



Cherries

Not just another berry.

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**SCHOOLS FINDING “FRUITFUL” WAYS TO
HELP KIDS EAT HEALTHIER**

Cherries Emerge As “Super Solution” In Cafeterias Across the Country

July 31, 2007 — As schools continue efforts to meet stricter nutrition guidelines, many are finding new ways to bridge the alarming gap between how much fruit kids are suppose to get and how much they’re actually eating.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), three out of five kids don’t meet their daily fruit requirements¹. But school foodservice directors say they’re offering more dried and juice options in addition to fresh. In particular, many have found a “super solution” in a familiar favorite – cherries.

“In my years as a school foodservice director and registered dietitian, I have found color and flavor are two key ingredients to getting kids to eat more fruits and vegetables,” said Connie Mueller MS, RD, SFNS, Director of Food and Nutrition Services for the Bloomington, Ill. Public School District. “That’s why we’re so excited to include cherries on our menus. Their red color is appealing, kids love the taste, and you can serve them in so many ways, from 100% juice blends to dried cherries on cereal or salad or even in a snack mix.”

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¹ Cook A, Friday JE. Pyramid Servings Intakes by U.S. Children and Adults 1994-96, 1998, 2000. CNRG Table Set No. 1, Available at: <http://www.barc.usda.gov/bhnrc/cnrg>. Accessed July 28, 2003.

Tart Cherries Make the Grade

Tart cherries – commonly enjoyed as dried, juice and frozen – are a Super Fruit packed with antioxidants and other nutrients kids need. A growing body of scientific research shows that tart cherries have among the highest levels of antioxidants, compared to other fruits. Cherries also contain beta carotene (vitamin A), vitamins C and E, as well as potassium, magnesium, iron, folate and fiber. Mueller says being able to offer a variety of ways to consume fruit is a huge win for schools and kids.

“Education in the cafeteria is just as important as in the classroom,” says Mueller. “Many of these kids haven’t had a lot of food experiences, so we try to teach them about new and different ways to eat that get them excited about fruits and vegetables, and hopefully asking for it at home.”

Choose Cherries and Win!

Tart cherries are a great option for the entire family. Log on to www.choosecherries.com to get back-to-school “Smart Swap” ideas for boosting the taste and nutrition of kids’ snacks and lunches.

The first 100 visitors to use the Smart Snack Swap tool will win a \$25 gift card to get their children off to a healthy start this school year.

Here are some quick tips to get started:

- Add a ½ cup of dried cherries to morning oatmeal and let kids mix them in
- Replace raisins with dried cherries for a Super Fruit version of Ants on a Log
- Create a cherry spritzer with ½ cup cherry juice and sparkling water
- Include a single-serve pouch of dried cherries in lunchbox

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The Cherry Marketing Institute (CMI) is an organization funded by North American tart cherry growers and processors. CMI’s mission is to increase the demand for tart cherries through promotion, market expansion, product development and research. For more information on the science supporting the unique health benefits of cherries and for cherry recipes and menu ideas, visit www.choosecherries.com.