

FRESH BITES NEWSLETTER

February 2019

Featured: Remain independent, against all odds



Each spring, foodservice directors as well as district administrators consider changes for the following school year. If your foodservice program is humming on all cylinders, you may be looking at ways to increase your menu variety or streamline operations. If it's losing revenues, and facing declining participation and increasing complaints, you may be considering drastic measures to turn things around. Or worse, your administration may be weighing outsourcing your entire foodservice program to a foodservice management company (FSMC) without your knowledge or input.

Foodservice management companies may seem like an easy solution to plaguing problems. Just turn over your program and let someone else worry about it. But it's not that simple.

While there are many good, ethical foodservice management companies, it's important to understand they have totally different

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Serving co-mingled age populations



Many schools these days have preK programs in addition to serving K-12 students. Food service procedures can be a little confusing when mixing age populations. Thankfully, the USDA provides some guidance when preK students co-mingle with older students at meal times. You can download a fact sheet (PDFs: [\[English\]](#) [\[Spanish\]](#)) outlining the school meal patterns for preK students and the differences between preK meal patterns and those of older students.

In general, the USDA encourages schools to serve meals to preschoolers separately from older students. For starters, independent meal times allow schools to serve preschoolers' family-style, which NutriStudents K-12 advocates for with many child care centers. Giving preschoolers the opportunity to serve themselves builds their confidence and independence and allows them to choose foods they prefer. Co-mingling preK with older students may result in less supervision of the younger students who may be trying new foods for the first time. Younger students also may not eat sufficiently because they're distracted or intimidated by older kids.

The preschool meal pattern provides the amounts and types of foods that most younger children need for healthy growth and development. This is best done in a separate setting, whenever possible. If you must serve populations together, refer to the fact sheet for help on differentiating the meal patterns for the populations you serve.

If you have questions after reviewing the fact sheet, please [contact General Manager Laurie Yohn, SNS, RDT.](#)

Forecasting tool brings precision to USDA Foods' allocations

It's almost time for districts to order USDA Foods for the 2019-2020 school year. If you're sitting with a freezer full of commodity foods yet to use, you may be wondering how to bring more accuracy to your USDA Foods' allocations for next year. The answer? NutriStudents K-12 Commodities Forecasting Tool! It has been updated in the client portal and is ready to use. This intuitive tool will tell you the precise amounts to order of all USDA Foods on your chosen menu weeks.

[Click here to schedule a demo of this time and money-saving tool today.](#)

Observe National CACFP Week, March 17-23



HELP SPREAD THE WORD,
CACFP
SERVES OVER 4 MILLION CHILDREN
with healthy meals and snacks daily. Learn more at cacfp.org.

Child care centers across the country will mark **National CACFP Week** in March, acknowledging the many ways communities -- and children -- across the country benefit from the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program. The CACFP Sponsors Association has [many helpful resources](#) you can use to raise awareness for your CACFP food service program.

The primary goal of CACFP is to serve nutritious meals to children attending child care homes and centers. Secondary goals are:

- The establishment of positive eating habits at the earliest stages of development.
- Reduction of future health care and education costs due to lack of proper early development.
- Training and support of local child care personnel.

Research also indicates that the CACFP is one important factor in providing quality child care.

Children who are cared for by providers participating in the CACFP benefit by being fed nutritious USDA regulated meals that ensure their proper development. These children gain from early nutrition education that helps them establish positive eating habits that will enrich the quality of their diet throughout their life. Parents of children in child care are assured that their child(ren) receives high quality meals. With proper nutrition, the child is less likely to experience illness and fatigue and will develop at a normal physical and intellectual pace. Good nutrition is the recipe for an all-around happier child.

Providers receive nutrition education and support services from their CACFP sponsor that help them serve nutritious meals and create a positive eating environment for children. The quality of child care provided in communities is improved due to educational and financial resources available to caregivers through the CACFP. This program provides approximately 2 billion meals and snacks to over 4.4 million children daily in child care centers, family care homes, and after-school programs; over 115,000 elderly persons in Adult Day Care; over 62,000 child care centers; 115,000 family child care providers working with 800 sponsors use CACFP to provide children with high quality nutrition and learning experiences.

NutriStudents K-12 is proud to support foodservice programs serving children through the CACFP program with our 10-week menu rotation that adheres to the federal nutrition guidelines / meal patterns for preK ages.

Remain Independent

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objectives than independent, self-operated school foodservice programs. They are profit-centered corporations, with profitability as their ultimate goal, sometimes at the expense of their client schools.

