

The School Nutrition Association of Connecticut



**SCHOOL
NUTRITION
ASSOCIATION**
OF CONNECTICUT

The NUTMEGGER



VISION

All CT students have access to nutritious school meals that promote a healthy lifestyle

MISSION

Provide school nutrition professionals with tools, resources and opportunities for program success and sustainability

VALUES

Striving for excellence through:

- Integrity
- Commitment
- Inclusion
- Collaboration
- Dedication

Pictures from our Fall Conference in This Issue!

SNACT.ORG

PAGE 3

President's
Letter

PAGE 6-7

I AM SCHOOL
NUTRITION

PAGE 8-10

Fall Conference
Pictures

PAGE 11

USDA Conference
Pictures

Executive Committee

President	Kate Murphy
Incoming President	Erin Perpetua
Vice President	Kristin Roberge
Treasurer	Jessica D'Agnese
Secretary	Ashley Carl
Executive Director	Denise Di Mare

Regional Representatives

Charter Oak	Open
Minute Maid	Open
Mohegan	Carol Dodson
Naugatuck	Becky Tyrrell
Nutmeg	Eileen Faustich
Yankee	Stephanie Deason

Committees (chairs listed first)

Child Nutrition	Lonnie Burt, Amanda Aldred, Melissa DeCoffe, Elizabeth Fisher, Becky Fowler, Kristina Roberge, Meghan Sullivan
Education	Stephanie Deason, Elizabeth Fisher (co chair) Fionnuala Brown, Diane Burbank, Sharon Shettleworth
Industry Council	Dennis O'Connor, Abby Kassman-Harned (vice chair), Christine Benoit, Jason Bloch, Dianne Burbank, Stephen Goldstein, Shelley Hill, Lynne Pellegrini, Stuart Wisel
Marketing	Christopher Hathaway, Amanda Byrd, Nicole Lefebvre, Tacey Martinek, Lianne Xenophontos
Member Services	Maureen Nuzzo, Dianne Houlihan (co chair) Kristina Roberge, Dennis O'Connor, Heather Plourde, Brian Reynolds, Sandra Shaw, Sharon Shettleworth, Tim Thurston, Samantha Wilson
Single Unit	Kristina Roberge
Nominating	Erica Biagetti and all regional reps
Program Development	Maggie Dreher, Erica Biagetti (co chair) Jen Bove, Cindy Brooks, Ron DeBarge, Eileen Faustich, Susan Maffe, Ashley Carl, Tim Prosinski, David Nichols, Maureen Nuzzo, Stuart Wisel, Sue Yazdzik, Tracey Winzer (Ways and Means)
Public Policy & Legislation	Jeffrey Sidewater, Susan Maffe, (co chair) Erica Biagetti, Cindy Brooks, Tim Cipriano, Dawn Crayco, Maureen Nuzzo, and all regional reps
CSDE Rep	Fionnuala Brown
CASBO Rep	Karen Asetta, Nancy Cole

SNACT President's Welcome

Our schools recently celebrated their 100th day of school. Do you know what that means? We are over half way done with the school year! As I reflect on the 1st half of the year I am amazed at the things our School Nutrition Heroes have accomplished.

I was so happy that we were able to come together in person for our annual conference and food show in October. I cannot thank our program committee enough for putting together such an incredible event. The comic relief from our keynote speaker, Scot Haney was just what we needed.



Our industry partners were a crucial part of our successful annual conference and USDA commodity show. They were asked to think outside of the box and come up with ways to introduce new products to us without having us taste them and also doing it virtually. Our program committee and our Ex. Director Denise once again were asked to do the impossible. With less than 2 weeks notice they took the in person USDA conference and commodity show and made it virtual. The behind the scenes work that they put in to making the conference the huge success it was is unbelievable. THANK YOU!

I know there are days when we think when will it get better, but it will. School Lunch Heroes will continue to put on their capes and a smile and nourish our students.

I Am School Nutrition!

