Fresh from California

Menu Planning Support Session

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CALIFORNIA FOOD FOR CALIFORNIA KIDS®

California Food for California Kids is an initiative of the Center for Ecoliteracy
LunchAssist PRO

Professional Development and Resource Hub
session 3 | agenda

● fresh from california
● specialty crops
● salad bars
● resources
● discussion
offerings

- **Menu Planning Support.** Online group sessions providing best practices for menu planning and substitutions, recipe development, and nutrition analysis with a Registered Dietitian.

- **Marketing Materials.** Beautifully designed promotional banners and posters for your cafeterias offered in both English and Spanish.

- **Media Support.** Media training and outreach to promote your district’s Farm to School program.
are you:

● currently offering salad bars,
● bringing them back next school year, or
● interested in offering salad bars for the first time?
specialty crops

fresh from ca
fruits & veggies in focus

- avocado
- broccoli
- cantaloupe
- cucumber
- grapes
- kale
- kiwi
- strawberries
- tangerines
- watermelon
salad bars
making a comeback
salad bars

benefits

- reduce food waste
- introduce new flavors, textures, and foods
- increase consumption of fruit and veggies
- meet veggie subgroup requirements
- offer customizable lunch tray options
- advance plant forward initiatives
- practice scratch cooking
salad bars + covid safety

CDC gave the okay, but check with your county

● CDC guidance for school nutrition professionals:
  ○ no evidence to suggest handling or consuming food is associated with COVID-19
  ○ very low risk of transmission from surfaces and shared objects
  ○ no need to limit food service approaches to single use items and packaged meals
  ○ recommend physical distancing and ventilation wherever possible

● contact county for local requirements
salad bars

a solid sustainability strategy
A sustainable community is usually defined as “one that is able to satisfy its needs and aspirations without diminishing the chances of future generations.” This is an important moral exhortation. It reminds us of our responsibility to pass on to our children and grandchildren a world with as many opportunities as the ones we inherited.

Fritjof Capra  
Co-Founder, Center for Ecoliteracy
food waste vs. food loss

“wasted food” describes food that was not used for its intended purpose

- **food waste** = plate waste
  - food served but not consumed
  - spoiled food
  - waste *considered* inedible

- **food loss** = unused product from agricultural sector
  - unharvested crops
how many pounds of edible food goes uneaten each year in the U.S.?
90 billion pounds of food

Source: South Dakota State University Extension
food waste prevention in schools

strategies your program may have considered or are currently using

- **food waste audit**
- share tables or baskets
- offer vs. serve (OVS)
  - salad bars
- recess before lunch
- longer lunch periods
food recovery hierarchy

- **MOST PREFERRED**
  - SOURCE REDUCTION
    - Reduce the volume of surplus food generated

- **FEED PEOPLE**
  - Donate extra food to food banks, soup kitchens, and shelters

- **FEED ANIMALS**
  - Use food scraps to feed livestock

- **INDUSTRIAL USES**
  - Provide waste oils for rendering and fuel conversion and food scraps for digestion to recover energy

- **COMPOSTING**
  - Create nutrient-rich soil amendment

- **LEAST PREFERRED**
  - LANDFILL/INCINERATION
    - Last resort disposal
salad bars + sustainability

part of your sustainability plan

- salad bars provide variety
- student choice leads to less waste
- excess fruits & veggies can easily be added
- zero waste recipes
  - watermelon rind coleslaw
- smaller pan sizes
  - allow more options
  - minimize food waste
policy refresher

keeping it compliant
true or false?
true or false:

items on the salad bar may count toward a reimbursable meal
true!
keep it compliant!

training may be needed on proper portion sizes

- teach students how to select the minimum portion size
- refresh and train staff on identifying a full serving of fruits and vegetables
  - 1 cup lettuce = ½ cup DGV
  - ¼ cup dried fruit = ½ cup F
  - how to visually assess if student has a ½ cup of fruit/veggies on tray

What Does a 1/2 Cup Serving Look Like?

- Grapes: 16 grapes
- Oranges or Apples: 6 slices
- Strawberries: 6 berries
- Beans & Corn: 1 tennis ball
- Celery or Jicama: 3 sticks
- Salad Greens: 1 baseball
true or false:

tongs are an acceptable serving utensil on the salad bar
true!
serving utensils

what utensils can be used on the salad bar?

- schools may determine what utensils to use on the salad bar
  - leafy greens = tongs
  - melon slices = tongs
  - grapes = spoodle
  - canned fruit = slotted spoodle

- it is important to provide visual aids and education to students to help them select the appropriate portions
true or false:
the point of service (POS) must be placed after the salad bar
false!
what if the salad bar cannot be placed before the POS?

