

Home Grown: Smarter Lunchrooms

Smarter Lunchrooms are designed to lead children to make healthy choices while providing them with the ability to continue to make choices. Instead of requiring students to take specific foods, smarter lunchroom techniques allow students to select healthy choices by making these foods the most appealing. The techniques are based on using environmental cues to increase student selection of healthy meal options and decrease plate waste. Techniques include product placement, product display, and the use of creative names for healthier foods. The *Home Grown* menus were designed with two smarter lunchroom techniques in mind: creative naming of targeted foods (K-12) and healthy convenience lines (9-12 only).

Creatively naming menu items and displaying those names near the food has been shown to increase consumption of a targeted item by 40-70%. This technique has been shown to be especially successful in increasing vegetable selection. Vegetables are frequently overlooked because they are downplayed with boring names that do nothing to entice a student to select them. By giving vegetables creative names and moving them into the spotlight, you have increased students' taste expectations. By making the vegetables sound more appealing you will increase the likelihood of students selecting and eating the vegetables. WI TN has developed a list of vegetable dishes included in the *Home Grown* menus and provided Smarter Lunchroom names for the 9-12 grade group.

Time and convenience greatly influence students' choices. During the busy lunch period, students will often grab a snack or skip lunch rather than wait in a long line for a meal. This can be used to your advantage by developing healthy and convenient reimbursable meals. Healthy express lines have been shown to increase selection of nutrient dense foods by over 30%. The *Home Grown* menus include five reimbursable meals that can be used as part of a healthy meal convenience line.

Tips to Increase the Number of Students who Select Vegetables

- Give vegetables creative or descriptive names. Use the names provided on the next page or develop your own names. Display these names on signs placed on the serving line by the vegetables.
- Create a Student Nutrition Action Committee of students who are responsible for naming veggies and developing signage.
- Display the creative and descriptive names on a poster or menu board outside the cafeteria.

Tips to Increase the Number of Students who Select a Targeted Entrée/ Reimbursable Meal

- Give targeted entrées creative or descriptive names and display these names on signs placed on the serving line and on a menu board outside the cafeteria.
- Create a healthy-items-only convenience line or specific Grab 'n' Go window/cooler.

WEEK 1	Monday	Colorful Curried Rice
		Vitamin Rich Steamed Broccoli
	Tuesday	Crunchy Carrots and Celery
		Creamy Hummus Dip
		Fresh Green Grapes
	Wednesday	Loaded Pork Tacos
		Fiesta Refried Beans
		Golden Corn
	Thursday	Savory Spaghetti and Meat Sauce
		Crisp Green Salad
Friday	Sweet and Sour Chicken and Rice Bowl	
	Asian Medley Vegetables	
WEEK 2	Monday	Philly Chicken Sub
		Crunchy Carrots
		Fresh Melon Cup
	Tuesday	Cheesy Omelet
		Harvest Apple Muffin
		Smooth Yogurt & Crunchy Granola
		Superb Sweet Potato Tots
	Wednesday	Creamy Butternutty Mac and Cheese
		Fresh Garden Salad
	Thursday	Tangy Apple-Cranberry Coleslaw
		Texas-style Baked Beans
		Toasted Potato Wedges
	Friday	Italian Seasoned Stromboli
		Steamed Green Beans
		Citrus Fruit Cup
WEEK 3	Monday	Mouth-Watering Minestrone Soup
		Oven Roasted Potato Wedges
	Tuesday	Creamy Chicken Alfredo
		Cheesy Garlic Bread
		Vibrant Green Peas
		Cherr-ific Salad
	Wednesday	Sweet Cinnamon Squash
		Crunchy Carrot Sticks
	Thursday	Italian Bean Salad
		Golden Corn
		Razzy Cran-Grape Gelatin
	Friday	Hearty Chicken Pot Pie
Green and Gold Steamed Broccoli		