Kate Murphy, Food Service Director Naugatuck Public Schools

SNACT 2021-2022 President



Executive Director Report

“The Reach of Breakfast and Lunch”, FRAC’s February 2022 report, shows that CT served over 16 million breakfasts and over 25 million lunches in SY 2020-2021. While that is a drop from pre pandemic levels, it is extraordinary that in the middle of a pandemic, when schools were not operating normally, CT’s SN professionals still managed to serve millions of meals!

The 2021-2022 school year has brought it’s own set of unique challenges, yet despite them all you have done a remarkable job keeping students fed. Supply chain disruptions, staffing shortages - the tales of disruption are matched by the creativity and determination to develop work arounds to make sure that the job get done.

While there is much unknown at this point about the SY 2022-2023 year one thing I know is that whatever the year presents, CT’s SN professionals will be there to keep CT’s students well nourished.



May 6 2022 is School Lunch Hero Day. Mark you calendars for a special SNACT celebration—now more than ever it’s time to acknowledge the Super Heroes you all are!

National School Breakfast Week March 7-11 2022

Let's Celebrate!



SNACT Committees—Get Involved!

All SNACT events are the result of the wonderful work done by our committees. In addition to our major events, SNACT sponsors regional trainings, Hot Topics and more. SNACT has 9 standing committees that meet regularly. The committees work separately and together to make sure SNACT is fulfilling our mission. The committees are:

Child Nutrition: Oversees Mentoring Program

Education: Coordinates and runs regional training and offers statewide training

Industry Council: IC is made up of 7 Industry Members who apply to serve on the council.

Marketing: Works to develop and maintain awareness of SNACT programs.

Member Services: Encourages SNACT membership, oversees SNACT Scholarships and Awards

Single Unit: Acts as the liaison between SNACT and single unit manager/supervisors.

Nominating: Identifies and recruits SNACT's future leaders

Program Development: Develops, designs and oversees SNACT Conferences, Trade Shows and Banquet

Public Policy and Legislation: Acts as the SNACT liaison on legislative matters.

Becoming involved with a SNACT Committee is a great way to develop and advance your personal and professional skills. Most Committees meet a few times a year. If you are interested in being involved with SNACT and the great things we do for school nutrition professionals in CT, please contact Incoming President Erin Perpetua at eperpetua@norwichpublicschools.org

Congratulations to our election winners!

Vice President (Term: 2022-2023): **Dianne Houlihan**, Food Service Director, Waterford Public Schools

Secretary (Term: 2022-2024): **Meghan Sullivan**, RD, CD-N, Director of Food and Nutrition, Pomperaug RSD #15

Industry Council Chair (Term: 2022-2024): **Stuart Wisel**, Key Impact Sales

Regional Representatives

Naugatuck Chapter (Term: 2022-2024): **Becky Tyrrell**, Food Service Director, EdAdvance,

Nutmeg Chapter (Term: 2022-2024): **Eileen Faustich**, MS, SNS, Food Service Director, Milford Public Schools



Recognize the great work done by SNACT members!

Nominate a SNACT member for the “I Am School Nutrition Spotlight”.

Nomination forms are on our website (www.snact.org)

Profiles of the winners will be published in the Nutmegger. You may nominate yourself or others.

Winners will be selected by the Marketing Committee.

I AM SCHOOL NUTRITION SPOTLIGHT

Kate Madison, Tolland

What is your position in the School Nutrition program? I’m the manager of Tolland high school. Also, the production specialist for the district and create all standardized recipes.

What is your favorite food? Hands down pizza.

What do you love about food? You can create many different dishes with the same main ingredient. Example being the chicken strips can be utilized in many different Mexican & Chinese dishes.

What motivates you to go to work every day? The staff I have. They are as committed to school food service as I am.

What is your favorite school lunch meal now? Homemade pizza. At the high school we use a round oven rising crust.

What was your favorite school lunch growing up? Homemade pizza. Back in the sixties you could smell the homemade yeast products the kitchen was making for lunch.

Do you have a time that you feel you have gone above and beyond? I guess when I can help a student with allergy menu’s or if you notice that are hungry and explain that they are allowed to take 5 of the allowed portions of their meals.

