

FRESH BITES NEWSLETTER

November 2019

Featured: Allergen-Free Menu is Full of Flavor



Food allergies and intolerances are becoming more prevalent in schools and care programs today. Students' allergic reactions may range from hives and sour stomachs to life-threatening conditions. NutriStudents K-12 gives scholars with food allergies delicious options at mealtimes with our special menu that eliminates seven of the most common allergens: dairy, gluten, soy, eggs, fish/shellfish, tree nuts and peanuts.

Each entrée can be paired with the grain of your choice — cilantro or garlic brown rice, or gluten-free tortilla chips. You choose the fruit or vegetable to offer to complete the meal. This menu is available under the “Lunch” drop-down menu in the client portal and should be used for any student with a food allergy who has a [Special Diet Statement](#) on file with your district, as required by USDA for meals to qualify as reimbursable. To keep students safe, foodservice managers, students and parents should not try to determine if a menu item on the regular menu contains an allergen as some allergens may not be obvious without reviewing labels or could be missed when reviewing a label.

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Thanksgiving Menu



Recognize the most food-centered holiday with this special lunch menu:

- Shredded Turkey & Gravy
- Green Beans
- Candied Sweet Potatoes
- Pumpkin Bread
- Cranberries

And, of course, we've provided recipes and reports to make it easy. Access the menu day by clicking on your desired age group:

[K-5](#) [6-8](#) [K-8](#) [9-12](#)

[Editable Food Production Report](#)

Featured: Allergen-Free Menu



Beef & Green Onions



Beef & Potato Pilaf



Chicken Supreme



Chicken & Vegetable Sukkar



Chicken Stew



Seasoned Chicken Breast

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Our allergen-free menu intentionally uses minimally processed foods and relatively few ingredients because manufacturers frequently change the ingredients in the foods they sell to schools. Neither manufacturers nor the USDA are required to report ingredient/label changes to food distributors, School Food Authorities (SFAs)/schools or foodservice management companies/caterers. The lack of notification is the single biggest challenge schools have when guaranteeing allergen-free meals do indeed omit risky ingredients. We recommend checking labels frequently to identify changes and potential allergens.

You may have concerned parents who request to verify nutritional details on the foods you serve. We understand their concern, however, we ask that you do not share our proprietary recipes with them. Our recipes are the intellectual property of NutriStudents K-12 and are only provided to our clients for their exclusive use and to share with reviewers conducting USDA Administrative Reviews. We also discourage you from providing CN labels to parents as well given the frequent changes to labels.

Some students have dietary restrictions recommended by specialty doctors or dietitians but do not have a Special Diet Statement on file. In Offer vs. Serve schools, students can select foods that conform to their diet to build a reimbursable meal when multiple options are offered. If students want to omit grains from their diet as a preference, for example, they could build a reimbursable meal by choosing at least three of the remaining four components required (meat/meat alternative, milk/dairy, fruit, vegetable and grain).

Lactose-Reduced Milk: Parents of students needing lactose-reduced milk can simply submit a written request to the schools. A Special Diet Statement is not required.

#KidsWeServe: Sarah Barrett



Click the picture to hear what Sarah thinks of school lunch at Verndale Public Schools, a NutriStudents K-12 client.

We'd love to share testimonials and stories of #KidsWeServe in your district. Email us at customerservice@NutriStudentsK-12.com.

Need Training? Start Here.

Keeping a school kitchen running smoothly and safely takes attention to details, practice and training. Some training is required by the USDA and the Department of Health; other training can help you grow your program and your career. Thankfully, there is a wealth of training material available from state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations and professional associations to meet the requirements as well as support professional growth. This blog post merely scratches the surface and serves as a starting point.

USDA Required Training

The USDA has minimum education standards for new school nutrition directors as well as annual training standards for anyone working in school nutrition. [The standards](#) aim to ensure school nutrition professionals are equipped to plan, prepare and purchase healthy products to create nutritious, safe and enjoyable school meals. Requirements:

- Foodservice Directors: Must complete at least 12 hours of annual continuing education/training. New foodservice directors must meet varying operational and food safety training requirements based on district enrollment within their first year.
- Foodservice Managers: At least 10 hours of annual continuing education/training.
- Full-Time Foodservice Staff: At least 6 hours of annual continuing education/training.
- Part-Time Staff: Each year, at least 4 hours of annual continuing education/training, regardless of the number of part-time hours worked.

