

AUGUST 2021 Back to School Month



Weeklong/Multi-Day Events

- » Tokyo Summer Olympics (July 23-Aug. 8)
- » International Assistance Dog Week (Aug. 1-7)
- » International Clown Week (Aug. 1-7)
- » National Farmers Market Week (Aug. 1-7)
- » Twins Days Festival (Aug. 6-8)
- » Paralympic Games (Aug. 24-Sept. 5)

Monthlong Events

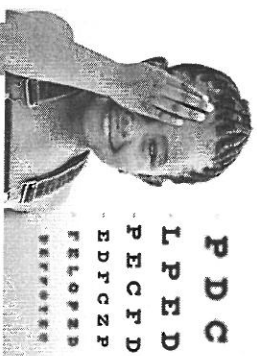
- » Back to School Month
- » International Pirate Month
- » National Catfish Month
- » National Eye Exam Month
- » National Goat Cheese Month
- » National Immunization Awareness Month
- » National Panini Month
- » National Sandwich Month

Single-Day Events

- » National Watermelon Day (Aug. 3)
- » Anniversary of Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Aug. 6)
- » National Mustard Day (Aug. 7)
- » International Cat Day (Aug. 8)
- » National Middle Child's Day (Aug. 12)
- » World Elephant Day (Aug. 12)
- » International Left-Handers Day (Aug. 13)
- » National Fajita Day (Aug. 18)
- » National Aviation Day/Orrville Wright's 150th Birthday (Aug. 19)

- » World Photography Day (Aug. 19)
- » National Lemonade Day (Aug. 20)
- » World Honey Bee Day (Aug. 21)
- » World Plant Based Milk Day (Aug. 22)
- » Mother Teresa's Birthday (Aug. 26)
- » National Dog Day (Aug. 26)
- » 1963 March on Washington/I Have a Dream Speech Anniversary (Aug. 28)

AUGUST 2021



IDEA

P D C

L P E D P E C F D E D F C Z P F E L O P E D

National Eye Exam Month
With nearly 80% of learning occurring through visual activities, according to the American Optometric Association (AOA), untreated vision problems can have serious effects on children's academic success. You can help spread the important wellness message of vision exams and screenings with a simple reminder to parents on your menu about National Eye Exam Month. Catch their "eye" by making a nutrition connection, such as noting the importance of omega-3 fatty acids in proper visual development and vitamins A, C and E for good eye health.

WHAT

National Panini Month

What's the difference between a panini and another grilled sandwich? Fundamentally, not much, but there are distinct characteristics about these crispy, craveable, gooey delights. Panini sandwiches usually feature a thick, sturdy bread (such as Italian bread, baguette, sub roll or ciabatta) and are pressed or weighted down. The best panini have golden brown, ridged grill marks on the bread. Don't have a panini grill or press in your kitchen? Just use your flattop or grill and a brick!



IDEA

National Farmers Market Week (Aug. 1-7)

If you have a school in a neighborhood considered to be a food desert without easy access to fresh produce and other healthy foods, consider hosting a special or periodic farmers market event at that site! Working with your principal, reach out to area farmers who are current partners for local procurement or farm-to-school activities. Suggest they set up tables in an area of the school parking lot or near the entrance at a time when parents are dropping off or picking up children.



WHAT

Twins Days Festival (Aug. 6-8)

Celebrated every summer since 1976 in Twinsburg, Ohio, the Twins Days Festival draws thousands of twins and multiples, earning status as the largest such annual gathering by *Guinness Book of World Records*. Attendees range from newborns to octogenarians, with both identical and non-identical siblings. The event not only celebrates twins, triplets and so on, but has become a resource for researchers and genealogists. If you are a twin, have a twin on your staff or serve twins in your school cafeteria, highlight this fun and fascinating status with signage and/or social media posts.

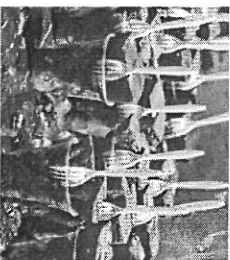


FACT

National Watermelon Day (Aug. 3)

Did You Know?

- » Watermelons are 92% water, making them a refreshing way to hydrate.
- » Most are 70% flesh and 30% rind—but 100% edible!
- » Debate rages as to whether a watermelon is a fruit or vegetable.
- » There are 1,200 different varieties, but they come in four main categories: seeded, seedless, mini and yellow/orange.
- » Early explorers used watermelons as canteens.
- » The heaviest watermelon (so far) weighed in at 350.5 pounds in 2013.
- » They're the official state vegetable of Oklahoma, although Florida, Georgia, California and Texas together account for two-thirds of U.S. production.



IDEA

WORLD

World Elephant Day (Aug. 12)

Promote awareness about this beloved species, which is endangered in many parts of the world, by focusing on what and how elephants eat. They may spend as much as 12 to 18 hours of each day eating. Adults consume be-



tween 200 and 600 pounds of food—grasses, tree foliage, bark, twigs, fruit and other vegetation—but their bodies only process about 40% of what they eat. Elephants also drink up to 50 gallons of water each day—about as much as a standard bathtub! Visit www.wwf.org to learn more about elephants.

IDEA

World Photography Day (Aug. 19)

There are so many ways to celebrate the power of photos to communicate and capture memories. Create a selfie frame for students to use when posing for photos you will post on your social media channels. Rent a photo booth for a day or two, allowing students to take keepsake images together after eating lunch. Challenge cafeteria teams to brush up on their photo skills with a contest for the most attractive lunch tray photos. Use this day to start a year-long project to take photos of school meals every day and create a mosaic or collage of these when the school year ends.