CDE has proposed 3 options (select 1):

1. dedicate a salad bar monitor to ensure students have a reimbursable meal
2. reroute student entry to the food service area so they access the salad bar before the serving line
3. serve a full portion of fruit and/or vegetable with each tray on the serving line

source: SNP-03-2020: salad bars in the NSLP and SBP
true or false:
each salad bar item must be planned in \( \frac{1}{2} \)-cup portions on the menu
false!
menu planning considerations

portion sizes

- plan for each student to be able to select at least **1 full serving** from the salad bar
- plan for **reasonable portion sizes** of each item offered
- minimum creditable amount of fruits and vegetables: **⅛ cup**

reasonable portion: 1 cup

reasonable portion: ¼ cup
true or false: a salad bar monitor can help ensure salad bars are safe for students
true!
food safety

monitor salad bars during meal service

- supply clean utensils and dispensers
- keep surface areas clean
- monitor total time food is on the salad bar
- ensure good salad bar etiquette

additional duties

- refill items
- engage with students
- monitor for reimbursable meals (if after POS)
- record leftovers on production records
special diet considerations for salad bars
stay ahead of the game

- prepare students’ tray from untouched food pan
- separate serving utensils for each item
- place items that contain top 9 allergens in separate service area if possible

special diets + salad bars
special diets + salad bars

minimize cross-contact

- consider pre-packaged top 9 allergen items
  - croutons
  - cheese cubes
  - shredded cheese
  - hard boiled egg

- salad dressings often contain milk, egg, and/or soy
  - consider pre-packaged salad dressings
  - package bulk dressings
  - make a house-made dressing free from top 9 allergens
scratch cooking

a solid start
start at the salad bar

want to add more scratch cooking?

- **speed scratch**: combining ready-made food w/fresh ingredients
- start small
- set realistic goals
- determine timeline
  - ex: add 2 new recipes a school year
scratch cooking

practice and master those skills

- salad dressings
  - strawberry vinaigrette
  - sweet serrano-lime dressing
- sauces
- bean salads
- grain salads
- leafy green salads
salad bar strategies

options, options, options
save $$$$  

salad bars can be part of a money saving strategy

- increase student choice
- reduce food waste
- feature local produce
- use up produce that is about to expire
- mix lower & higher price point items
  - garnish
  - toppers
salad bar set-ups can vary and should work for you and your team’s current skill set

- individual fruits and veggies vs. recipes
- pre-portioned options
- build your own station
- themes
- compliment the menu
compliment the menu

**menu**

**Wednesday**

**Main entrees**
- bean & cheese tostadas
- vegan torta with avocado

**Milk**
- fat free chocolate milk
- 1% white milk

**Salad bar**

- Tropical Fruit Salad with Mint
- Kale & Quinoa Medley
- Black Bean, Corn, & Watermelon Salad
- Kiwi Salsa
3 salad bar setup ideas

1. Low-prep set-up
   - Tangerines
   - Fresh Broccoli
   - Grapes
   - Kale Caesar Salad

2. Low-prep set-up
   - Cantaloupe
   - Three Bean Salad
   - Strawberries
   - Green Goddess Cabbage & Cucumber Salad

3. Low-prep set-up
   - Watermelon
   - Korean Spicy Cucumber Salad
   - Veggie Quinoa Salad
   - Kiwi (quartered)
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<tr>
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<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>theme:</td>
<td>house-made</td>
<td>CA veggie of the</td>
<td>locally-made</td>
<td>CA fruit of the</td>
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### Salad Bar Theme: Veggie Subgroups by Day of the Week

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<td>Dark Green</td>
<td>Red/Orange</td>
<td>Starchy</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Beans/Peas/Legumes</td>
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- **Monday**: Dark Green (e.g., broccoli)
- **Tuesday**: Red/Orange (e.g., carrots)
- **Wednesday**: Starchy (e.g., coconut)
- **Thursday**: Other
- **Friday**: Beans/Peas/Legumes (e.g., beans, peas, lentils)

*Add another red/orange option to meet the meal pattern.*
resources
salad bar resources

- **Half Cup Poster** (LunchAssist)
- **Fruit & Vegetable Crediting Guide** (FL Dept. of Ag.)
- **Best Practices Handling Fresh Produce in Schools** (USDA)
- **Handling Fresh Produce on Salad Bars** (USDA/ICN)
- **Promoting and Supporting School Salad Bars** (CDC)
- **The Lunch Box** (Chef Ann Foundation)
- **Guide to Conducting a Student Food Waste Audit** (EPA)
- **Recipe Book for School Nutrition Pros** (Pisanick Partners)
- **Rainbow Berry Salad with Strawberry Vinaigrette** (SLCUSD)
- **Vegan Torta with Avocado** (Healthy Kids Collab. - CIA)
- **Tropical Fruit Salad with Mint** (NH DHHS)
- **Kale Quinoa Medley** (OK Farm to School Cooking)
stay connected with LunchAssist

● LunchAssist PRO membership featuring Brigaid
  ○ staff training videos in English & Spanish
  ○ culinary training by Brigaid (coming soon)
  ○ templates, tools, and resources
  ○ weekly newsletter

● check out our newest article in Served Digizine!
  ○ “The Sustainability Conversation We Are Not Having”
resources & events | center for ecoliteracy

- [learn more](#) and sign up for [fresh from california](#)
- final menu planning support session | 6/15, 1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. PT
- [plant-forward school meal resources](#)
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thank you
discussion time!