Note: If hired January 1 or later, an employee must only complete half of the above required training hours.

Food Safety / Protection Training

In addition to USDA-required operational training, food safety training/certification is needed to help prevent foodborne contamination and illnesses in schools. Requirements may vary by state, so check with your state's Health Department for minimum standards. In Minnesota, for example, at least one person in each school kitchen must be a Certified Food Protection Manager, or one CFPM per 10 satellite feeding sites. The National Restaurant Association's [ServSafe®](#) Food Protection Manager Certification teaches and confirms knowledge of food safety protocols, and is accepted in all 50 states.

The USDA Office of Food Safety also provides general training resources and recommendations to create [food-safe schools](#).

Operational Training

Beyond required training, there are many training resources to expand your knowledge and help you run your program more efficiently:

- USDA Foods has several [webinars and training tools](#) that present the basics and best practices for using USDA Foods/commodities in Child Nutrition Programs.
- [USDA Team Nutrition](#) is one of our favorite sources for training tools and fact sheets on NSLP, SBP, CACFP, Smart Snacks, Summer Food and more.

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NutriStudents K-12®
Menu Freedom. Over 100 Certified Weeks.



"The nutrients, the weekly production records, allergy-free menu, a commodity order builder are all at our fingertips in one software system! I can't believe we went all this time without this software! Thank you NutriStudents K-12!"



DeAnn Arellano, Foodservice Director
Sierra Grande (CO) School

Share Tables Reduce Waste, Satisfy Hungrier Students



Share tables are an excellent way for child nutrition programs to reduce food waste and help hungry kids get their fill. For those times when students' eyes are bigger than their stomachs, they can place select foods they don't want on the share table for other students/program participants to eat. Share tables are permitted by the USDA, according to [specific guidelines](#).

Prepackaged, shelf-stable items, such as crackers and granola bars, or whole fruits that must be peeled before eating, like oranges and bananas, are excellent to place on a share table. For food safety reasons,

many foods are not allowed to be placed on share tables.

Acceptable Foods:

- Unopened, pre-packaged, shelf stable items, such as granola bars, cereal packs, crackers, ketchup and drinks.
- Wrapped fruit and vegetables and fruits with a thick skin, like bananas, oranges and washed apples, if the peel is intact.
- Unopened, pre-packaged potentially hazardous or perishable food items, such as string cheese and milk, when a temperature control mechanism is in place.

Unacceptable Foods:

- Unpackaged food items, such as a salad bowl without a lid.
- Packaged items that have been opened, or otherwise compromised, such as an open bag of baby carrots.
- Packaged items that can be opened and resealed.
- Food items brought from home.

If your school or care program offers a share table, and we recommend everyone does, someone must monitor the table to ensure only acceptable foods are exchanged through the table and the share table must be accounted for in your HACCP plan.

Food remaining on the share table at the end of meal service may not need to be thrown away. They may be served and claimed for reimbursement during another meal service (i.e., during an afterschool program when leftover from a school lunch); and/or donated to a nonprofit organization, such as a community food bank.

For more information, see:

["Use of Share Tables in Child Nutrition Programs" USDA Policy Memo](#)

EVERY KID HEALTHY MN CONFERENCE



Tuesday, November 19, 2019
8 am - 4 pm

Earle Brown Heritage Center
6155 Earle Brown Drive
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430

This conference supports schools, organizations and individuals who want to help make every kid in Minnesota healthy, active and ready to learn. It will feature a keynote presentation, learning sessions from state- and local-level experts, an exhibit area, and networking opportunities.

Upcoming Show

Stop by our table to enter to win a one-year subscription for free!

NutriStudents K-12
Menu Freedom Over 100 Certified Vendors

Make This: Beef Pho



A traditional Vietnamese noodle soup, Pho may seem a little adventurous for some but it's really a dish comprised of everyday ingredients that students love. Give it a try! It's featured on Week 16 of our 5-day and 7-day menus as well as Week 8 of our 7-day menus. You could pair it with a cultural lesson on the Hmong New Year, which much like Thanksgiving in the United States, is traditionally observed following harvest season at the end of November or the beginning of December.

Beef Pho is comprised of three recipes: beef meatballs, macaroni noodles and pho broth, which is a mild broth with onions, cilantro and squeeze of lime.