WHAT

World Plant Based Milk Day (Aug. 22)

Vegans and those with medical or cultural issues that restrict consumption of dairy milk are turning to plant-based beverages that mimic many of the characteristics of milk—particularly color and mouthfeel. They can be made from grains (oat, rice, barley and more), legumes (soy, pea and peanut) and nuts (almonds, cashews and walnuts). Coconut and potato are other sources of some plant-based "milks." In the U.S., these beverages are steadily gaining popularity. Almond milk commands the largest market share (64%), with oat milk on the rise.



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SEPTEMBER 2021

National Rice Month

Monthlong Events

- » Better Breakfast Month
- » Childhood Cancer Awareness Month
- » Classical Music Month
- » Fruits & Veggies—More Matters Month
- » Library Card Sign-Up Month
- » National Chicken Month
- » National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month
- » National Courtesy Month
- » National Food Safety Education Month
- » National Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
- » National Honey Month
- » National Mushroom Month
- » National Potato Month
- » National Rice Month
- » Suicide Prevention Awareness Month
- » National Yoga Month
- » National Whole Grains Month

Single-Day Events

- » National Food Bank Day (Sept. 3)
- » Labor Day (Sept. 6)
- » International Literacy Day (Sept. 8)
- » National Football League Season Opener (Sept. 9)
- » Patriot Day, 9/11 Anniversary (Sept. 11)
- » National Grandparents' Day (Sept. 12)
- » National Celiac Disease Awareness Day (Sept. 13)
- » National Peanut Day (Sept. 13)
- » National Stepfamily Day (Sept. 16)
- » International Country Music Day (Sept. 17)
- » National Dance Day (Sept. 18)
- » National Gymnastics Day (Sept. 18)
- » International Talk Like a Pirate Day (Sept. 19)
- » First Day of Fall (Autumn Equinox) (Sept. 22)
- » Johnny Appleseed's Birthday (Sept. 26)
- » World Tourism Day (Sept. 27)
- » World School Milk Day (Sept. 29)
- » International Translation Day (Sept. 30)

Weeklong/Multi-Day Events

- » Constitution Week (Sept. 17-23)
- » Rosh Hashanah (Sept. 6-8)
- » National Arts in Education Week (Sept. 12-18)
- » Yom Kippur (Sept. 15-16)
- » International Week of the Deaf (Sept. 20-26)
- » Banned Books Week (Sept. 26-Oct. 2)

SEPTEMBER 2021

IDEA

National Food Safety Education Month

You practice diligent food safety protocols every day, making your knowledge and expertise a valuable resource to parents!

Every year, an estimated 1 in 6 Americans get sick from a foodborne illness. Throughout this month, you can promote key food safety concepts, including handwashing, using a food thermometer when cooking, proper chilling of perishable foods, safe food storage, management of leftovers and avoiding cross-contamination of raw and cooked foods. Develop a calendar of short tips that can be shared via social media (posts, infographics or videos) or on fact sheets sent home.



WHAT

National Hispanic Heritage Month
Celebrate the histories, cultures and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, certain Caribbean islands and Central and South America. The dates

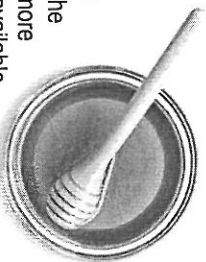
reflect the anniversaries of independence for several Latin American countries. During this month, festivals, educational and cultural events take place throughout the United States to recognize the positive impact of Hispanic Americans.



WHAT

National Honey Month

Honey starts as flower nectar collected by bees. The color and flavor of honey varies based on the original floral source. There are more



than 300 distinct types of honey available in the United States. These range from wildflower (delicious in salad dressings) and orange blossom (great in a marinade or with brie and goat cheese) to buckwheat (good in barbecue sauces or hearty baked goods) and blueberry (featuring a buttery finish that pairs well with yogurt and sour cream). Do you know any beekeepers in your area who might help you with a tasting activity this month?

FACT

National Potato Month

Did You Know?

- » Potatoes are grown in all 50 states.
- » An 8-oz. baked potato has only about 100 calories.
- » The potato was the first vegetable to be grown in space in October 1995.
- » The potato is a fat-free, nutrient-dense food. USDA has stated that "a diet of whole milk and potatoes would supply almost all of the food elements necessary for the maintenance of the human body."
- » Don't wash potatoes before storing; this speeds decay.



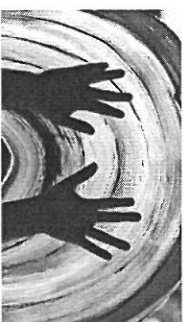
IDEA

National Arts in Education Week

(Sept. 12-18)

Reach out to arts educators and club advisers in your school,

expressing your interest in supporting messages about the value of arts education. Offer to display visual artwork in the dining area, suggest a music group perform during meal periods or organize a creative writing contest with poems or essays on the importance of good nutrition. Run video clips on cafeteria monitors of school theater and dance performances. Use social media or create a display highlighting photos of your school's arts educators, thanking them for their creative hard work.



WHAT

National Celiac Disease Awareness Day (Sept. 13)

While gluten-free food choices have become trendy, for some children, a gluten-free diet is a medical necessity. Celiac disease is a condition in which consumption of gluten, a protein found in wheat, rye and barley products, can result in digestive problems and cause damage to the small



intestine. If you serve students with celiac disease, you need to become very fluent in reading ingredient lists to identify all the products that can contain gluten, as well as appropriate substitutes. Visit www.celiac.org to learn more.

