ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# NUTRITION NEWS

School Meals
Education
Health

September 2011 Volume VI / No. 1

## Highlights:

- School Gardens
- Nutrition Websites for Kids
- USDA MyPlate
- New USDA Campaign
- CN Training
- Presentation of HUSSC Awards
- Commissioner's Memos

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# Kids Contribute to Good Nutrition

## Arkansas School Gardens

### The Delta Garden Study:

The Delta Garden Study is a $2 million research study funded by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Research Service (ARS) designed to prevent childhood obesity and social risk behaviors, and improve academic achievement in middle school children in the Delta and Central regions of Arkansas.

The overall project goals are:

1) To reduce childhood obesity in the state of Arkansas.
2) To decrease social risk behaviors in middle schoolers and to improve academic achievement.
3) To support the Farm to School effort by helping to provide fresh, locally grown produce to schools.

It is the largest, and most scientifically rigorous, school garden research study in the nation. The primary goals are increased fruit and vegetable intake and increased minutes of physical activity. Secondary goals include reduction in body mass index (BMI) and body fat, increased school bonding, reductions in absenteeism and fighting at school, and improved student grade point averages and

*Students at Mabelvale School District receive hands-on gardening experience.*

benchmark testing scores. Each participating intervention school will receive a 1-acre garden and greenhouse, and study-funded Garden Manager for one full school year. The corresponding study-developed curriculum is aligned to the state educational frameworks for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade science, math, language arts, health, and P.E.

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Five garden schools in the state are presently participating in the study:

Harrisburg Middle School, Highland Middle School, Marshall High School, Monticello Middle School, and Mabelvale Magnet Middle School.

If you are interested in participating in the Delta Garden Study, visit the study website at www.arteengarden.com.

*As part of the Delta Garden Study students are taught a variety of skills including the planting and harvesting of fresh produce.*

**Additional School Garden Websites:**

Check out these websites that provide additional information on other kid's gardens in Arkansas:

**jimlongsgarden.blogspot.com/2011/02/Jonesboro-ar-kids-garden.html**
Great story on the kid's garden in Jonesboro from blogger Jim Long.

**dinnergarden.org/seedsforkids.html**
The Dinner Garden has teamed up with the Arkansas Rice Depot to provide seed packs to 25,000 Arkansas children in 600 schools across that state. The Food for Kids program gives new backpacks filled with ready to eat food, school supplies, personal care products and other items to participating schools. These schools then distribute the backpacks to students in need.

**Arkansaslocalfoods.org**
Woodruff Elementary School: Arkansas Local Foods Initiative (ALFI) hosts garden classes for the kindergartners at Woodruff Elementary in Little Rock. The children attend garden classes during their science block every three weeks during the entire school year. The kids learn about how to prepare the soil, how to plant a seed, parts of a plant, and the importance of healthy food choices and the larger impact those choices have on the environment. ALFI and Woodruff Elementary plan to add a grade level each school year until they have incorporated all of the grades. Classes are held at Woodruff Community Garden.

Carver Magnet Elementary School: The Garden Program at Carver Elementary in Little Rock is an after school garden club that meets on the school campus two days a week. There is a K-2 club and a 3-5 club. The garden itself, as well as the garden program, is 4 years old this year. Carver's school garden consists of three gardens: a vegetable garden, a crop garden, and a flower garden. ■

*Students at Harrisburg Middle take the opportunity to participate in the school's garden program.*

## Nutrition Activity Websites for Kids

Are you looking for current nutrition education flyers, worksheets, or activities for students? There are many websites that offer free materials for use in classrooms as well as cafeterias. Check out the following sites for updated MyPlate materials including crossword puzzles, coloring pages, and more!

**www.choosemyplate.gov/kids/**

**www.nutritionexplorations.org/kids.php**

**www.nourishinteractive.com/**

**kidshealth.org/kid/**

# SHARED MOMENTS

## Fit 4 Fun in Monticello Schools

Thanks to a 2011 grant from the Blue and You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas, the Monticello School District gets to add some fitness activities to school programs. The $79,285 grant will allow student menu advisory teams at Monticello Intermediate School (MIS) and Monticello Middle School (MMS) to work with school food service to taste test foods, and advertise new foods and meals served in the cafeteria.

As part of this grant, Veggie Power was born. Veggie Power is an after school gardening club that has been meeting since January at MIS (3rd-5th grades). Students have gotten to plant, care for and taste some garden produce.

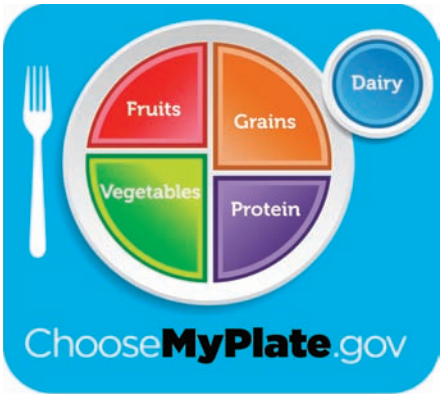
*A Monticello Intermediate School student enjoys the Veggie Power program.*

At MMS' (6th-8th grades) after school program students have gotten to participate in structured fitness activities like playing Capture the Flag, Limbo, a space shuttle relay and Dance, Dance Revolution. During after school nutrition classes students have taste-tested some unique fruits and vegetables including blood oranges, roasted chickpeas, sprouts, fresh lettuce and radishes while they've learned about label reading, serving sizes and using MyPyramid-(now MyPlate) to plan a healthy diet.

