and LFTB

I promised myself I would only use the term “pink slime” once, so that everyone knows what I’m talking about. The USDA and beef industry use the term LFTB – lean finely-textured beef – so that’s the term I’ll be using throughout.

What is it? In a nutshell, it’s leftover fat and meat (“trim”) from typical beef production processes. The meat and fat are separated mechanically, using heat and a centrifuge. The recovered meat is then treated with ammonia to raise its pH level and kill pathogens such as E. coli.

Wait ... ammonia?!

Celebrity chef Jamie Oliver demonstrated how unappetizing it is to pour ammonia over ground beef. That’s a media image that sticks in your mind.



Beef Products Inc., which developed the practice, describes it as a “puff” of ammonia gas, which combines with moisture to form harmless and natural ammonium hydroxide and then evaporates, leaving no more than background levels. That sounds nicer, but doesn’t give a visual image to match raw ammonia ruining wholesome ground beef.

Is LFTB “natural”? Of course not. It’s an industrial product. Said another way, it’s exactly as natural as a can of Spam.

Is it safe? Yes. It’s been widely-used for decades. If you eat commercial ground beef, it’s very likely that you’ve been eating LFTB. It’s added to ground beef to lower both the price, and overall fat content. Since there’s no labeling requirement, there’s no way to know which beef contains LFTB and which beef doesn’t, unless you watch as your butcher grinds it.

Does it look and sound gross? Also yes.



So where are we now?

Due to public outcry and recent media attention, USDA has announced that it’s giving states and schools a choice – beef products with LFTB, and without. By default, all beef currently ordered for the SY12-13 year will be “without”. If states or schools choose to order the lower-price, lower-fat beef with LFTB, they will be given that option. If they choose not to, they’ll continue to get beef that’s free of LFTB by default.

Alaska has chosen not to. And so of July 1, 2012, all beef that Alaska receives through USDA programs (NSLP, CACFP, TEFAP, etc.) will be LFTB-free.

Tony Warren is the Program Assistant for Alaska’s USDA Food Distribution Program and Alaska’s newest amateur expert on LFTB.

Dates to Remember:

April, 2012
Global Child Nutrition Month

April 7, 2012
World Health Day

April 26, 2012
Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day

May 1-7, 2012
National Physical Education and Sport Week

May 8, 2012
National Teacher Day

Oct 15-19, 2012
National School Lunch Week

Oct 24, 2012
Food Day 2012

Helpful Links:

AKSNA Website –
www.AKSNA.org

AKSNA Facebook page -
www.facebook.com/pages/Alaska-School-Nutrition-Association/127128467377407
OR

www.facebook.com and search for the Alaska School Nutrition Association page

School Nutrition Association Website -
www.schoolnutrition.org

Fuel Up To Play 60 Homepage –
www.fueluptoplay60.com

Health education materials -
www.eatsmart.org if interested in free educational materials regarding health and wellness

Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools 2012 Alaska Video Contest



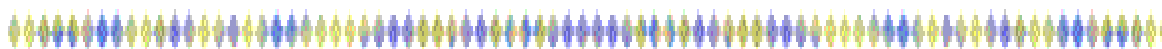
Salad bars are a hot topic in child nutrition. Some school food service directors are big fans, others do not attempt implementing salad bars due to the obstacles such as food safety, costs, training, waste, and usage. At Child Nutrition Programs we take the concerns to heart and recognize the validity, however we travel across the state and see great school food service programs everywhere we go, many having implemented salad bars. In partnership with the Obesity Prevention Program and the Farm to School Program, Child Nutrition Programs requested a Salad Bar Grant focusing on finding peer-to-peer solutions to show how other districts have overcome barriers to implementing successful salad bars.



We asked districts to submit a short video showcasing their salad bars and received three amazing videos spanning across our state. Please take a few minutes to see the videos and vote on your favorite.
<http://www.aksaladbars.blogspot.com/>. Voting goes through April 17.

Upon completion of the video contest, we hope to incorporate the best practices into a longer training video for use with school nutrition professionals. We'll be debuting the training tape and other salad bar resources as a preconference session to the August CRE training in Juneau, Anchorage, and Fairbanks.

Jo Dawson | State Program Administrator | Child Nutrition Programs | Alaska Education & Early Development
801 W. 10th Street, PO Box 110500, Juneau, AK 99811 | (: 907.465.8708 | 7: 907.465.8910 | *: jo.dawson@alaska.gov



Global Child Nutrition Month



April is Global Child Nutrition Month. Following is an article, in part, from the Global Child Nutrition Foundation's (GCNF) website.