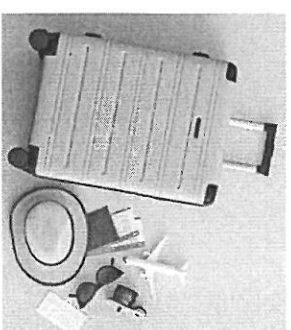
IDEA

World Tourism Day

(Sept. 27)

Create a collage display of images of the favorite vacation sites—or bucket list destinations

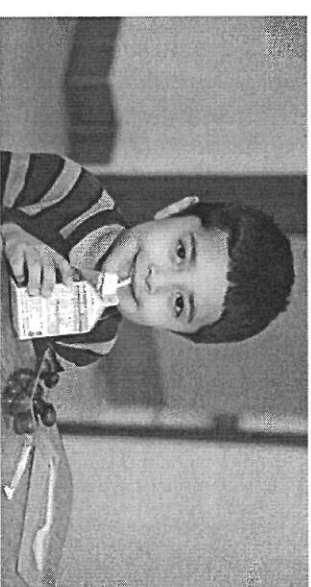
—of your cafeteria team members. Ask children as they go through the line where they would like to travel. Use social media or flyers to highlight some of the tourist sites that are right in your own backyard—the parks, attractions, monuments, natural wonders, museums, galleries and historic spots that are worth fresh attention and exploration.



FACT

World School Milk Day (Sept. 29)

This observance has been promoted since 2000 as a way of raising awareness of the value of school milk not just as a component in U.S. federal child nutrition programs, but all across the globe. The U.S. reaches the most children with school milk programs, but other countries reaching large numbers of children with the nutritious beverage include China, Iran, Japan, France, Thailand and Turkey. Among the 58 countries that participated in a 2013 International Dairy Federation survey, 93% distributed milk in the classroom, 71% in a school cafeteria/canteen.



Simpliot



OCTOBER 2021 National Farm to School Month

Weeklong/Multi-Day Events

- » Fire Prevention Week (Oct. 3-9)
- » International Postcard Week (Oct. 3-9)
- » Customer Service Week (Oct. 4-8)
- » Earth Science Week (Oct. 10-16)
- » National School Lunch Week (Oct. 12-16)
- » National School Bus Safety Week (Oct. 17-23)

Monthlong Events

- » Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- » Down Syndrome Awareness Month
- » German American Heritage Month
- » Global Diversity Awareness Month
- » Health Literacy Month
- » Italian American Heritage Month
- » National Apple Month
- » National Book Month
- » National Bullying Prevention Awareness Month
- » National Chili Month
- » National Cookbook Month
- » National Dental Hygiene Month
- » National Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- » National Farm to School Month
- » National Fire Prevention Month
- » National Pasta Month
- » National Pizza Month
- » National Popcorn Poppin' Month
- » National Pretzel Month
- » National Seafood Month
- » Polish American Heritage Month
- » Spinach Lovers' Month
- » Vegetarian Awareness Month

Single-Day Events

- » International Vegetarian Day (Oct. 1)
- » National Custodial Workers Day (Oct. 2)
- » Gandhi's Birthday/International Day of Nonviolence (Oct. 2)
- » National Taco Day (Oct. 4)
- » National Walk to School Day (Oct. 6)

» World Octopus Day (Oct. 8)

- » World Mental Health Day (Oct. 10)
- » Native American Day/Indigenous People's Day (Oct. 11)
- » Boss's Day (observed Oct. 15)
- » Global Handwashing Day (Oct. 15)
- » National Dictionary Day (Oct. 16)
- » World Food Day (Oct. 16)

» International Chefs Day (Oct. 20)

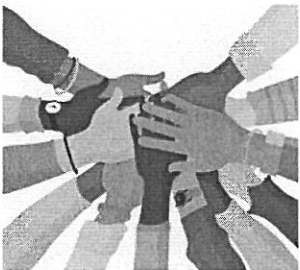
- » National Color Day (Oct. 22)
- » World Pasta Day (Oct. 25)
- » World Series Begins (Oct. 26)
- » National Chocolate Day (Oct. 28)
- » Statue of Liberty Birthday (Oct. 28)
- » National Magic Day (Oct. 31)

OCTOBER 2021

IDEA

Global Diversity Awareness Month

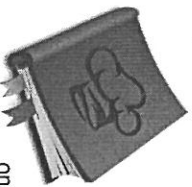
Go all out to plan a diverse menu this month that features traditional cultural dishes from populations represented by your staff or student body. (You may need to tweak some recipes in order to be compliant with nutrition standards.) Designate one day each week—Wednesday, perhaps—as Global Diversity Menu Day to serve these items. Promote the entire menu all month long and develop social media posts or handouts with facts about the origins of the dishes and their ingredients, traditional preparation techniques and even recipe cards (converted to family-size portions).



IDEA

National Cookbook Month

Do you and coworkers collect cookbooks? As a team-building exercise, organize a cookbook swap this month, challenging one another to try one new recipe at home. Post photos of the results on social media or bring them to a potluck dinner scheduled for your next chapter meeting or other event. To engage your community, convert some of the most popular recipes you serve throughout the school year into family-size yields and collect them to share with parents via your website or social media channels. Or sell your "cookbook" at a moderate price as a fundraiser to underwrite future cafeteria activities with students.

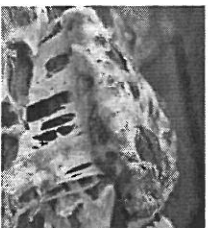


FACT

National Pizza Month

Share these five fast facts with students this month!

- » The average American eats more than 23 pounds of pizza every year!
- » Mozzarella, the common pizza topper, accounts for some 80% of all U.S. cheese production.



» For 37 years, the International Pizza Expo & Conference has featured sessions on popular new styles (like Detroit), flour blends, vegan pizzas and top trends.

» NASA has contracted for a 3-D printer that will make pizza (and other foods) for astronauts on space missions.

» Eggs are a popular topping in Australia; deep-fried pizza is a Scottish favorite; mayo is a common topping in Japan; and green peas regularly dot pizzas in Brazil!