All of these activities are being designed to help the Monticello School District meet the upcoming USDA menu changes. For more information about the Monticello School District activities, contact Jane Pelkki, MPH, RD at eatwell7114@yahoo.com. ■

*Nutrition News thanks Jane Pelkki, MPH, RD, for submitting this article.*

## USDA's MyPlate




As a Child Nutrition Professional, encouraging students to eat healthy well balanced meals is part of everyday job responsibilities. Daily education is administered on the breakfast and lunch menu by following the meal pattern set by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). MyPyramid has been an exceptional guide helping students see how different food groups contribute to the meal. MyPlate is the new MyPyramid!

First lady, Michele Obama, launched the new MyPlate icon in place of MyPyramid on June 2, 2011. MyPlate is part of a larger communications initiative based on the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans to help consumers make better food choices. The MyPlate diagram has a familiar plate design allowing students to link food groups to actual foods on their plate.

USDA will focus on selected messages including: enjoy your food, but eat less; avoid oversized portions; make half your plate fruits and vegetables; switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk; make at least half your grains whole grains; compare sodium in foods; drink water instead of sugary drinks; and be active your way. Child Nutrition is doing a great job of initiating these messages through recent changes in the program.

Ways to encourage MyPlate in your school:

- Display posters
- Share choosemyplate.gov website with teachers to educate the children
- Print fact sheets to display in lunch lines

Using the MyPlate icon is encouraged to educate students on eating a well-balanced diet. Continue to stay on board with this initiative for overall health of the children. ■

## New USDA Campaign

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) will soon launch a campaign to encourage Americans to eat better. The campaign which starts in September 2011 will focus on specific foods and eating habits and, if successful, change what Americans eat and how. Different topics will be highlighted over the next 27 months, including:

**September-December 2011: Make half the plate fruits and vegetables**
**January-April 2012: Enjoy food, but eat less**
**May-August 2012: Drink water instead of sugary drinks**

Your child nutrition department can help USDA teach children healthy eating habits they will use for a lifetime! ■

## *More Than Mud Pies*
## Preschool Nutrition Education Workshops

The Child Nutrition Unit (CNU) will be offering a series of nutrition workshops specifically developed for preschool teachers. The "More Than Mud Pies" program was developed by the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI). The curriculum is in its 5th edition and has been very well received.

### Upcoming Distance Learning Workshops

**October 6:** Preparing for a CRE

**November 3:** Production Records

**December 1:** Cooperative Work Relationships and Team Building

**February 2:** Funds for AR Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program and Severe Need

**March 1:** TBA

**April 5:** Policy Statements/ Agreements for SY 2012 – End of the Year Closeouts

The mission of NFSMI is to provide information and services that promote the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs. This mission parallels the mission and goals of the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), CNU. A major goal of the CNU as well as national child nutrition advocates is to address the issue of childhood obesity. Evidence indicates that poor nutrition and lack of physical activity are associated with lower student achievement. Thus, schools are being encouraged to take a leadership role in helping students learn to make healthier eating choices.

In an effort to address these concerns, a series of preschool nutrition education workshops have been scheduled for the following sites:

**September 29, 2011**
Arkansas River Educational Cooperative
8:30 – 11:30am
Shoebox Registration Account Number: 154514

**October 7, 2011**
Southeast Education Cooperative
8:30 – 11:30am
Shoebox Registration Account Number: 154594

**October 11, 2011**
Arch Ford Educational Cooperative
8:30 – 11:30am

*Preschool teachers gather at the Wilbur Mills Education Cooperative in Beebe to receive training on how to incorporate nutrition and physical activity messages in everyday curriculum.*

Dr. Wynona Bryant-Williams will be providing the training for the workshops. She is a certified TAPP trainer which will allow preschool teachers to received professional development credit for the workshop. ■

# Arkansas First Lady Ginger Beebe Presents HUSSC Awards

At the 2011 Child Nutrition Directors' Conference, hosted by the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), Child Nutrition Unit (CNU), Lavaca and Harrisburg School Districts were recognized for their hard work in creating healthier environments for Arkansas children.

Ginger Beebe, Arkansas First Lady, Dr. Tom Kimbrell, ADE Commissioner, and Ellen Wahlberg-Carlisle from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), presented these districts with HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSSC) Awards.

Lavaca Elementary School has led the way by being the first school in Arkansas to receive a HealthierUS award. They have received both the Bronze and Silver awards and are currently working toward the Gold. Harrisburg Elementary School has received the Bronze Award but is already working to receive the next award levels.