Global Child Nutrition Month is observed annually in April to heighten awareness of childhood hunger. In 2009, the World Food Programme estimated that as many as 350 million of the world's children suffer from poverty and hunger. The goals and ideals of Global Child Nutrition Month are to acknowledge that global hunger can be overcome by combining the will and resources of individuals and organizations. Freeing children from hunger allows them to become self-supporting and contributing citizens and is a step toward building a stable and peaceful world.

Global Child Nutrition Month provides a unique opportunity to demonstrate social responsibility and help increase awareness of global child hunger issues through GCNF's Change Our World campaign.



For our favorite fundraising ideas to use during Global Child Nutrition Month (and all year round!), and to view the article in full, please visit the following link:
<http://www.gcnf.org/events/global-child-nutrition-month/>.



2012 AK School Food Service Professional Survey

We are excited to announce winners of the AK School Food Service Survey:

- Carl Warner, Business Manager, Sand Point – AK
- Lynn Watkins, Child Nutrition Manager, Tok – AK
- Lori Buzzell, Administrative Assistant, Juneau – AK
- Madonna Brock, Food Service Manager, Ketchikan – AK
- Heidi Craig, Food Service Director, Ft. Yukon – AK

A total of 65 people started the survey and 55 completed it, a few districts were represented more than once.

Salad/Vegetable Bar Results

61% of the respondents have heard of “Let’s Move Salad Bards to Schools” initiative but were not clear about what it was. **After taking out duplicates 17 of the respondents have a salad/vegetable bar in their school(s) for a total of 53 schools with a salad bar!** While 20 of those are in the Anchorage School District and 12 in Juneau that still leaves 22 in various schools around the state. The top two problems listed from respondents that have a salad/vegetable bar were food costs of salad bar and the availability of food to stock it.

	Have a salad/vegetable bar	Do not have a salad/vegetable bar
Sanitation concerns	84% said this was no problem-not too big of a problem	95% said this was important-very important
<u>Food costs</u>	53% said this was problematic and 26% said it was very problematic	93% said this was important-very important
Kids liking it	95% said this was no problem-not too big of a problem	57% said this was important-very important
<u>Availability of food</u>	47% said this was problematic and 16% said it was very problematic	92% said this was important-very important
Food waste	79% said this was no problem-not too big of a problem	89% said this was important-very important
Menu planning & reimbursable meal concerns	84% said this was no problem-not too big of a problem	92% said this was important-very important

As can be seen in the table sanitation, kids’ preferences, food waste, and menu planning have not been problematic for schools that have active salad bars in their schools; food costs and availability have been confirmed problems.

The top requested item was for a “How To” guide for starting and running a salad/vegetable bar. We are excited to announce that there is a resource available and we will be looking at getting this printed and mailed to people. We encourage you to go to: http://www.thelunchbox.org/sites/default/files/Salad%20Bars-The%20Lunch%20Box%20Guide_v1_0.pdf to check it out!

2012 AK School Food Service Professional Survey cont.

Most salad bars (65%) are placed before the point of purchase with items counting as reimbursable meal components. The top five most popular salad/vegetable bar items reported were:

1. Lettuce
2. Carrots
3. Cucumber
4. Fruit
5. Broccoli

Out of 59 responses, 38 (64%) said they were interested in applying for a free salad/vegetable bar for their school.

Local Food Results

We haven't had enough time to pull together all the data in all the different ways but below you see a glimpse of the interest in using local product at the public school districts. As more information is analyzed about the other questions from the survey we will be sure to pass them along.

Product (N)	Already Doing It	Interested – Very Interested	% interested
Kale (28)	0	23/28	82%
Lettuce (37)	7	29/30	97%
Broccoli (36)	5	30/31	97%
Carrots (38)	7	30/31	97%
Potatoes (36)	3	29/33	88%
Cabbage (33)	4	27/29	93%
Zucchini (34)	4	28/30	93%
Squash (34)	1	30/33	91%
Milk (33)	4	26/29	90%
Grain (32)	0	30/32	94%
Berries (35)	1	33/34	97%
Beef (34)	2	27/32	84%
Salmon (38)	4	31/34	91%
Halibut (38)	3	32/35	91%
Pollock (32)	7	24/25	96%

*Other vegetables of interest were cauliflower, tomatoes, celery, spinach, red cabbage, and onions.

If you are interested in hearing more about the Alaska Farm to School Program you can sign up for the listserv at: <http://list.state.ak.us/soalists/akfarmtoschool/jl.htm>

Do you have questions or comments about the Farm to School Program? Call or email Johanna Herron at, Johanna.herron@alaska.gov or 907-374-3714.

Webinar Wednesday - Managing Food Safety When Handling Fresh Produce in Schools

Wednesday, April 18, 2012 from 2:00-3:15 PM ET

SNF in partnership with the USDA Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS) Office of Food Safety will be offering this educational webinar to discuss managing the food safety risks when handling fresh produce in the school lunch setting. Several highly seasoned school nutrition professionals will present a great variety of information not to be missed.