IDEA

Spinach Lovers' Month

Encourage students to eat more spinach to grow healthy and strong! You can help way kids to try spinach by adding it to smoothies, pancakes and dishes with "acceptable" flavor profiles like those with cheese, pasta, tomatoes and eggs. Another tactic is to make sure spinach is part of a school garden project. Children are more willing to try foods they've grown and harvested on their own.



IDEA

International Postcard Week (Oct. 3-9)

Do you collect more postcards from travel destinations than you send through the mail? You and your coworkers can use these in a fun engagement activity. Write notes about the signature foods related to the destinations on the cards or generic good wishes ("Keep traveling to the cafeteria!" "Oh, the places you will go!" "Every day is a great adventure!") and let students pick one at random to keep as they come through the line. Or, distribute blank cards and ask kids to create their own postcard pictures of favorite foods or vacations or someplace they want to visit one day.



FACT

Customer Service Week (Oct. 4-8)

Do you and your team members know some of the most common customer service traps in foodservice? These include: poor or inconsistent food quality, unfriendly servers, long



wait times, running out of menu items, an unattractive setting, dismissive attitudes toward complaints and failure to request feedback. Use this week to make sure your customers know how much they are valued!

IDEA

World Octopus Day (Oct. 8)

The octopus is having a moment. With a growing presence in popular culture (thanks to the Oscar-winning Netflix documentary "My Octopus Teacher" and a corresponding commercial produced by Google), the once-feared sea "monster" has captured the fascination of children and adults alike. Decorate your cafeteria in an "under the sea" theme, share fascinating facts and ask the librarian to lend you some books to display on the serving line, such as *Take Your Octopus to School Day*, *Inky the Octopus* and *Ticky Octopus*. Ask students to imagine what they would do with eight different arms!



IDEA

International Chefs Day (Oct. 20)

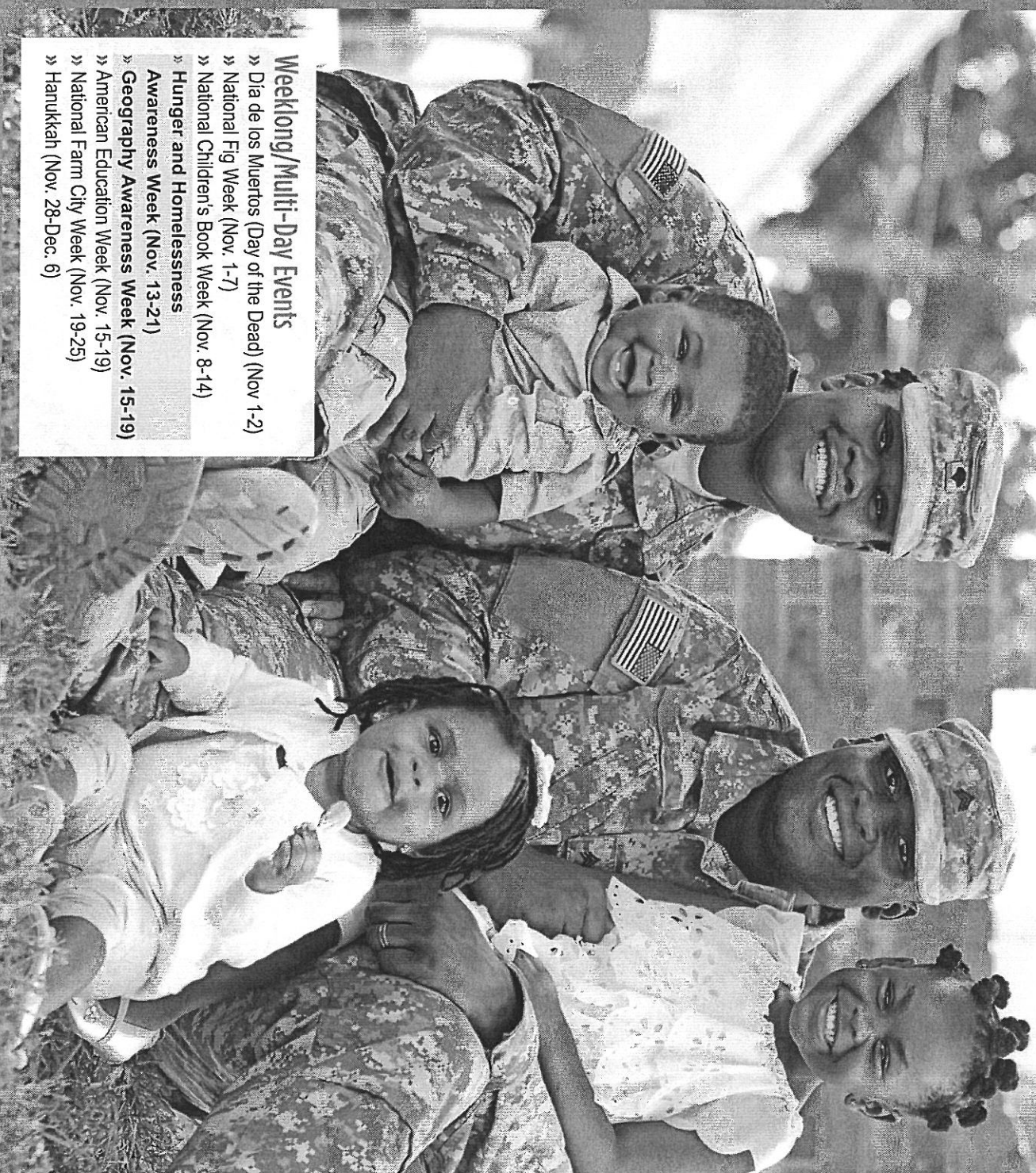
Use this date to promote the culinary creativity and expertise of the school chefs (and cooks) on your nutrition services team! On serving lines or social media channels, share their photos and bios, as well as their go-to ingredients for culinary inspiration and favorite dishes to make and eat. Another idea is to let the menu for this day feature a "Chef's Special" and give your chefs free rein to surprise and delight students with something new and unexpected.