*Lavaca School District accepts award. (From left to right) Tara Hershaw, Lavaca Elementary Principal, Jared Cleveland, Lavaca School District Superintendent, Ms. Glynieta Price, Lavaca Child Nutrition Director and Dr. Tom Kimbrell, ADE Commissioner.*

The HUSSC is designed to recognize those schools who have made extra efforts to create a healthier school environment through the promotion of nutrition and physical activity.

More schools in Arkansas are on their way to receiving HUSSC Awards. For more information on HUSSC log on to fns.usda.gov/tn/healthierus/index.html. ■

*Congratulations to Lavaca and Harrisburg!*

*Harrisburg School District accepts award. (From left to right) Ellen Wahlberg-Carlisle, USDA, Dolores Sutterfield, Harrisburg Child Nutrition Director and Ginger Beebe, Arkansas First Lady.*

# Be Prepared! 2011-12 Coordinated Review Efforts

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), Child Nutrition Unit (CNU) Area Specialists will soon be traveling the state conducting Coordinated Review Efforts (CRE). It is important for districts to be prepared for these reviews. To ensure districts do not have critical area findings the following questions can be used as a self-assessment:

**DO YOU:**

- Approve each household's application for free or reduced-price meals correctly?
- Serve meals that contain the required food items and required amounts documented by accurate production records?
- Record, consolidate and report meal counts correctly on the claim for reimbursement?
- Maintain a current roster of student meal status eligibility?
- Base claim for reimbursement on accurate meal counts taken, by category, at the point of service?
- Make sure an on-site review of each school site's meal counting system is conducted by February 1 and corrective action is taken as needed (applies to school districts with more than one serving site.)?
- Verify the correct number of applications by November 15, 2011, email the Verification Summary Report by December 15, 2011 and keep verification records?
- Make sure that no child is denied benefits or discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability?
- Check each school's meal counts before submitting a claim for reimbursement?

For a more complete assessment, go to the Child Nutrition Website at *http://www.arkansaschildnutrition.org*, click on the "Forms" link on the left hand side of the page, scroll down and select "On-Site Review Form." For questions or technical assistance, contact the district's assigned CNU Area Specialist at 501-324-9502. ■

## ADE COMMISSIONER'S COMMUNICATION MEMOS

The following Arkansas Department of Education Commissioner's Communication Memos relate to Child Nutrition Programs. A complete list can be accessed on the Child Nutrition Web page at *http://www.arkansaschildnutrition.org*.

| NUMBER | DATE | SUBJECT |
|---|---|---|
| FIN-12-030 | 09/08/11 | October 6 DL- Coordinated Review Effort & School Meals Initiative |
| FIN-12-027 | 08/25/11 | 2011 Required State Report- District Verification Results- Free & Reduced Price Applications |
| FIN-12-025 | 08/15/11 | Oct. 1 Pre-School Reports for Enrollment & Free/Reduced Price Eligibles |
| FIN-12-024 | 08/19/11 | APSCN Cycle 2 Report: October 1, 2011 Enrollments & F/R Price Eligibles |
| FIN-12-016 | 08/04/11 | Foster Child Categorically Eligible for Free Meals in Child Nutrition Programs |
| FIN-12-010 | 07/26/11 | Additional USDA Guidance on Paid Lunch Equity SY 2011-12 |
| FIN-12-009 | 07/26/11 | Requirements for On-line Applications and Electronic Transactions in the Arkansas Child Nutrition Programs |
| FIN-12-007 | 07/22/11 | 2011-12 Child Nutrition Reimbursement Rates |
| FIN-11-100 | 06/13/11 | 35% Reduction in Cash Portion of NSLP State Match SY 2011-12 |
| FIN-11-096 | 05/27/11 | Classified Employee Minimum Hourly Rate for 2011-2012 Consumer Price Index |
| FIN-11-093 | 05/10/11 | AMENDMENT to Child Nutrition Renewal of Agreement SY 11/12 |
| FIN-11-087 | 04/27/11 | Change in Federal Regulation Regarding Social Security Number Reporting Requirements |
| FIN-11-086 | 04/27/11 | Water Availability in National School Lunch Program Federal Requirement |
| FIN-11-085 | 04/27/11 | Fluid Milk Requirement Change SY 11/12 |
| FIN-11-084 | 04/27/11 | Child Nutrition Renewal of Agreement SY 11/12 |
| FIN-11-083 | 04/22/11 | Maximum Portion Size List SY 11/12 |

## NUTRITION NEWS

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## USDA Recipe Contest Winners

Earlier this year, Let's Move!, in association with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), challenged school nutrition professionals, chefs, students, parents and interested community members to create tasty, healthy, exciting new recipes for inclusion on school lunch menus across the country.

Out of over 340 submissions, 15 semi-finalists (5 for each category) were selected. The first place recipes from the 3 categories advanced to compete for a $3,000 Grand Prize at a national cook-off event at the American Culinary Federation National Convention in Dallas, Texas, on July 25, 2011.

In addition, the semi-finalists' recipes were posted for online voting by the public to determine a Popular Choice Winner. Winning teams were invited to prepare their nutrition-packed meals alongside White House chefs. To see the 15 semi-finalists' and grand prize recipes, go to: www.recipesforkidschallenge.com/submissions. ■