CVUSD Wins Summer Sunshine Award from USDA!

We are thrilled to have been recognized by the USDA, for successfully integrating local foods into the summer meal program and promoting healthy eating through nutrition education, taste testing, and cooking demonstrations.

This summer was Child Nutrition’s first year offering the summer meal program in the Conejo Valley. All children, from 1-18, were given the opportunity to enjoy a free meal at two of our sites, Acacia Elementary and Conejo Elementary, as well as eleven area housing sites. Our Child Nutrition staff served over 400 meals per day to students and youth in our community in the summer.

Our Nutrition Specialist, Kelsea Cregut, provided support with nutritional curriculum and engaged students by creating a farm stand at Acacia Elementary that offered students the opportunity to taste test local and seasonal produce. Kelsea also engaged students at Conejo Elementary, playing games and teaching “plant parts.”

Grant Updates

**Kaiser Permanente Thriving Schools Grant:** Hydration Stations have been installed at CVHS, Conejo Elementary, Glenwood Elementary (more on page 3)

Child Nutrition Services received the Project Produce Grant, awarded by the Chef Ann Foundation. This grant provides funds to increase students consumption of, and exposure to, fresh produce through educational activities to encourage students to taste new fruits and vegetables. A partnership with Ventura County Farm to School Collaborative provides us with a Nutrition Specialist to conduct monthly taste-testings to over 1,000 students and growing!

Last year we were fortunate to receive a City of Thousand Oaks Community Enhancement Grant for the Ladera Elementary Garden. This year we have put that grant to good use expanding, improving and maintaining the garden in which we held this year’s Farm to School Event. (more on page 2)
October : Farm to school Month

Sandy Curwood, Director of Child Nutrition Services, kicked off Farm to School month, as a keynote speaker for the first annual tri-county event held in Santa Barbara. The two day event: Growing Edible Education, A Symposium of Best Practices, focused on nutrition education in the garden, food service programs, and garden/farm education curriculum from local leaders in the field. Her staff showcased the October HOTM salad (Southwestern salad) during lunch. We are excited to share that CVUSD will host the 2016 event at Sequoia Middle School Sept.29/30, 2016.

All CVUSD schools participate in Harvest of the Month (HOTM) featuring a seasonal local produce item, every Thursday on our Farm to School salad bars. October featured lettuce, and our Nutrition Specialist, Kelsea Cregut, sampled and provided nutrition education with a group of students at Conejo Elementary.

The smell of baked chicken, corn bread, and cilantro rice filled the air, as students were served lunch on a California Thursday—California Thursdays is a collaboration between the Center for Ecoliteracy and participating school districts to serve healthy, freshly prepared school meals made from California–grown food. More than 4200 students crunched on a carrot, On October 23, for our second annual Crunch Heard ‘Round the County, celebrating FoodDay and creating awareness for Farm to School and agricultural literacy.

Our Foodcorps member, Luisa Accorsi, finished the month strong, with a Farm to School event at Ladera Elementary, educating students on the “Food Circle”. The goal was to have the students participate in planting, cooking, eating and composting in order to illustrate the cyclical nature of food in a hands-on way, connecting the cafeteria to the garden, and the garden to the cafeteria.

Kindergarten and first grade enjoyed the Dec. HOTM salad: Carrot Citrus Salad.

A new look

Child Nutrition Services has a new logo for our Farm to School programs, and we would like to recognize Belinda Poore as the winner. Belinda is a para-professional at Banyan Elementary and noticed our flyer while creating art at a local Art Treks. Great job!

We love the new look! Thanks to all for their submissions!

A Monthly Focus

Each month, we focus on a Child Nutrition staff member, a Harvest, and a Farmer. We recognize the following staff and celebrate their efforts!

September
Lori Nava  
Conejo Elementary

October
LoraLee Brown  
Glenwood Elementary

November
Pam Donley  
Lang Ranch Elementary
The Crunch Heard ‘Round the County

On Friday, October 23 over 4200 students CRUNCHED on a carrot throughout our school district in celebration of FoodDay, bringing awareness of farm to school programs, food sustainability and agricultural literacy. Lang Ranch Elementary celebrated with a school wide assembly, Madrona crunched with classes at their Jog-a-thon, and Dr. Santos at Maple Elementary was our Super Hero “Crunchy, the Carrot Man” as students learned about Respect. Our central kitchen was humming as they cleaned and prepped 500 lbs of carrots from our local farmer, JoinTheFarm. Jamie Oliver tweeted about our event to over 115k followers, and FoodDay.org will be blogging about our event. We are thankful to all the schools who participated in The Crunch!

Conejo Elementary, Glenwood Elementary, and CVHS have all been a part of a two-year grant from Kaiser Permanente. The Thriving Schools partnership grant provides opportunities for school districts to work with target schools to institute policy, environmental and program changes, creating a culture of health in school communities. Not only have these students been provided access to palatable water, but they have also been having conversations on reducing their intake of sugary beverages and sampling water infused with local, seasonal produce. Each of these three sites have a water bottle dispensing unit, strategically placed near the cafeteria. These units include a visual user interface display with a “Green Ticker”, counting the quantity of 12oz bottles saved from the landfill.

Sandy’s Corner

The new school year was celebrated with an all CNS staff training and pep-rally on August 24th with a 2015-16 focus on Accountability.

New Superintendent, Dr. Ann Bonitatibus welcomed the group and Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, Dr. Jon Sand, thanked the group for their dedication. CVUSD CNS guiding principles, smarter lunchroom assessment, Farm-to-school update and food safety plan were all covered topics. The event featured healthy, seasonal, local snacks to model that healthy food can be fun and delicious too. Happy 15-16!

Snacks featuring the HOTM for August: Red Peppers
Harvest of the Month

Each month, we feature produce from a local farm on our Farm to School Salad bars. Local and seasonal produce gives our students fresh, quality produce and keeps our dollars locally, supporting our farmers and our economy.

September:
Tomatoes  
Beylick Family Farms  
Scott Beylick, Farmer

October:
Lettuce  
South Central Farmers Cooperative  
Tezo, Farmer

November:
Persimmons  
Timber Canyon Ranches  
Ben Shore, Farmer

CVUSD – Wellness Policy

At CVUSD, we have a committee for student wellness, comprised of members of our community, PTA and DAC representatives, teachers, principals, a school board member, child nutrition director, pediatrician and chaired by the Director of Student Services, Dr. Antonio Castro. This team meets three to four times yearly. 11/9, 1/25, 4/18 for the 2015/16 calendar year.

A local school wellness policy is a written document of official policies that guide a local educational agency (LEA) or school district’s efforts to establish a school environment that promotes students’ health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Established by the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, and further strengthened by the Healthy, Hungry – Free Kids Act of 2010, it requires each local LEA participating in the National School Lunch Program to develop a local school wellness policy that promotes the health of students and addresses the growing problem of childhood obesity. The responsibility for developing a wellness policy is placed at the local level so the unique needs of each school under the jurisdiction of the LEA can be addressed.