Objectives for Today

• Be aware of a seasonal cycle menu that meets nutrition standards, incorporates local and USDA Foods, and meets gold criteria for HUSSC.

• Be able to address challenges in implementing healthier school menu options.

General Climate

• 2004 Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act with current nutrition guidelines
• 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
• 2007 Institute of Medicine (IOM) Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods Report
• 2008 Iowa legislature passes the Healthy Kids Act
• 2009 IOM School Meals Report with Menu Recommendations (Spring)
• 2009 New HUSSC criteria and financial incentives
• 2009 Iowa Gold Star Cycle Menu Project Begins (Fall)
• 2010 Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act with Proposals
• 2010 Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act with Proposals
• 2010 Iowa Gold Star Cycle Menus Toolkit Released

USDA Team Nutrition 2009 Grant Project Overview

• Team effort to develop a 5-week “Chef Inspired” seasonal cycle menu
• ISU Extension led standardization and modification of recipes and pilot testing
• Menu was pilot tested by 7 volunteer school districts — feedback from students, staff and managers
• Chef and Extension technical assistance was provided to pilot schools
• Goal to provide a tool for schools to help meet HUSSC requirements

Menu Outcomes

• Healthier Menus
• USDA Foods Incorporated
• HealthierUS School Challenge Gold Criteria
• Chef Inspired Recipes
• 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and IOM Recommendations
  – increased legumes, whole grains, & fruits/vegetables
  – reduced sodium and fat
• Locally Grown Options
• Student Appeal and Acceptability

“The TEAM”

• ISU Extension
• Chef Consultant
• Food Service Directors
• Bureau Consultants
• Students
Recipe Development

• Recipes used as starting point:
  – Chefs
  – USDA
  – Healthier Kansas Menus project
  – Popular magazines
• Adapted to HACCP base
• Useable in quantity situations
• Contemporary menu items - appealing to students with global view
• Tested with Spring menus in ISU Quantity Food Production lab

Pineapple Melon Salsa, Fresh Fruit Cup & Jicama Salad

Three Bean Salad
Spinach and Tomato Salad

Chicken and Spinach Alfredo Pasta

Chicken Chipotle Burrito
Pilot Test

- Tool kit of 5-week seasonal cycle menu with 95 HACCP-based standardized recipes
- DVD with recipes and photos
- Technical assistance provided by ISUE Specialists/Chefs
- Pilot tested with the 7 districts Fall 2010
- Data collected included plate waste, observations, interviews, and cost and production records

Iowa Gold Star Pilot Districts

- Johnston: High School
- South Hamilton: Middle/High School
- Gilbert: Elementary, Middle and High School
- Lawton-Bronson: High School
- Humboldt: High School
- South East Polk: Delaware Elementary and 6th Grade Center
- Des Moines Independent: Brody Middle School, Jefferson and Wright Elementary
Pilot Districts

- Seven districts
  - Products tested/served in 12 buildings
  - Districts tested in 1 – 3 buildings
- All districts self-operated
- Locations:
  - 3 Metro districts (Des Moines); 4 Rural/small town districts
  - Central Iowa, Far western, and North central
- Total enrollment reached in participating buildings = 4,850 students

Challenges

- Some higher food costs
- Reluctance by students to try new items
- Sourcing of special items
- New recipes and methods preparation
- Time in communication and coordination
- Production staff time – more “from scratch” preparation

Technical Assistance

- Pre-pilot orientations
- Practice of new items
- Chef assistance for production planning
- Samples provided to students
- Presentations to school boards
- Letters to parents
- School newsletter and press release
Mise en Place (meez-un-plahss)

- This is a French phrase that means, to put in place.
- Food professionals use this phrase to describe the things that have to be done to get ready to prepare a dish or menu item.
- Everything you prepare in your kitchen requires a series of steps.
- Often, these steps are outlined in the form of a recipe, and give you the basic information you need.
- With new recipes, this IS important!

What is this?
Butternut Squash

How to Prepare: Jicama

Communication to School Boards

- ISU Extension Publication PM 2048A
- Accessed at www.extension.iastate.edu/store
- Enter PM # search box

Benefits

- New recipes with trendier menu options
- Increased student and staff interest in meals
- Chef promotion and involvement heightened student willingness to “try” new food
- Increased scratch cooking
- Increased staff pride and student interaction
- New skill development
- Point of sales promotions
- Healthier options – legumes, whole grains, dark green and orange vegetables, etc.
- Child Nutrition Program recognition and some increased participation
- Media attention
So .....  

What did Pilot Schools have to say about the Iowa Gold Star Menus?

Directors Plan To...

- Incorporate some of the new items in future menus (almost all of recipes were useful)
- Address production needs
  - Some pairings more labor intensive than other days
  - Consider equipment available
  - Consider purchase of pre-cut vegetables or invest in mechanical cutter

Hits

- Stromboli
- All of the Wraps (option as build your own with lettuce/tomato and condiment self serve)
- Cuban Salad (USDA Recipe)
- Side salads with spinach and romaine mixes
- Fruit offerings – mango, blueberries, etc.
- Mandarin orange chicken (USDA Food)
- Cuban Pork Sandwich (USDA Food)
- Hot Ham and Cheese on Whole Grain Bagel
- Whole grain oatmeal cookies (USDA Recipe)

Repeat Exposure/Recipe Tweaking

- Sweet Potato Fries – serve as confetti fries
- Chicken Quesadilla – over yield with mixture
- Spinach Alfredo with Bow Tie Pasta – reduce spinach
- Jicama salad – too much time; prep day ahead for flavors to marry
- Squash
  - Good acceptance with summer and zucchini
  - Butternut presented prep challenges and some acceptance issues (variety of presentations)

Misses

- Original whole grain cinnamon roll recipe
- Sweet potato salad
- For some:
  - Turkey tetrazzini
  - Chicken panini
  - Macaroni and cheese
  - Tuna salad
  - Jicama salad
  - Corn muffins and cornbread

Input from Directors

- “We have some new recipes to use.”
- “Initially we had to purchase some special items, but all are shelf stable and will last for a while.”
- “The first few weeks killed us, so either we got better at working or the menus got easier.”
- “Most administrators were supportive – as long as the service line didn’t slow down.”
- “We were surprised at how supportive the teachers and Principals were.”
- “It was a great feeling when we experienced positive feedback from students and staff.”
Input from Students

- “The new items were cool.”
- “The stromboli was awesome.”
- “I want it everyday.”
- “Our school smells so good.”
- “The mandarin orange chicken was like eating at a restaurant.”
- “The new menu was fun and different!”
- “The Spinach Alfredo was too green.”

Input from Foodservice Staff

- “Yes, this was challenging but I really felt it was worthwhile.”
- “This project had us working as a team.”
- “We learned we could do this – it seemed hard at first but we got used to it.”
- “I don’t use the paring knife anymore.”
- “Students liked dressings mixed in salads.”
- “I learned about other vegetable options rather than just potatoes.”
- “An eye opener – students will eat it!”
- “I think we are close to HUSSC.”
Thank you!