When did you realize that school lunch was going to be your vocation? I had a great introduction into school food service because my director & manager could see that I was a very creative and highly motivated to make lunches homemade fresh. Example fresh hummus, create lunch your way station and make a teacher only lunch menu.

What do you feel is your greatest accomplishment in school nutrition? Making our school district standardized recipes. This helps the kids know the bean salads, deli sandwiches, rice bowls will have the same familiar flavors as they move from school to school.

If you could change one thing in school nutrition, what would it be? It used to be universal feeding. Now with the pandemic that has happened.

If you didn’t work in school lunch, what would you like to do? Be a travel agent.

What is your favorite food, book, destination, animal, season, author, movie, hobby, vacation, car ? I love to travel the United States. I would say my favorite vacation would be when my daughter & I traveled from New Mexico to St. Louis via route 66 and then ended with ANC.

When did you fall in love with school nutrition? I have been in school nutrition since 2002. Twenty years WOW!

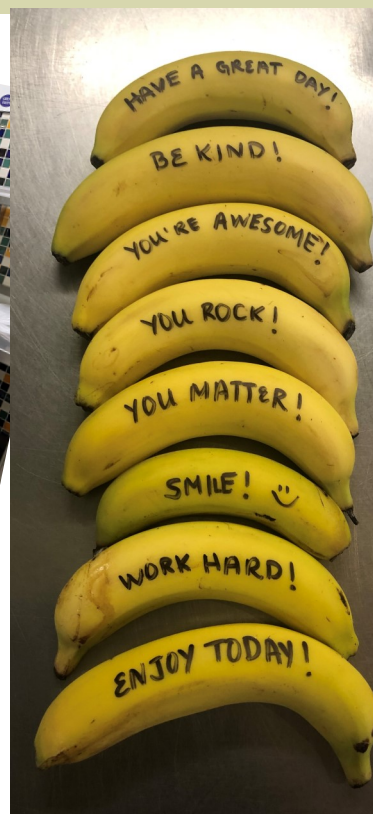
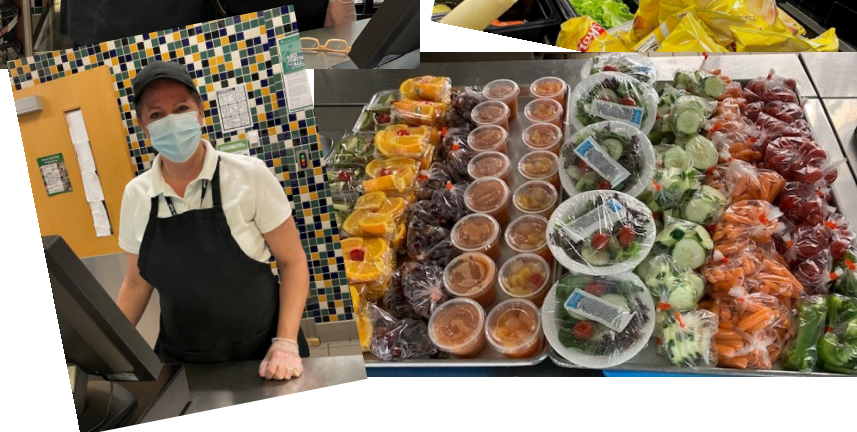
What is the most popular new menu item you are offering to your customers? Now with the pandemic it must be any breaded chicken item. I used to have at least 12 menu items to choice from.

Tell us a fun fact about yourself that not everyone might know? I have traveled to 42 of the 50 states, hoping to see the other 8 within the next 2 years.



Kate Madison

Scenes from Tolland!



Fall Conference Planting Seeds for the Future Staying out of the Weeds

Our Fall Conference had a little bit everything— virtual, in person and included a farmer’s market! It kicked off with 2 virtual days of ICN’s “Cafeteria as Classroom” followed by a 1 day in person conference, farmers market and trade show. We were honored to have both Education Commissioner Charlene Russell-Tucker and Agriculture Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt join us in person. And everyone was delighted by our guest speaker, Scot Haney of WFSB. You can find the CSDE presentation at <https://snact.org/page/presentations>



From the survey..

