

Posted: 10/14/2015

To: School Food Authorities

Subject: SFS-16-09 National School Lunch Week and Sodium Infographic

USDA has provided a letter from Deputy Under Secretary Katie Wilson, to all School Food Authorities (SFAs). This letter recognizes the hard work and effort of school nutrition professionals in serving healthy meals to over 30 million students nationwide.

Additionally, a new infographic offers tips on achieving sodium reduction while boosting the flavor of foods served in schools. SFAs are encouraged to check out this infographic for ideas and resources.



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

October 9, 2015

Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

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Alexandria, VA  
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Dear School Food Authorities:

As we celebrate National School Lunch Week, I want to thank you for all of your efforts to serve healthy meals in America's schools. As a result of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, our Nation's school children now have access to more nutritious school meals and snacks. Your continued efforts to implement the updated school meal nutrition standards are commendable, and children are now trying and consuming more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains each school day than ever before.

Currently, children ages 6-18 years in the U.S. consume approximately 3,300 mg of sodium per day. This is far greater than the daily *maximum* of 2,300 mg of sodium recommended in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010. High sodium intake is a major concern as it is related to an increased risk of high blood pressure, which can begin in childhood. Over the past several years, you have worked diligently toward meeting sodium target 1, and I applaud your hard work as you rose to this challenge.

To assist you in achieving sodium reduction in school meals, USDA is collaborating with the food industry, public health organizations, and other stakeholders on a national sodium reduction initiative entitled *What's Shaking? Creative Ways to Boost Flavor With Less Sodium*. The goals of this initiative are to:

- Increase awareness of the need for dietary sodium reduction;
- Expand the number of sodium reduction tools and resources available to schools while increasing the use of these resources; and
- Highlight activities in the private and nonprofit sectors that are helping schools achieve the sodium targets.

Over 35 national associations and organizations have already signed on to partner with USDA in the "*What's Shaking?*" initiative, and the number continues to grow. This is great news for schools and students across the country. It means that you, your staff, and families will have access to more resources, recipes, menu ideas and sodium reduction strategies, skill-building trainings, and lower sodium product options from which to choose. Many of these resources can be found on our "*What's Shaking?*" Web site, which serves as a convenient hub for resources on sodium reduction and healthier meals at home and at school.

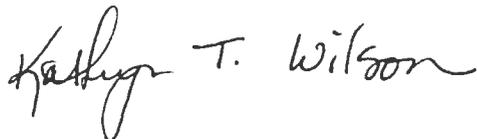
Additionally, I am excited to share with you our new newest infographic (enclosed here) for school nutrition professionals. This infographic will help you communicate with your staff, families, and the school community about the importance of sodium reduction, and garner community-wide support for your efforts to boost the flavor of school meals with

Regional Directors  
State Directors  
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less sodium. Please share this infographic widely and highlight your school meal program successes.

I greatly appreciate your continued dedication to the success of the Child Nutrition Programs, and it is our goal to continue to support you. You play the most vital role in supporting our children's health and well-being, and increasing awareness of sodium reduction in the school and broader community is one important step toward ensuring a healthy environment where our Nation's children live, learn, and play. Let's continue to support each other on this journey of feeding children in a way that can create a lifetime of healthy habits.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathryn T. Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial 'K'.

Kathryn T. Wilson  
Deputy Under Secretary  
Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services

Enclosure



FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION PROFESSIONALS

# WHAT'S SHAKING?

*creative ways to*

**BOOST FLAVOR WITH LESS SODIUM**



## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW...

The sodium targets for school meals help kids eat less sodium while still getting the amount they need to stay healthy.



## TOP SOURCES OF SODIUM FOR CHILDREN

- pizza
- bread
- cheese
- lunch meats
- chips

Lowering sodium in children's diets today can help prevent heart disease tomorrow.



## SCHOOLS ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

Before Updated Nutrition Standards (1,650 mg)

After (1,420 mg)

*(Depicts sodium content data for high schools.)*

School lunches now have 230 mg less sodium.



# 90%

of children in the United States consume too much sodium.

## HOW YOU CAN REDUCE SODIUM *in* SCHOOL MEALS



### 1 USE HERBS & SPICES

Feature "Flavor Stations" in your cafeteria where students can add seasonings (without added sodium) that appeal to their tastes.



### 2 EXPLORE NEW RECIPES

Find large quantity recipes for school food service on the new recipe Web site, <http://www.WhatsCooking.fns.usda.gov>.



### 3 ORDER USDA FOODS

Stretch your budget and serve nutritious foods by planning your school meals around no-salt-added or low-sodium USDA Foods.



### 4 CONTACT VENDORS

Write bid specs that request lower sodium options. Depending on the brand, a food item may have different amounts of sodium.



Check out all of our resources at the "What's Shaking?" Web site:  
[HTTP://HEALTHYMEALS.NAL.USDA.GOV/WHATSSHAKING](http://HEALTHYMEALS.NAL.USDA.GOV/WHATSSHAKING)



Sources:  
<http://www.iom.edu/en/Reports/2009/School-Meals-Building-Blocks-for-Healthy-Children.aspx>  
[http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6336a3.htm?s\\_cid=mm6336a3\\_w](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6336a3.htm?s_cid=mm6336a3_w)  
[http://www.cdc.gov/salt/pdfs/sources\\_of\\_sodium.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/salt/pdfs/sources_of_sodium.pdf)  
[http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/SNDA-IV\\_Vol1Pt1\\_0.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/SNDA-IV_Vol1Pt1_0.pdf)