CONAGRA
FOODSERVICE

NOVEMBER 2021

Military Family Month



Weeklong/Multi-Day Events

- » Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) (Nov 1-2)
- » National Fig Week (Nov. 1-7)
- » National Children's Book Week (Nov. 8-14)
- » Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week (Nov. 13-21)
- » Geography Awareness Week (Nov. 15-19)
- » American Education Week (Nov. 15-19)
- » National Farm City Week (Nov. 19-25)
- » Hanukkah (Nov. 28-Dec. 6)

Single-Day Events

- » All Saints Day/All Hallows' Day (Nov. 1)
- » National Author's Day (Nov. 1)
- » National Cinnamon Day (Nov. 1)
- » Cookie Monster Day (Nov. 2)
- » National Sandwich Day (Nov. 3)
- » Diwali—The Hindu Festival of Lights (Nov. 4)
- » National Nachos Day (Nov. 6)
- » Daylight Savings Time Ends (Nov. 7)
- » **National STEM/STEAM Day (Nov. 8)**
- » Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
- » National Pickle Day (Nov. 14)
- » National Philanthropy Day (Nov. 15)
- » America Recycles Day (Nov. 15)
- » **National Education Support Professionals Day (Nov. 17)**
- » Mickey Mouse's Birthday (Nov. 18)
- » Great American Smokeout (Nov. 19)
- » Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 25)
- » #GivingTuesday (Nov. 30)

Monthlong Events

- » Military Family Month
- » National Adoption Month
- » **National Career Development Month**
- » National Diabetes Month
- » **National Native American Heritage Month**
- » National Peanut Butter Lovers Month
- » **National Pepper Month**
- » National Scholarship Month
- » Picture Book Month
- » Vegan Month

NOVEMBER 2021

CAREERS

IDEA

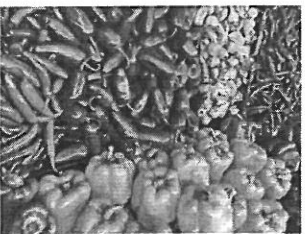
National Career Development Month

As schools host activities to encourage students and adults to explore career options that reflect their interests and skills, you can promote the benefits of a school nutrition career. Work with counselors and teachers on the best outreach to students in culinary arts, health and consumer sciences classes or programs. Arrange for a table at a career fair. Let parents know about open positions in your operation, emphasizing longer-term career growth opportunities. Publish short profiles of long-time school nutrition staff, focusing on how they discovered this career and why they love it.

WHAT

National Native American Heritage Month

There are more than 500 different recognized Native American tribes in the U.S. As you celebrate the culture of the First Nations, take care not to cause offense by working with representatives of groups with roots in your region. Look to serve authentic dishes or menus—explaining modifications for school foodservice—and provide properly sourced historic information. Start by tapping the education and support resources of the National Museum of the American Indian at www.americanindian.si.edu.



FACT

National Pepper Month

Chile peppers, black peppercombs and sweet bell peppers all count themselves as members of the pepper family. They are grown all across the globe and the biggest difference is the level of heat they deliver, as measured on the Scoville scale. Bell peppers get a 0 rating, while the habanero earns

a 100,000 rating for its fiery effects. Even “mild” bell peppers have a very distinctive taste, so you may want to serve cooked or raw peppers on the side, rather than pre-mixed into salads or other dishes.

WHAT

Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week (Nov. 13-21)

Although pandemic-era statistics are not yet available, the number of individuals facing homelessness and hunger is expected to rise this year. You likely are already aware of students and families in your community who are living with food insecurity, including some of your neighbors and even fellow colleagues in the school nutrition department. This week is a good reminder to raise your antennae to be sure that in all your actions, you are respectful of the dignity and privacy of those who are struggling to make ends meet—and to encourage others to do the same.



IDEA

Geography Awareness Week (Nov. 15-21)

This is a great opportunity to partner with teachers on cafeteria-classroom projects that connect to lessons about geography, world cultures and American history. Make



yourself available to showcase special samplings of dishes that reflect different global traditions. Assign a day to focus on regional specialties, from clam chowder in New England to catfish in the Gulf states to Frito Pie in the Southwest to the many different chili recipes across the country. As you lead up to Thanksgiving, celebrate all the many cultures that influence American kitchens today.

WHAT

Diwali—The Hindu Festival of Lights (Nov. 4)

One of the most important holidays in India, Diwali has become a national festival enjoyed by Hindu and non-Hindu communities alike. The Diwali story is interpreted differ-



ently in various regions of the country, but the common thread is celebrating the victory of good over evil. The festival features decorating with clay lamps and creating design patterns from colored sand, as well as holding feasts and fireworks. Decorate your cafeteria with LED candles and consider serving a menu with simple Indian dishes, such as Butter Chicken, Chicken Masala or Naan.

WHAT

National STEM/STEAM Day (Nov. 8)

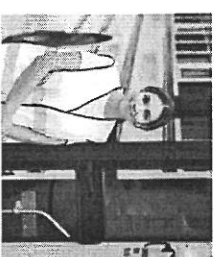
STEM is a curriculum that focuses on education in four fields: science, technology, engineering and math, the most rapidly growing industries in the U.S. economy. Some schools now promote STEM, which adds “Art” to the acronym, as a means for ensuring programs are fun and engaging, while teaching creativity and critical thinking skills. STEAM activities that connect to your program might include maintaining a hydroponic garden in the cafeteria, coordinating recipe contests among kids and teaching lessons on reading nutrition labels and analyzing nutrients in menus.