Information was valuable, panels were excellent. Scot Haney is hysterical!



Farmers Market was OUTSTANDING also!!



Our fall trade show was a first—no eating allowed. But our exhibitors rolled with it and gave us a great show! The best part? Being together again!

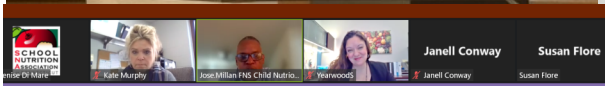


From the survey...
We always exhibit and find the opportunity for interaction with the Directors very valuable. This year it was especially nice just to see everyone!





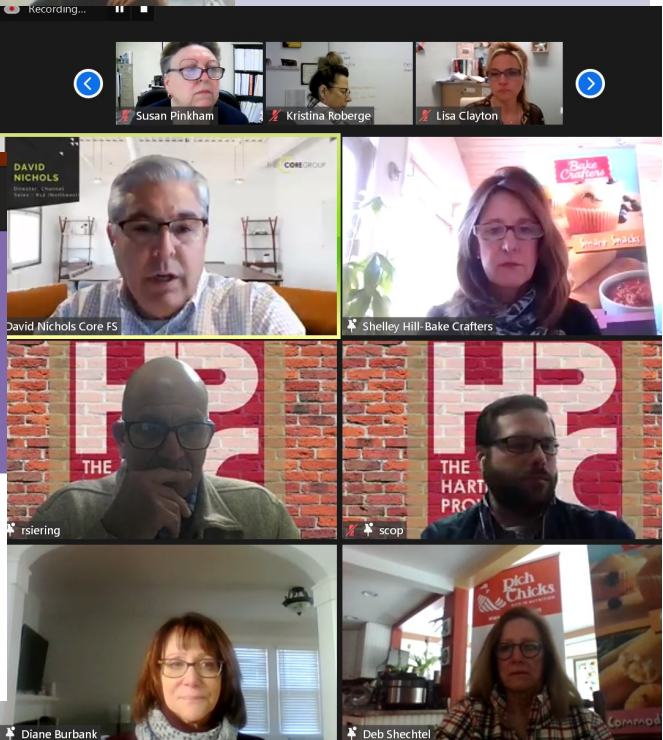
Our USDA Foods Conference and show also went virtual— 3 days of conferencing and connecting! We were joined by representatives from the USDA Food Distribution Division, Supplemental Nutrition and Safety Programs, FNS, as well as our CSDE and over 20 vendors



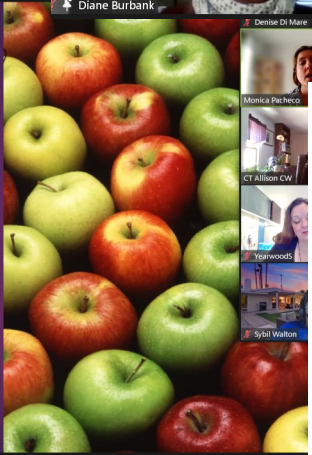
Processing of USDA Foods and USDA DoD Fresh



Kathleen Staley, Chief Program Integrity and Monitoring Branch



- ### New for Spring 2022
- USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) orders mainly center-of-plate items
 - Fresh Produce will be available via other funding streams
 - Ordering via WBSCM
 - More information to come





2022 Position Paper

Throughout the pandemic, nutritious school meals have [contributed to student achievement](#), supported America's families and provided a critical safety net during economic hardships. With the help of [federal child nutrition waivers](#), school nutrition professionals have ensured safe and consistent access to healthy meals for students. School meal programs now endure acute supply chain, labor, financial and regulatory [challenges](#) and require Congress and USDA's continued support. *To promote the health and success of students and ensure the sustainability of school meal programs, the non-profit School Nutrition Association (SNA) urges Congress to:*

Extend pandemic-related child nutrition waivers through School Year (SY) 2022/23

Persistent national supply chain disruptions and labor shortages have severely impacted the financial and operational sustainability of school meal programs. Widespread [issues](#) with discontinued menu items, shortages and higher prices are already wreaking havoc on the SY 2022/23 bid process. To plan for next school year, school nutrition programs and their suppliers urgently need the assurance of waiver extensions through SY 2022/23.

