



Chef Combo's™

ISSUE 11

CONNECTIONS

A Newsletter for Teachers Using
Chef Combo's Fantastic Adventures in Tasting and Nutrition



On the road with Chef Combo

Chef Combo always takes time for fun and daily exercise. Here he is taking a playground break from his busy schedule of making new friends and sharing ideas about health and nutrition with children, parents and teachers.



TEACHER-TO-TEACHER

When you think spring, think color and Chef Combo's **Rainbow/Color Themes**, especially the **Pot of Gold** activity (page 107). Dr. Vicki Folds, Vice President of Education for Tutor Time® Child Care Centers, has developed an original song and the activity for use at Tutor Time's 200 national and international centers. The song and the activity encourage children to taste nutritious fruits and vegetables and recognize colors.



BRIEFS



Celebrate Spring!

Help children discover the wonder of spring through the **Fantastic Adventures for Spring** activities in the **Seasons Themes**.

- After a nature walk, have students make a **My Favorite Bug** snack (page 66).
- Have Chef Combo discuss how caterpillars change into butterflies. Then let the children make **Caterpillars** they can eat (page 65). Be sure to play song #5 "Caterpillar Snack Time" on the audiocassette. The sheet music can be found on pages 10-11 of the Music Section of the Teacher Guide. 🎵

Growth Themes:

Perfect for Dairy Month

The **Growth Themes** offer excellent ways to celebrate June Dairy Month. Use the **Milk Grows Bones and Teeth** nutrition activity (pages 177-178) to teach children to identify foods made from milk and understand how important these foods are in building strong bones and teeth.

Remember **Growth and Lunchtime Themes** are included in Update #2 along with a classroom-size poster, *Foods From A to Z*. If you have not received your set, call your local Dairy Council® or 800-426-8271 for the telephone number of the Dairy Council nearest you. 📞

Cybersurfers' Alert!

Interested in the latest information on nutrition? Bookmark these worthwhile Web sites and share them with parents.

www.familyfoodzone.com

User friendly with these categories:

- "Ask the Expert"
- Idea of the Day
- Refrigerator Art Contest
- Kids Cooking
- Shopping Tips
- Moms Food Guide

www.whymilk.com

Click on these selections:

- Famous Faces
- Club Milk, featuring a milk mustache moo-seum
- Contests and Events, featuring the program "MILK! Read to Me" (tells parents how to get a free children's book by purchasing two gallons of milk) 📖

Chef Combo at Head Start

Chef Combo was delighted to meet so many National Head Start Association members when they gathered in Minneapolis, MN April 14-17 for the 26th Annual Conference.

If you were there but missed your chance to pose with Chef Combo for a souvenir photo, he will be at the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Conference in New Orleans, LA on November 10-13, 1999. 📷

Colors You Can Taste!

(to the tune of "Someone's in the Kitchen with Dinah")

Red is the color of cherries,

Red is the color of apples, too.

Red is the color of tomatoes,

I like red, don't you?

Yellow is the color of bananas,

Yellow is the color of apples, too.

Yellow is the color of lemons,

I like yellow, don't you?

Green is the color of celery.

Green is the color of apples, too.

Green is the color of broccoli,

I like green, don't you?



MATERIALS

- Bite-sized portions of fruits and vegetables featured in the song, grouped by color on individual paper plates
- A paper plate for each child

WHAT TO DO

- Follow Steps 1-5 in the **Pot of Gold** activity (page 107).
- Tell children to think about the colors of fruits and vegetables.
- Teach children the *Colors You Can Taste!* song and have them sing it several times. Point out that apples come in different colors.
- For a snack, offer the children a taste of each of the foods featured in the song.
- Let the children vote on their favorite taste from each color group. Create a tasting chart if desired (page 30).
- Continue with Step 6. 📖

Reinforce Healthy Eating By Recommending Family Meals

Extend the nutrition learning taking place in your classroom with **Chef Combo's Fantastic Adventures** by encouraging parents and caregivers of students to make family mealtime a top priority.

The day-to-day juggling of work, school and an abundance of extra-curricular activities has dramatically decreased family mealtime. A 1995 Food Marketing Institute survey showed that American families only eat together 4.8 times a week—a statistic that, if improved, could foster family bonding and provide nutritional, emotional and academic benefits for children.

Family mealtime affords parents the opportunity to be role models and introduce a variety of new foods to children. Ellyn Satter, Registered Dietitian, nutrition expert and author explains, "Family mealtimes are so important, giving children the no-pressure time needed to learn to try foods. When served regularly, mealtimes become matter-of-fact times that children get new food experiences." Based on research for her upcoming book *Secrets of Feeding a Healthy Family* (for information visit Web site www.ellynsatter.com), Satter gives this advice: "Plan meals around adults, who are generally responsible for preparing them, and allow children to choose from what is available. Meals geared to what children will eat limit their exposure to other options and puts pressure on both parties for children to eat what was specifically prepared for them."

Additionally, experts say that family meals can improve children's academic performance. A Harvard Graduate School of Education research project studied and

followed children beginning at ages 3-5, at home and at school. Diane Beals, Ed.D., a team member and now assistant professor at Washington University in St. Louis reports, "We found that children exposed to family mealtime conversation developed more interesting vocabulary and literary skills. It is key to keep table-talk just above the child's level so it is challenging."

Additional pointers for parents are:

- Children who help prepare foods are more willing to taste them
- Higher self-esteem is built during family mealtimes
- Family meals aren't just dinner; breakfast, picnics and dining out all count

At school make the most out of snacks and mealtimes. A classroom can be an "extended family" supporting wholesome meals and snacks served in a nurturing environment. According to David Dickinson, Research Scientist at the Educational Development Center in Newton, MA, who was on the Harvard Team that studied children at school, "Mealtime opportunities with teachers led to children having more advanced vocabulary and literacy development. The most benefit was derived when teachers sat at the table, listened and directed conversations and gave the 'magic' of attention." 

For more information on the benefits of family mealtime visit www.familyfoodzone.com.

FROM CHEF COMBO'S BOOKSHELF



Add these favorites to the Related Literature Lists in **Chef Combo's Fantastic Adventures in Tasting and Nutrition** Teacher Guide.

Birchall, Brian. *What Comes from a Cow?* Bothell, WA:



The Wright Group Publishing, 1996. This uncluttered little book features simple, close-up photos of young children enjoying seven delicious dairy foods made from milk.

Anastasio, Dina. *Van's Sandwich*. Cleveland: Modern Curriculum Press, 1994.



In this oversized book, Van, a little boy, tells his own lunchtime story in rhyme. He builds an incredibly enormous sandwich using a variety of foods. The illustrator masterfully showcases the colorful foods Van gathers for his masterpiece: a four-foot sandwich. Van shares his lunchtime creation with his friends and young readers who will delight in the four-foot foldout version in the book.

\$25 FOR IDEAS...

National Dairy Council® welcomes suggestions from newsletter readers for extensions of the current Chef Combo activities.

We are looking for ideas for manipulations, books, songs, finger plays, etc. that will enhance children's learning by building on one of the existing activities in **Chef Combo's Fantastic Adventures in Tasting and Nutrition**.

Contributors will receive \$25 for each idea published. Be sure to include your name, school, full address, phone number, and current position. All submissions become the property of National Dairy Council.

Send your idea, as well as the name of the specific Chef Combo activity associated with it, to:

Chef Combo's Connections Newsletter

c/o Nutrition Education
National Dairy Council
10255 West Higgins Road, Suite 900
Rosemont, IL 60018-5616
FAX: 1-800-974-6455