IDEA

National Education Support Professionals Day (Nov. 17)

While school cafeteria staff are considered education support professionals, this is your opportunity to recognize and thank your peers in other departments—especially those that helped with curbside meal distribution during the pandemic. Offer a coupon for one free adult meal or a special treat to the custodians, drivers, counselors, nurses, aides, monitors, administrative professionals, security officers and other partners in the school community.



General Mills
Convenience
& Foodservice

DECEMBER 2021 Root Vegetables and Exotic Fruits Month

Monthlong Events

- » National Impaired Driving Prevention Month
- » National Pear Month
- » Root Vegetables and Exotic Fruits Month
- » Safe Toys and Gifts Month
- » Universal Human Rights Month

Weeklong/Multi-Day Events

- » National Cookie Cutter Week (Dec. 1-7)
- » National Handwashing Awareness Week (Dec. 5-11)
- » Kwanzaa (Dec. 26-Jan. 1, 2022)

Single-Day Events

- » Rosa Parks Day (Dec. 1)
- » World AIDS Day (Dec. 1)
- » Special Education Day (Dec. 2)
- » International Day of Persons with Disabilities (Dec. 3)
- » National Cookie Day (Dec. 4)
- » International Cheetah Day (Dec. 4)
- » Christmas Card Day (Dec. 9)
- » Nobel Prize Day (Dec. 10)
- » International UNICEF Day (Dec. 11)
- » Gingerbread House Day (Dec. 12)
- » Poinsettia Day (Dec. 12)
- » World Choral Day (Dec. 12)
- » National Cocoa Day (Dec. 13)
- » Bill of Rights Day (Dec. 15)
- » National Maple Syrup Day (Dec. 17)
- » National Ugly Christmas Sweater Day (Dec. 17)
- » International Migrants Day (Dec. 18)
- » First Day of Winter/Winter Solstice (Dec. 21)
- » Cookie Exchange Day (Dec. 22)
- » Christmas Day (Dec. 25)
- » Boxing Day (Dec. 26)
- » New Year's Eve (Dec. 31)

DECEMBER 2021

IDEA

Root Vegetables and Exotic Fruits Month

In between your school versions of traditional holiday fare in November and December, take the opportunity to menu something a little different.

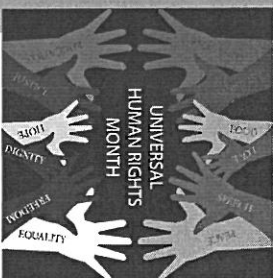


Roasting is a delicious—and seasonally appropriate—way to serve root vegetables like carrots, sweet potatoes, beets and rutabaga. Exotic fruits can be purchased in smaller quantities for special sampling events. Consider dragon fruit, chayote, persimmon, pomeio, starfruit and rambutan, all of which are tasty and boast a distinctive look!

WHAT

Universal Human Rights Month

One of the most important things you can do throughout the course of this month—and every month—is to find common ground with the people around you. By learning more about others' values, traditions and challenges—and by making a point to always spread kindness to



colleagues and students—we are taking the first steps in the fight for equality, justice and dignity for all. Learn more about the impetus for this observance, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, established by the United Nations after World War II. Visit www.un.org/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights.

FACT

National Handwashing Awareness Week (Dec. 5-11)

Living through a pandemic made us all very good at washing our hands!

Of course, this is a task that you do

often in a school kitchen. Share some fast facts with students to help them stay mindful of this important hygiene routine.

- Germs can live on your hands for up to three hours.
- Germs can spread from your hands when you touch surfaces, objects, foods and drinks and your body.
- There are five steps to handwashing: wet, lather, scrub, rinse and dry.



- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds—sing "Happy Birthday" two times or work with kids to make up their own handwashing song.
- Remember to make handwashing a healthy habit at home, work and at play!

WHAT

Special Education Day (Dec. 2)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that

children with physical, mental and learning disabilities be provided equal access to public education and that parents and educators work together to create an education plan that identifies approaches and accommodations for these students. Originally signed in 1975, the law has been enhanced over the years to improve standards and services. Recognize the special education teachers and staff in your school with a thank-you treat, courtesy of the cafeteria. Offer your support in helping students to develop life and social skills.



IDEA

Christmas Card Day (Dec. 9)

Do you buy new holiday greeting cards each year, even if you have leftovers from previous seasons? Hate to discard the free cards sent with charitable solicitations? You and your coworkers can bring all these extras into the cafeteria and make them available to students. Encourage the children to select one or more to give to a special someone, like their parents or grandparents, a kindly neighbor, the school bus driver, a favorite teacher or a best friend. (You may find one or more coming back to you!)

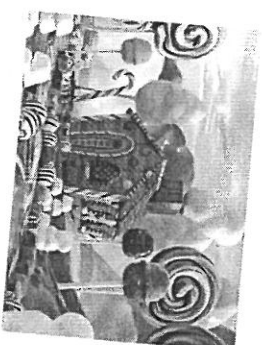


IDEA

Gingerbread House Day (Dec. 12)

Your cafeteria team can collaborate as a group on a gingerbread house or construct individual abodes. Consider assigning a theme or providing a list of required ingredients or elements. Take pictures of the creations and post them on social media, asking your followers to vote for their favorites.

If different teams across the school district are competing, be sure to encourage students to support their school cafeteria's entry!