*Make the following **permanent** changes to Child Nutrition Programs:*

- **Increase National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program (NSLP/SBP) reimbursements.**
During the pandemic, free meals have been reimbursed at the higher Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) rate. However, in a November 2021 [SNA survey](#), only about half of school meal program directors indicated that the SFSP reimbursement rates sufficiently covered the costs of producing school breakfast and lunch, including food, labor, supplies and pandemic costs. Returning to NSLP/SBP reimbursement rates would increase meal program losses and cut into education budgets, impeding efforts to meet the needs of students and jeopardizing progress in school nutrition programs.
- **Expand NSLP/SBP to offer healthy school meals for all students at no charge to support academic achievement.**
Students, families and school meal programs alike have reaped the benefits of offering equal access to free school meals during the pandemic and through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). [Research](#) shows students receive their healthiest meals at school, and school meals are [proven](#) to support learning and improve attendance and classroom behavior. No child goes hungry during the school day or accrues [unpaid meal debt](#), a burden on families and school district budgets. School nutrition professionals can focus on nourishing students and spend less time on paperwork and reporting requirements.
- **Ease sodium, whole grain and milk requirements.**
Nutritious school meals already meet Target 1 [sodium reductions](#). Giving schools more time to meet Target 2 limits and eliminating unachievable Final Targets will preserve this progress and ensure students continue to consume school meals, which include fruits, vegetables and milk. Congress should also restore the rule that half of all grains be whole grain rich and permit schools to offer low-fat flavored milk.
- **Reduce regulatory and administrative burdens.**
Overly complex federal regulations divert resources from the mission of serving students and impede efforts to quickly and creatively adapt meal services during emergencies. Congress should direct USDA to implement the recommendations of the congressionally-mandated [Child Nutrition Reporting Burden Analysis Study](#) and the forthcoming Government Accountability Office (GAO) study of [USDA Foods in Schools](#).

Legislative News

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced updates to the school nutrition standards that give schools a clear path forward as they build back better from the pandemic. The new final rule – [Child Nutrition Programs: Transitional Standards for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium](#) – establishes the following requirements beginning SY 2022-2023:

- Milk: Schools and child care providers serving participants ages six and older may offer flavored low-fat (1%) milk in addition to nonfat flavored milk and nonfat or low-fat unflavored milk;
- Whole Grains: At least 80% of the grains served in school lunch and breakfast each week must be whole grain-rich; and

Sodium: The weekly sodium limit for school lunch and breakfast will remain at the current level in SY 2022-2023. For school lunch only, there will be a 10% decrease in the limit in SY 2023-2024. This aligns with the U.S Food and Drug Administration’s recently released [guidance](#) that establishes voluntary sodium reduction targets for processed, packaged, and prepared foods in the U.S.

All other nutrition standards, including fruit and vegetable requirements, will remain the same as the 2012 standards.

Planning for the future, USDA intends to issue a proposed rule in fall 2022 that moves toward updating nutrition standards for the long term. USDA is required to update school nutrition standards based on recommendations from the latest Dietary Guidelines for Americans. In doing so, USDA will prioritize seeking input from schools, industry and others to inform the process. The department expects to finalize that rule in time for schools to plan for SY 2024-2025.

“These transitional standards are step one of a longer-term strategy to lean into the school meal programs as a crucial part of improving child health. Over the coming months and years, USDA will work closely with its school meal partners to develop the next iteration of nutrition requirements. We’ve got to find the right balance between standards that give our kids the best chance at a healthy future based on the latest nutrition science, and ensuring those standards are practical, built to last, and work for everyone,” said Vilsack.