Servings: 100

Serving size: 4 meatballs, 1/2 c. noodles, 1 c. broth

Ingredients

400 Beef Meatball:

ADVANCE PIERRE (3-17-505-0)

6.25 lbs Noodle Macaroni Elbow Whole Wheat
(USDA-100919 or Zerga 8001-000)

Pho Broth:

49-3/4 c. Water

3/4 c. + 1 tsp. Chicken Base

(Stouffers - 00074826240049 or

Custom Culinary-1171ECFPZ)

3/4 c. + 1 tsp. Soy Sauce - Kikkoman (171)

1/4 c. Kosher Salt

1 T. Ground Black Pepper

3/4 c. + 1 tsp. Red Onion, Raw 5#

3/4 c. + 1 tsp. Fresh Cilantro (30 CT)

3/4 c. + 1 tsp. Fresh Green Onion

5 Fresh Limes (12 count)

Instructions - Meatballs

Cooking method: standard oven, 4" deep full hotel pan

1. Place thawed meatballs into the pan.

2. Wrap pan with plastic wrap & tinfoil.

HACCP: keep cooled below 41° until ready to cook

3. Preheat oven to 325° (if using a convection oven, decrease temp by 25° to 50°). Heat until entrée reaches 165° or above, hold above 135° until end of service.

Instructions - Macaroni Noodles

Cooking method: stove top

1. Bring water to a rolling boil.

2. Fully submerge noodles in water.

3. Heat until the noodles are al dente.

4. Drain water & place into pan.

5. Wrap pan with plastic wrap.

Instructions - Pho Broth

Cooking method: stove top

1. Blend base & water to make chicken stock.

2. Add spices, sauce & broth and mix well.

3. Heat until entrée reaches 165° or above, hold above 135° until end of service.

4. Chop onions, cilantro and add just before service.

5. Cut limes into 8ths and serve a wedge with each bowl.

Service: Serve each student 4 meatballs each, ½ c. noodles and a cup of broth.

Creditable Products

- Advance Pierre 3-17-505-0 (4 each, credits as 1.5 meat/meat alternative)
- USDA 100919 (1 oz, credits as 1 whole grain rich equivalents)
- Zerga 8001-000 (1 oz, credits as 1 whole grain rich equivalents)

[Download recipe and nutritional detail.](#)

Need Training? Start Here.

[training...continued from page 3](#)

- [SNA's Training Zone](#) is a great resource for accessing scheduled (Webinar Wednesdays) and on-demand webinars, and online training modules on a variety of topics, some of which offer continuing education credits to help maintain professional development certifications.

Professional Development

Those who've chosen a career in school nutrition may want to pursue a Certificate in School Nutrition, or the School Nutrition Specialist (SNS) credential, through the School Nutrition Association. The SNA has charted a clear path for professional development through Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 and Level 4 of the Certificate in School Nutrition.

The SNS Credential is a mark of excellence and achievement that reflects what it takes to manage school nutrition programs in today's challenging climate. The SNS Credentialing Exam evaluates candidates' knowledge and skills required to perform specific job activities related to managing or directing school nutrition programs.

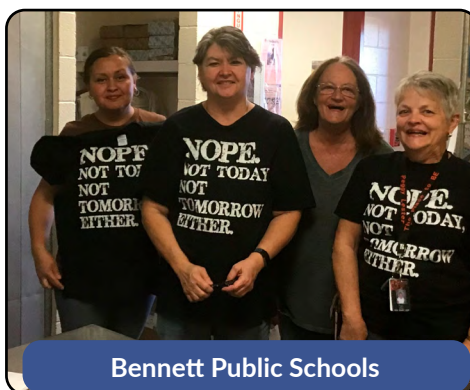
If all these options are overwhelming, start with a search of the [USDA's comprehensive database of training programs and resources](#) from federal and state agencies, nonprofit organizations, universities and other sources. As you amass your training, track your progress using the [USDA's Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool](#).

Photo Gallery: Fall Travels

Our team has been on the road this past month visiting client sites and working trade shows. Here are a few friends we've made along the way.



Byers Public Schools



Bennett Public Schools



MI SNA Annual Conference

Photo Gallery: Fall Travels



Lewiston-Altura Public Schools



Bethune Public Schools



Upper Lakes Foods Fall Food Show



Upper Lakes Foods Fall Food Show



Upper Lakes Foods Fall Food Show



MI SNA Annual Conference



NutriStudents K-12 President and Co-Founder Eldon Brustuen took a break from the MI SNA Conference to step out of character and have a little fun test driving a Polaris Slingshot.

Get In Touch!
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