IDEA

National Ugly Christmas Sweater Day (Dec. 17)

Tweak the event to spotlight "Ugly Christmas Aprons" and ask your team members to find or create a silly or tacky apron. Students can vote for their favorites! Or, give a small treat, maybe a candy cane or gingerbread cookie, to every student coming through the serving line wearing an ugly Christmas sweater. Organize a sweater donation drive with some simple publicity and a large box in the cafeteria. The last week of school is always busy, but you can conduct this holiday-themed activity any time this month.



WHAT

Winter Solstice (Dec. 21)

The shortest day of the year in the U.S., the winter solstice is marked by the point at which the North Pole is at its furthest from the sun. (Check your noontime shadow—it will be the longest of the year!) Though commonly referred to as the First Day of Winter, the meteorologic community has begun to push back on this, given the preceding weeks of colder temperatures, making the distinction between meteorological winter (Dec. 1) and the astronomical date of the solstice. But with just 9.5 hours—or less—of daylight, everyone can agree that it's a hard day to get up and go to school!



The Signature of Quality

FEBRUARY 2022 Children's Dental Health Month

Monthlong Events

- » American Heart Month
- » Black History Month
- » Canned Food Month
- » National Bake for Family Fun Month
- » National Cherry Month
- » National Children's Dental Health Month
- » National Grapefruit Month
- » **National Hot Breakfast Month**
- » National Library Lover's Month
- » **National Snack Food Month**

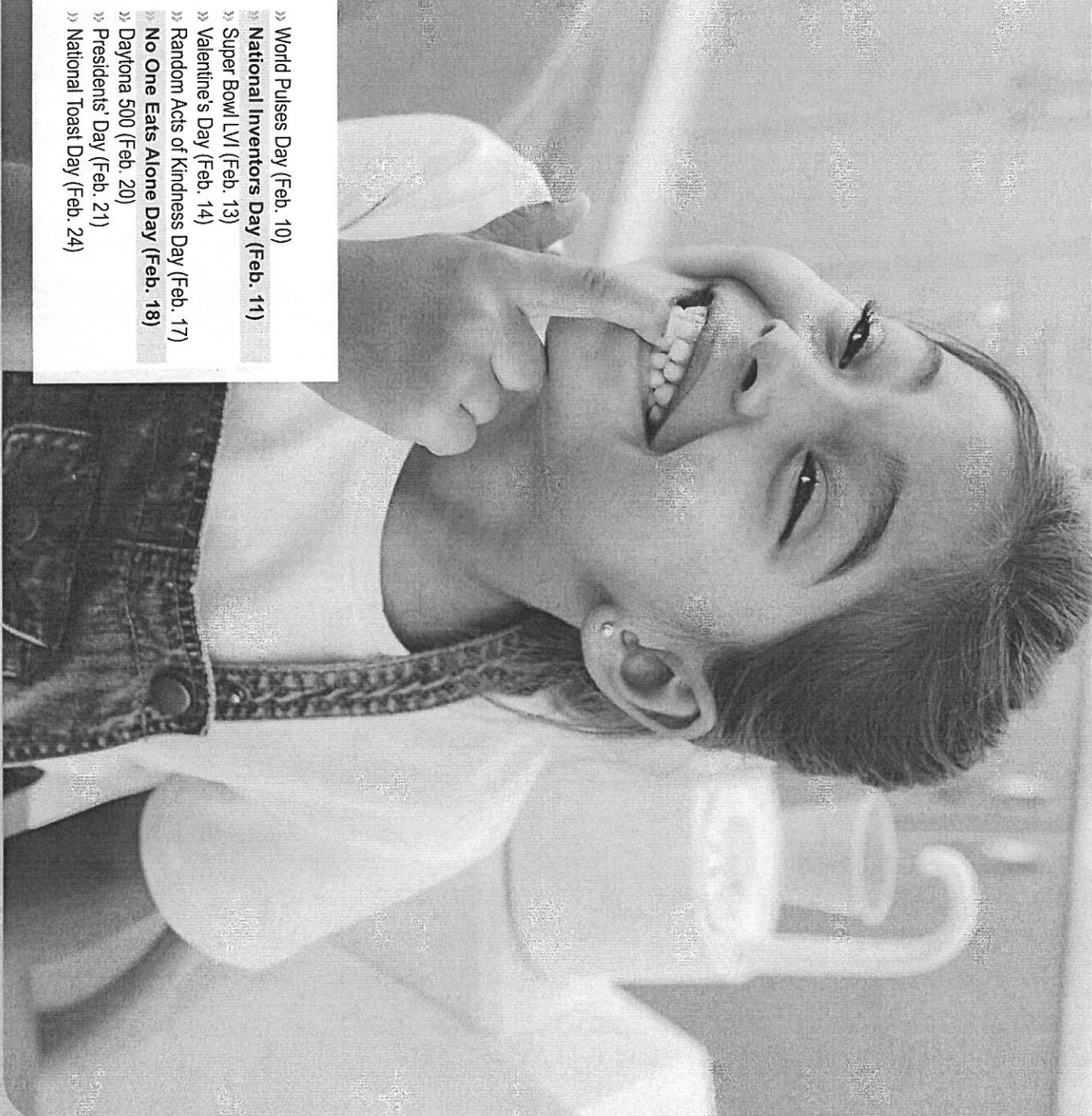
Weeklong/Multi-Day Events

- » **Winter Olympics (Feb. 4-20)**
- » National Burn Awareness Week (Feb. 6-12)
- » National School Counseling Week (Feb. 7-11)
- » Pride in Foodservice Week (Feb. 7-11)
- » **National FFA Week (Feb. 19-26)**
- » **National Eating Disorder Awareness Week (Feb. 21-27)**

Single-Day Events

- » **Chinese New Year—Year of the Tiger (Feb. 1)**
- » National Freedom Day (Feb. 1)
- » Groundhog Day (Feb. 2)
- » National Tater Tot Day (Feb. 2)
- » World Read Aloud Day (Feb. 2)
- » National Wear Red Day (Feb. 4)
- » National Boy Scouts Day (Feb. 8)
- » National Pizza Day (Feb. 9)