“The creativity of schools and other local partners who understand what works best in practice will be key as we grow into this new generation of school meals. We are eager to listen and learn from their ideas because when it comes to the health and well-being of our nation’s children, we must always continue to aim high and strive for the best,” Vilsack added.

Hot Topics for Directors 2021-2022

Hot Topics for Directors are lunch time opportunities for SNACT members to meet and learn together.

The 2021-22 Schedule is:

November 19, 2021

Allergen Answers: What the vegan? Gluten Who?

Sponsored by McCain's

February 25, 2022

Stress Less: Tips and Tools

Sponsored by Waypoint

March 18, 2022

Capitalizing on the Plant Forward Trend

Sponsored by Country Pure

April 29, 2022

Crystal Ball: Visions of the Future

Sponsored by Core Foodservice

Stay tuned to Thursday Thoughts for details.



HOT TOPICS: ALLERGEN ANSWERS HOSTED BY MCCAIN FOODS & KEY IMPACT SALES



SNACT's Industry Council

SNACT's Industry Council is a valuable partner to SNACT. Dennis O'Connor of American Patriot Sales is our Council Chair and Abby Kassman-Harned is vice-chair.

In addition to Dennis and Abby, the members of the 2021-2022 Council are: Christine Benoit (CORE Foods), Jason Bloch (McCain Foods), Dianne Burbank (Thurston Foods), Stephen Goldstein (CR Peterson), Lynne Pellegrini (AJ Letizio) and Stuart Wisel (Key Impact) SNACT is fortunate to have this wonderful group to work closely with us as we navigate the year.

Members of Industry Council rotate on 2 year terms. Applications for the 2022-24 term opened in January and are due by March 7.

A group from SNACT sorted and packed almost 4,800 pounds of meat in a refrigerated room at Connecticut Foodshare in December!



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Other Featured Brands:

*Recognize the work done by CT's School
Nutrition Professionals!*

Nominate a SNACT member for the **I Am School Nutrition** Spotlight. Profiles will be published in the Nutmegger. You may nominate yourself or others. Winners will be selected by the Marketing Committee.






Go to SNACT.ORG to
nominate!



Free Social Media Graphics



In partnership with SEA Level Social, we are providing social media graphics to help you tell your story and increase participation. Follow SNACT on social media to find these free resources!

-  School Nutrition Association of Connecticut (SNACT)
-  @snaofct
-  @mysnact

Questions or requests, email
Liz Roesel at liz@sealevelsocial.com



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- 8" French Bread, WG
- 4x6 Classic Pizza, WG
- 4x6 Stuffed Crust Pizza, WG

For more information please contact:

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Northeast:	Vincent Nardone Jr.	570-709-5138	Vinnie@nardonespizza.com
Midwest:	Mary Valnes	701-238-6296	Mary.Valnes@nardonespizza.com

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- **Inventory control**- Some customers have difficulty using an entire piece of whole muscle product in a timely manner, sliced product allows the customer to open what is needed.



Brian Scagliarini
Old Neighborhood Foods
bscags@thintrim.com
413-454-2357

Lynne Pellegrini
AJ Letizio Sales and Marketing
lpellegrini@ajletizio.com
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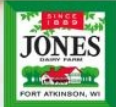


