

MEDIA ALERT

“The Lunch Box” is open New Web site unveils healthy solutions for every school

BOULDER, Colo. (Aug. 25, 2009)

WHAT: www.TheLunchBox.org, a revolutionary Web portal of tangible tools for school districts everywhere, today unveiled its inaugural tool kit of practical solutions for school nutrition officials and children’s health advocates across the U.S. It is a first-of- its-kind school nutrition resource.

Created by renegade lunch lady and longtime activist and author Chef Ann Cooper, with expertise from hundreds of school lunch reform advocates across the country, the Lunch Box is a project of the new Food, Family, Farming Foundation (<http://www.foodfamilyfarming.org/>), headquartered in Boulder, Colo. The Lunch Box is a comprehensive set of “why” and “how to” online tools to transition the typical highly processed school meal program to healthier, wholesome and fresh food-based menus with no trans fats, high fructose corn syrup or unnecessary chemical additives and preservatives.

Because change is never easy, especially with today’s tight school district budgets, F3 has launched the Lunch Box Project to make the following resources available at no charge:

- 80 scalable recipes
- Nutritional and cost analyses
- Menu plans and Chef Cooper’s “Meal Wheel”
- Budget, inventory and procurement models and templates
- “How to Get Started” tips and case studies
- Food safety, handling and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points tools and counsel
- Training videos
- Expert guest bloggers offering pragmatic advice
- Community engagement so all lunch ladies (and gentlemen) can help each other

WHY: The time is ripe for 31 million schoolchildren.

- Congress is expected to take up the Child Nutrition Act, which comes up for review only every five years. Increased budgets and improved nutritional standards, which have not changed in 15 years, will be up for debate.
- President Obama and first lady Michelle Obama have both been recently quoted in support of better nutrition for schoolchildren and promotion of healthier eating for all children.
- Rates of childhood obesity are soaring. About 12 percent of children ages 2 to 5 are obese compared with 17 percent of kids 6 to 11, and 18 percent of kids ages 12 to 19.^{1 2}

HOW: Nationwide, concerned citizens can help raise funds for The Lunch Box by purchasing donation coupons at Whole Foods Markets’ stores or donating at www.foodfamilyfarming.org.

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Founded by Chef Ann Cooper, the Food, Family, Farming Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization created to change the food system in the U.S. to an ecologically sound, sustainable model. By empowering schools, families, farms and producers to operate sustainably, F3 enables schools to serve nutritious whole food to all students. F3 educates through training programs, direct services, a Web portal and collateral resources. Its founding partners are the Chez Panisse Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Orfalea Foundations, the Colorado Health Foundation and Whole Foods Market Inc. Visit www.foodfamilyfarming.org for further information.

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¹ NHANES data on the Prevalence of Overweight Among Children and Adolescents: United States, 2003–2006. CDC National Center for Health Statistics, Health E-Stat.

² Ogden CL, Carroll MD, Flegal KM. High Body Mass Index for Age Among US Children and Adolescents, 2003–2006. *JAMA* 2008; 299:2401–2405.