

# USDA FOODS

*More Choices For You. More Options for Them.*

A USDA Foods Guide for  
Child Nutrition Professionals



# Agenda

- **USDA Foods and School Nutrition**
- **The Benefits of Using USDA Foods**
- **The USDA Foods Communications Initiative**
- **Ways to take action**

# USDA Foods and School Nutrition

# USDA Foods and School Nutrition



The USDA Foods program supports Federal nutrition assistance programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

The NSLP serves over 32 million children each day.

# USDA Foods and School Nutrition



**USDA Foods provide approximately 15-20% of the food offered in each school lunch.**

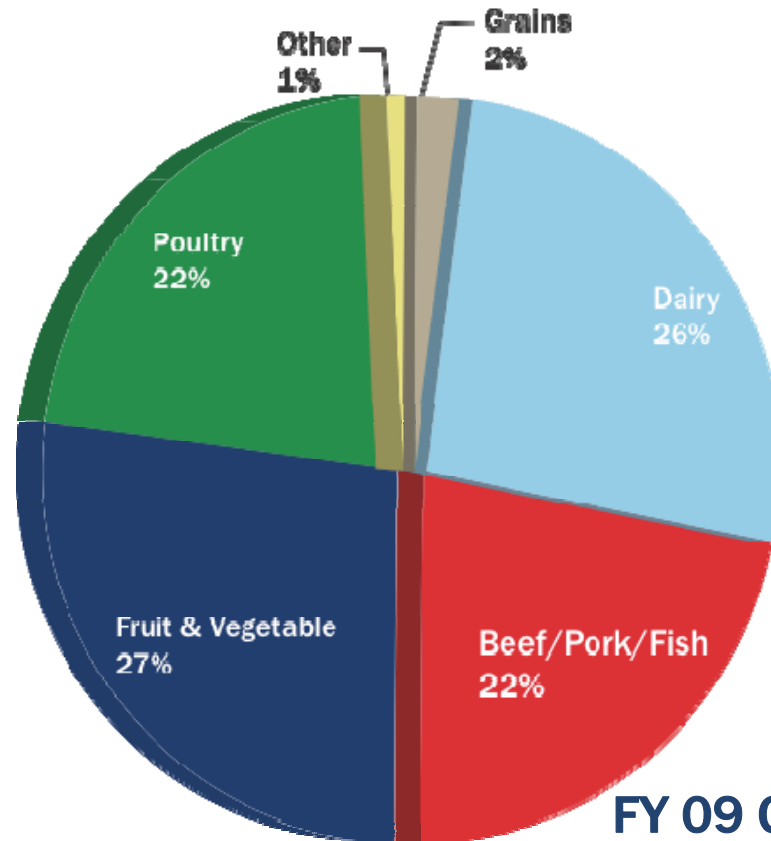
# The Benefits of Using USDA Foods

# Choice and Convenience



- More than **180** nutritious food items are available – fresh, frozen, packaged, canned, dried, and bulk.
- Convenient products to meet your menu planning needs, student taste preferences, school nutrition goals, and local wellness initiatives.
- Many USDA Foods are available for further processing.

# Choice: USDA Purchases by Food Type



**FY 09 Child Nutrition Programs**  
(includes entitlement and bonus)



# Healthy Basics



## USDA's 100% American Grown Foods:

- Help schools meet meal pattern requirements
- Support the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*

**“Over the years, they [USDA Foods] have become increasingly more nutritious. Improved quality and appeal has lead to greater use of these products by schools.”**

–Alliance for a Healthier Generation

# Wholesome Offerings

## More Fruits and Vegetables

- Fresh produce
- Dried fruits and nuts
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Frozen fruits and vegetables



## More Whole Grains

- Whole-grain tortillas
- Whole-grain pancakes
- Whole-grain macaroni
- Whole-grain spaghetti
- Whole-grain rotini
- Oats
- Brown rice
- Quick-cook brown rice
- Dry kernel corn for further processing



# Improved Nutritional Quality

## Reducing Added Sugars

- Unsweetened applesauce
- Only extra light sucrose syrup for canned fruits



## Reducing Sodium

- Lower sodium processed cheese
- Low sodium canned vegetables
- No salt added canned corn and tomatoes
- No salt added frozen vegetables
- Reduced sodium chicken fajita strips
- Reduced sodium turkey taco filling
- Researching lower sodium meat products



United States Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service



# Improved Nutritional Quality

## Lower in Fat

- Trans fat-free frozen potatoes
- Fat-free potato wedge
- Eliminated shortening
- Low-fat bakery mix
- Reduced-fat cheese products

## Leaner Meats

- 96-97% lean ham
- 95% lean turkey ham
- 95% lean beef patties
- Bone-in roasted chicken with half the fat of battered chicken



# Stretch Lunch Budgets

	Whole-Grain Tortillas	Tomato Sauce *USDA's is low sodium	Frozen Green Beans
Commercial Cost	\$23.10 (144ct)	\$17.70	\$15.35 (20# case)
USDA Foods Cost	\$16.00 (288ct)	\$15.46	\$12.10 (30# case)

A 2011 USDA survey found that the majority of CNPs surveyed agree that USDA Foods help stretch tight budgets and offers one way to stretch limited meal budgets for the 94% of schools participating in the NSLP.

# Stretch Lunch Budgets



## Recent Bonus Offerings:

- Blueberries
- Fruit Mix
- Peaches
- Pears
- Potatoes



# The USDA Foods Communications Initiative



# The USDA Foods Communications Initiative

- Despite the many improvements, there are still misperceptions about USDA Foods and the NSLP.
- USDA is taking action to educate the public about USDA Foods and the NSLP and replace fiction with fact.



# Understanding the Realities of USDA Foods Helps Promote School Lunch

## Fiction

USDA Foods are low quality, unhealthy, and don't meet food industry standards.

The NSLP benefits only low-income students.

Choices of USDA Foods are limited.



## Fact

USDA Foods are healthy and safe, and in some cases surpass industry standards.

All students benefit by participating in the NSLP.

USDA Foods offer a wide variety of nutritious and tasty foods that inspire healthy, innovative recipes and menu planning.

# Take Action!

# Let USDA Foods Help You!

## School Lunch Menu

---

**Monday:** Roasted USDA Chicken

**Tuesday:** Stir-fry with USDA brown rice

**Wednesday:** Roll-ups with USDA whole-grain tortillas

**Thursday:** USDA whole-grain pasta and vegetables

**Friday:** USDA whole-grain rotini topped with USDA's low-sodium tomato sauce with a side of USDA carrots



United States Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service



# Spread the Word!

**HIGHLIGHT**  
USDA FOODS ON  
SCHOOL MENUS

**CONDUCT**  
TASTE TESTS  
WITH USDA  
FOODS

**ENCOURAGE**  
MORE STUDENTS TO  
PARTICIPATE IN  
THE NSLP

**SUPPORT**  
NUTRITION  
EDUCATION  
IN SCHOOL

**PROMOTE**  
SCHOOL LUNCH  
FOR STUDENTS



United States Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service



**Contact us to learn more and  
encourage others to do the same!**

**[www.fns.usda.gov/USDAFoods](http://www.fns.usda.gov/USDAFoods)**