



## The Recipe Development Process

All of the recipes in this Chef Designed School Breakfast book were developed by a Culinary Chef and Registered Dietitian. Chef Brenda Thompson used her combination of culinary chef expertise and nutrition knowledge to create healthy recipes that incorporate new flavors and a variety of great tastes.

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### CHEF BRENDA, RDN

Idaho Child Nutrition Programs Contractor Chef Brenda Thompson is a Culinary Chef and Registered Dietitian with many years of experience in Child Nutrition Programs. Chef Brenda has a passion for creating healthy foods that are not only high in nutrients but also taste good. Her culinary expertise is a great asset to Idaho Child Nutrition Programs.



# The Recipe Evaluation Process

Each Chef Recipe was thoroughly tested and evaluated by school foodservice staff and students to ensure that the recipes would be successful in a wide variety of schools and have student appeal.

Every recipe was tested in a school kitchen with minimal equipment and staff.

## TEST KITCHEN DETAILS

- **Personnel:** 7 full-time employees to prepare foods and serve approximately 780 students from grades K-12
- **Kitchen equipment available:** four convection ovens, a kettle, a tilt skillet, warmers, a proof box, mixer and a dishwasher
- **Prepared:** 780 meals per day were prepared and packaged the day before
- **Transported:** 780 meals per day were transported to three different school sites
- **Served:**
  - Grades K-8 were served Breakfast in the Classroom style. Classroom size ranged from 20-25 students. Each classroom received a container with milk and foods to be served. At times they also received a sheet pan with the prepared foods. Utensils, napkins, and wet wipes were included as needed.
  - Grades 9-12 were served Grab 'n Go style. The meals were pre-packaged and served from a food cart as students entered the building.

## PACKAGING

Packaging can change the quality and texture of food, so it is necessary to consider packaging needs in order to identify the best options. Food safety, convenience, and presentation are all considerations. If food needs to be reheated, it is necessary to use oven-safe packaging.

During the recipe testing process, all breakfast meals were packaged the day before. Packaging products included single foil sheets, boats, bowls, and oven safe baggies. The breakfast pizza required oven-safe packaging. The plastic packaging used had small perforations to keep food products from getting soggy. This particular packaging also sealed itself when the food inside was being heated, which removed a step from the packaging process and saved time.

1. Boat-style packaging
2. Dippers packaging
3. Oven-safe baggies
4. Breakfast ready for transport



## Voting Results Were Gathered From Every Student

Each student was given a voting slip with their breakfast. After they finished eating their meals, students were asked to put their anonymous voting slip into a box. Teachers assisted in ensuring that students deposited their vote correctly. Boxes were provided in each classroom for grades K-8 and on the breakfast carts for grades 9-12.



## Marketing Your Chef Menus

Take advantage of the fact that the recipes featured in this book have been designed by a chef; this opens up a new marketing opportunity for your school breakfast program. Students get very excited about chefs. Chefs are well-respected in the food industry and even, at times, have celebrity status. Studies have shown that when schools incorporate a chef initiative there is greater whole grain selection and vegetable consumption by students (Cohen, et al, 2012).

Before testing these recipes, Chef Brenda visited each classroom to let students know that they would be served a “Chef Designed Breakfast”

on Tuesdays over the next few months. The students expressed excitement knowing that their meals were made by a chef and were eager to taste the food. On the days that a Chef Designed Breakfast was served, marketing sheets were posted to promote the meal and increase enthusiasm.

Marketing is a very important part of making your school food service programs successful. Getting school administrators and teachers on board to help you market your menus can be very helpful. Putting students in charge of marketing can be a great way to get them involved.

### TIPS TO HELP YOU MARKET YOUR PROGRAMS:

- ✓ **Be a Culinarian:** Wearing chef coats adds some excitement and the feeling that something special is being made in the kitchen. When cooks wear chef coats it emphasizes they are culinarians.
- ✓ **Garnish:** Garnishing is another way to make meals exciting. Garnishing does not need to be complicated. It can be as simple as embellishing your dishes, as seen on the Huevos Rancheros. It is a good idea to be sure that your garnishes on meals are edible and enhance the taste of the meal. Curly parsley is an example of a garnish that will likely not be eaten and just adds unnecessary expense to your meals.
- ✓ **Naming Foods:** The recipes in this book have creative names designed to generate some excitement around the meals. During testing, it was discovered that some students were eager to try the meal because of its name. Cornell University’s studies show that naming vegetables (and having the names displayed with the foods) increases selection from between 40% and 70%. This was a perfect example of that.
- ✓ **School Staff Support:** It is important to have the support of your administrator and teachers when starting and continuing your programs. Their support will help grow and maintain your programs. Your programs can often times be a good segue into teaching lessons for teachers.
- ✓ **Student Acceptance:** Getting the school student body or other popular student programs on board will help with the marketing of your programs. Students will eat what you serve them. It may take them a few times of seeing a new food before they even give it a try.

Study Reference : Juliana F.W. Cohen, Liesbeth A. Smit, Ellen Parker, S. Bryn Austin, A. Lindsay Frazier, Christina D.Economos, Eric B. Rimm, Long-Term Impact of a Chef on School Lunch Consumption: Findings from a 2-Year Pilot. Study in Boston Middle Schools, Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Volume 112, Issue 6, June 2012, Pages 927-933.