Register at <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/783916986>.

Your Best Guide to the New Meal Pattern Regulation

SNA is your best guide to the new USDA Meal Pattern Regulation. Members will be the first to get access to the USDA updates through the SNA website. To access this information, once you login, click under the Highlights section. Housed on the Final Meal Pattern Regulation page of the SNA site will be SNA's roll-out Plan of Action, SNA's Press Release, the Final Regulation and archived webinars regarding the regulation.

Content will be updated as it becomes available. You must be an SNA member to access this information. For more, please visit: <http://www.schoolnutrition.org/mealpattern>.

Free Training Course for Managing Food Allergies – NEW

Check out SNA's newest FREE course on SNU – Managing Food Allergies in the School Foodservice Setting. This one hour course is divided into five areas:

- Allergy Action Plans and Response
- Mindful of Rights & Responsibilities
- Hide & Seek Allergens
- Skills to Avoid Cross Contact
- Scrub Allergens Away

Each area has a pre and post-test as well as resources and discussion questions and is worth one CEU. The course is available in English and Spanish. This course made possible by funding from the National Peanut Board.

To access the course: www.snuniversity.org

Dear Senate Bill 3 Sponsors and House Finance Committee Members,

Attached is the letter from the School Nutrition Association (SNA) serving as a thank you to USDA Secretary Vilsack, regarding the 150th Birthday of the United States Department of Agriculture-USDA.

When nobody else had a meaningful plan for support of school meal programs, the USDA and President Truman, established the National School Lunch Program in 1946. As a result, generations of American school children have enjoyed the benefit of school meals, for success in American classrooms.

Long before Alaska Statehood, the USDA was, and still is, the lone supporter of per meal funding for school meals to Alaska Students. The USDA is to be congratulated.

The extraordinary extra per meal USDA support provided to Alaska students, as compared to the lower 48, is an additional reason for appreciation to be extended to the USDA.

The support of transportation for USDA commodity foods provided to Alaska School Meal Programs, as compared to the lower 48, is additional significant asset to school meal operations that serve our Alaska students. This generous commodity support to Alaska children is too often overlooked.

Recognizing the higher cost of living for Alaska families, as compared to the lower 48, the USDA has kindly made adjustments to USDA income/benefit guidelines. This long time special support allows more low income Alaska families to participate in the nutritionally sound National School Breakfast Programs and National School Lunch Programs.

In addition, the USDA has independently supported the well received Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Snack programs as a provision to Alaska K-6 students of all income levels.

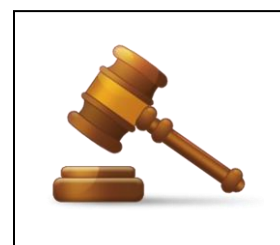
The USDA also provides additional support to After School Snack programs, not enjoyed by the lower 48 states.

While USDA funding is not completely sufficient support to meet all expectations for school meal programs in Alaska, the USDA support to Alaska children has proven to be an essential provision for success in Alaska classrooms.

As we go through our Alaska days, where we generally all enjoy access to, and availability of foods for our adult lives, it seems appropriate for us all to reflect with gratitude the successful history of support to our Alaska children provided by the U.S.D.A.

Happy Birthday - USDA!

Dean Hamburg - Public Policy and Legislative Chair
Alaska School Nutrition Association-AKSNA
P.O. Box 2546
Soldotna, AK 99669





April 4, 2012

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Re: Happy Birthday

Since 1946 when President Truman signed the National School Lunch Act (Act) and the School Nutrition Association (SNA) was incorporated, SNA has had a special relationship with USDA and agriculture. The stated purpose of our Act is to help children and American agriculture. It is the only section of the Act that has not been amended.

On behalf of our 55,000 members and the 32 million children we serve allow us to say "Happy 150th Birthday" to all of the dedicated people at USDA and to the farmers, ranchers and all involved in the food supply system who produce the food for the school nutrition programs. Their amazing productivity benefits all Americans and especially our children. We have the most productive food system in the world thanks to USDA, our farmers and all those in the food chain. While FNS is the largest agency in the Department, we appreciate that the production of a safe and affordable food supply for all Americans is the Department's core mission.

In just a few months we will also recognize the 150th birthday of the land grant college system. Our land grant colleges and USDA's research program have played a key role in the research, innovation and biotechnology that feeds us all for less than ten percent (10%) of our disposable income. So, as one of USDA's largest consumers, on behalf of the programs we jointly serve, thank you and Happy Birthday to all at USDA and our extended family.

Sincerely,

Helen Phillips, SNS
SNA President

Sandra Ford, SNS
SNA President-elect

Leah Schmidt, SNS
SNA Vice President

Frank DiPasquale
SNA Chief Executive Officer