What do these companies generally mean for districts?

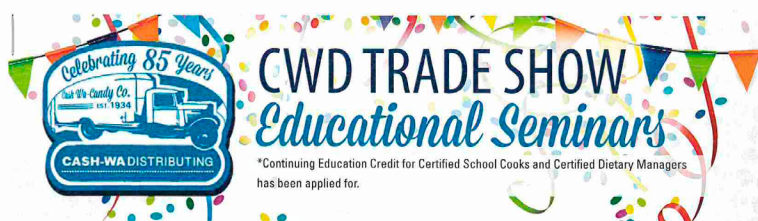
1. You sacrifice any and all revenues your program may generate. That may not be a big deal to programs running in the red, but you forfeit any potential revenues from changes you may implement.
2. Your staff is no longer your staff. FSMCs typically result in the district's foodservice staff being laid off and then rehired as employees of the outside vendor, often at a lower wage. This affects employee morale and could lead to a potential public relations situation for your district.
3. You lose control of your program, which is often less than ideal for aspiring foodservice directors. These corporations charge fees based on a school's desired outcomes for its foodservice program, with the goal to come in on budget. They tend to cut programs to the bare minimum and may not be open to your requests for improvements.
4. They increase their revenues through add-on services such as on-site staff, staff training and nutrition-in-the-classroom support. It could cost your district more money than initially thought, which doesn't resolve budget concerns you may have had previously.

A Better Way

Instead of sacrificing control and profits, partner with NutriStudents K-12 to strengthen your existing program and remain self-operated. Your staff remain your staff. You have a library of fully compliant menu weeks to keep students engaged and participating all year. And you have productivity tools and resources

to help your program run smoothly, save on food costs and build participation. Perhaps best of all, you can reinvest your profits back into your foodservice program. NutriStudents K-12 doesn't replace foodservice directors -- we help them!

NutriStudents K-12 pricing is transparent and affordable, and generally falls within foodservice directors' budgetary authority.



Professional Development Opportunity

NutriStudents K-12 VP of Sales Steve Munch, RD and General Manager Laurie Yohn, SNS, DTR, will be presenting, "Establishing a Winning School Foodservice Program through Preparation, Promotion and Procurement," at **Cash-Wa Distributing's 2019 Annual Spring Trade Show**, March 26-27 at the Buffalo County Fairgrounds in Kearney, Neb. Continuing Education credit approval is pending. Not in the area? Watch for this presentation to be offered at additional trade shows later this year!

"The kids are excited about breakfast and lunch. Participation has increased much more than we expected: From 500 to 700 every day."

- Crystal Vang

Make This! Crunchy Bonzo Beans

Crunchy Bonzo Beans are a fun finger food for kids and a great way to incorporate legumes from your USDA Foods allocations. They're easy to make, too!

Ingredients:

3 #10 cans low-sodium garbanzo beans (USDA Food)
1½ c Vegetable oil
2½ T Paprika
2 T Garlic salt
3 T Onion powder
1½ T Black pepper, ground



Serving size: 1/4 cup

Yields: 105 servings

One serving provides: ¼ cup vegetable, beans/legumes

(Click link to original recipe below for full nutritional information.)

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. Open cans of beans, drain, and rinse beans well under cool running water.
3. Drain beans well and pat dry with towel.
4. Mix olive oil and the remaining seasonings in a bowl.
5. Add the beans and coat well. Pour them on the sheet pan and spread the beans out evenly.
6. Bake for 20 minutes at 400°. Stir the beans around on the pan and bake for another 20 to 25 minutes until crisp and roasted. Beans will turn dark in color.

Notes:

1. One #10 can fits perfectly on a sheet pan.
2. Store at room temperature in an air tight container.
3. Serve in soufflé cup, or use to top a salad, or serve as a healthy snack.
4. If you bake ahead and they are not crisp at time of service, return them back to the oven at 400° for 5 minutes to re-crisp.
5. To make them spicy, add cayenne pepper.

Source: [Recipe](#) developed by Chef Dee Dee Olson as part of a USDA Team Nutrition grant in 2014.

Apply Today! Action for Healthy Kids offering grants up to \$3,000

Do you have ideas for amping up your breakfast program or expanding physical fitness initiatives in 2019-2020? Apply for an **Action for Healthy Kids school grant!** School breakfast grants are valued up to \$3,000 and the Game On grants up to \$1,000. Participate in informational webinars next week to learn more.

Deadline to apply: Friday, April 5, 2019

Get In Touch!
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