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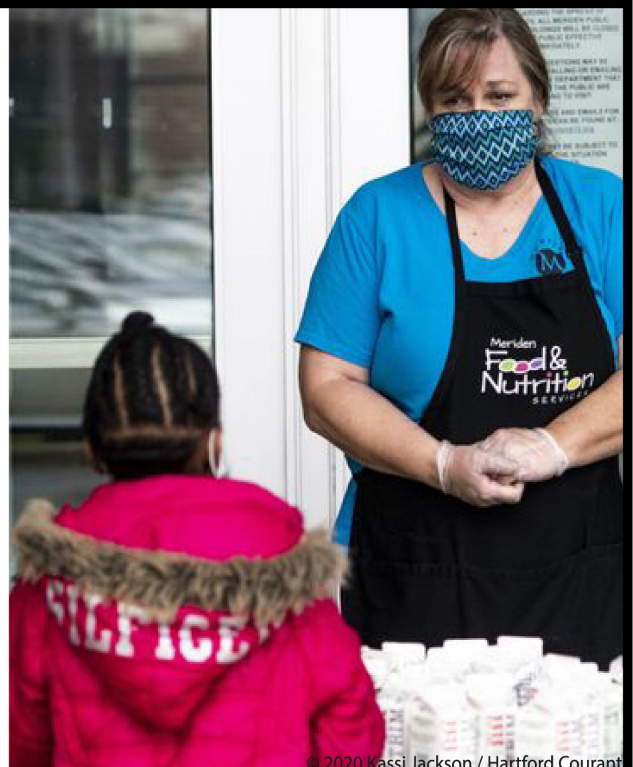
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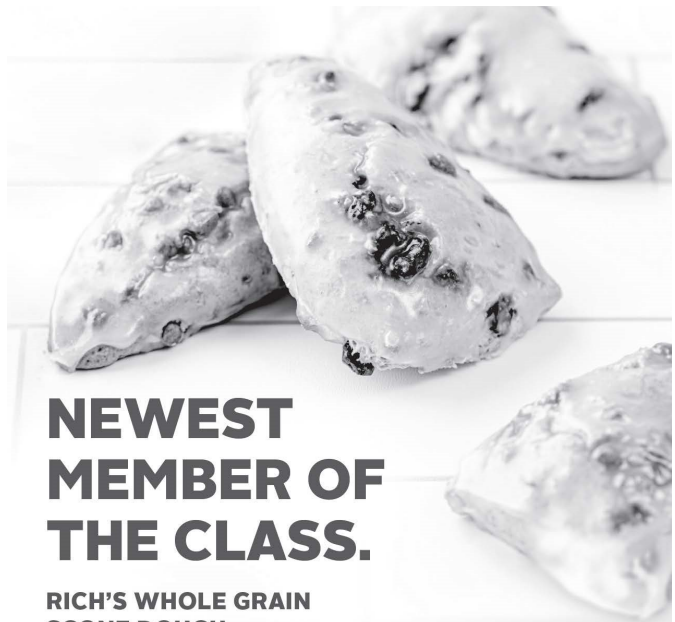
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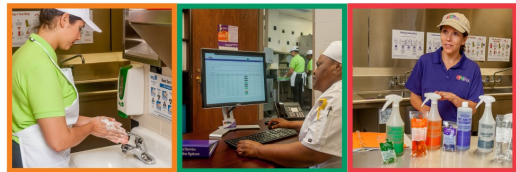
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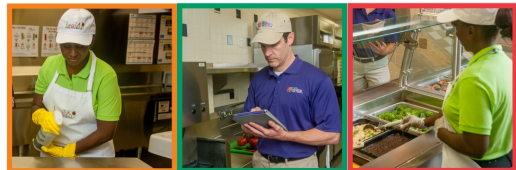
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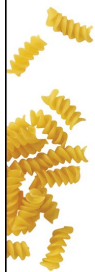
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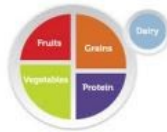
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You'll find links to our members, their websites and contact info as well as a resource list.

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Seen in CT

Left: Alcott Elementary School lunch staff in Wolcott showed off their school spirit and celebrated 2-2-22 by wearing tutus

Right: At Linden Elementary School in Plainville, CT it was dressed like a staff member day! One of the Kindergarten students dressed up as a Food Service Employee!

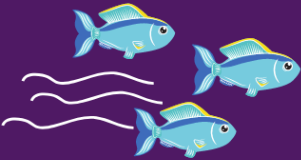




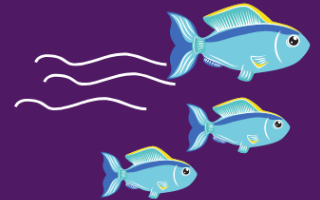
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