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Agricultural Outlook Forum
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Arlington, Virginia

Presented: February 19-20, 2015

The Changing Needs of School Districts as Consumers

Maria Caplon

Agriculture Outlook Forum Session

Thursday, February 19, 2015

3:45-5:15 pm

Montgomery County Public Schools

- 16th largest school system in USA
- 202 Schools
- Student enrollment: 154,350
- Students eligible for FARMS: 35%

Services provided:

- Breakfast: >35,000 daily
- Lunch: >65,000 daily
- After school snacks: ~4,000 daily
- After school suppers: ~5,000 daily
- Weekend meals: ~2,000 day
- Summer food service program ~10,000 daily

Take it down a notch:

- 75 / 202 schools receive breakfast in classroom
- Many after school snacks / suppers distributed by program staff (accountability issues)

Elementary School Meals



Secondary School Meals



Struggles and Challenges

Packaging

- Products needs to fit into preplate container
- Individual packaging needed for universal breakfast, after school snacks and summer meals

Whole Grains

- Student acceptability
 - color
 - taste
 - texture

Fruits and Vegetables

- Serving sizes
- Individual packages
- Cost per unit
- Variety

Reduced Sodium

- Student acceptability
- Meets smart snacks regulations

Move to Scratch Cooking/ Clean label

- Searching for less colors, artificial flavors, preservatives
- Interest in serving more items that appear home cooked

Farm to School

- Purchasing processes
- Cost

Technical Assistance

- Recipe development
- Product demonstration/application