- » World Pulses Day (Feb. 10)
- » **National Inventors Day (Feb. 11)**
- » Super Bowl LVII (Feb. 13)
- » Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)
- » Random Acts of Kindness Day (Feb. 17)
- » **No One Eats Alone Day (Feb. 18)**
- » Daytona 500 (Feb. 20)
- » Presidents' Day (Feb. 21)
- » National Toast Day (Feb. 24)

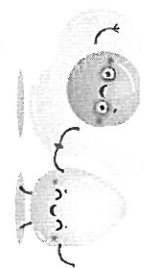


FEBRUARY 2022

IDEA

National Hot Breakfast Month

This is a great opportunity to get student customers primed for next month's National School



Breakfast Week (NSBW) celebration. Plan to test some new hot breakfast recipes and encourage your customers to vote for their favorite(s) to be featured prominently during NSBW. Hot breakfast can be eaten with a fork (nuevos rancheros), a spoon (oatmeal) and with your hands (sausage biscuit sandwich). Diners often perceive a hot breakfast to be more filling and satisfying than cold options, so make sure they are a part of your cycle menu!

WHAT

National Snack Food Month

Snacks often get a bad rap as indulgent treats with few nutritional benefits, but in school cafeterias, the Smart Snacks in School rule applies nutrition stan-



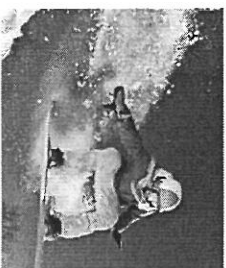
dards that help students make healthy choices beyond the reimbursable meal. Snacks provide an energy boost between meals and help to manage hunger. All foods can fit in a healthy diet, if attention is paid to balance and proper portion sizes. Encourage exploration of new options in different snack categories, from sweet, salty and savory to creamy, crunchy and chewy.

FACT

Winter Olympic Games

(Feb. 4-20)

Sports enthusiasts usually must wait two years between the Summer and Winter Olympic Games, but not this year! Records and hearts are both sure to be broken as new champions



rise, while others stumble in their quest for gold. A total of 109 events will be held across seven sports categories: biathlon, bobsled, curling, ice hockey, luge, skating and skiing (which includes snowboarding). Beijing, China, plays host, becoming the first city to host both the Winter and Summer Games, the latter in 2008. One surprising fact: Artificial snow will be used

for all outdoor events, as the city gets very little of the white stuff most winters.

FACT

National Eating Disorders

Awareness Week (Feb. 21-27)

With eating disorders affecting 20 million women and 10 million men in the U.S., it's good to build awareness about these troubling medical conditions.



» Families are not to blame and eating disorders are not choices, but mental and physical illnesses. A growing consensus suggests that they are caused by a range of biological, psychological and sociocultural factors.

» Eating disorders affect people of all genders, ages, races, ethnicities, body shapes, weights, sexual orientations, religions and socioeconomic statuses.

» An eating disorder diagnosis is a health crisis.

» Full recovery from an eating disorder is possible, especially with early detection and intervention.

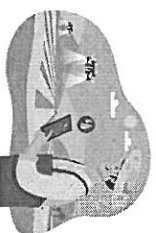
Learn more at www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/learn.

IDEA

National FFA Week (Feb. 19-26)

National FFA Organization (formerly Future Farmers of America)

prepares young people for leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. Members include future chemists, veterinarians, policymakers, entrepreneurs, business leaders, teachers and, yes, farmers. Do you have a chapter in your schools or district? They are an ideal partner with school nutrition teams. Whether it's using harvests and livestock raised by the students in school meals or agricultural education activities or peer-to-peer outreach. Contact the group's adviser about planning a joint project for this week. You can find a chapter locator tool at www.ffa.org/chapter-locator.

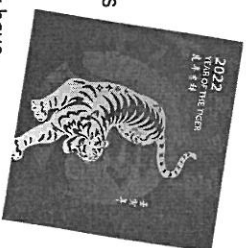


WHAT

Chinese New Year—Year of the Tiger (Feb. 1)

2022 will be the Year of the Tiger, according to the 12-year Chinese zodiac calendar. In the wild, the tiger is brave and

independent—active, but proceeds with caution. People born in the Year of the Tiger are said to have a similar personality. But once they speak out or take action, they have no regrets. They also never give up halfway to the goal. Chinese New Year is a great occasion for a promotion with bright, colorful decorations and tasty Asian dishes.



IDEA

National Inventors Day

(Feb. 11)

Observed on the anniversary of the birth of Thomas Edison, National Inventors Day celebrates the innovators who are continually thinking of fresh, original solutions to problems and about how to make things better, faster, less expensive, more efficient and more reliable. Invite the inventors among your student customers to suggest their ideas for a better cafeteria experience or new ways to manage weeding/watering in the school garden or classroom meal service. Reward every submitted idea with a lightbulb-shaped eraser!



IDEA

No One Eats Alone Day (Feb. 18)

Reach out to student groups and your parent-teacher organization to help coordinate this peer-driven promotion to address social isolation, especially in the cafeteria. Visit www.beyond-differences.org/national-awareness-days to sign up to receive program resources, including a middle school student leadership unit. Students will learn to make new friends at lunch beyond their existing peer groups through activities and conversations and other strategies.



MARCH 2022 Youth Art Month

Monthlong Events

- » American Red Cross Month
- » Irish American Heritage Month
- » Music in Our Schools Month
- » National Athletic Training Month
- » National Caffeine Awareness Month
- » National Cheerleading Safety Month
- » National Craft Month
- » National Ethics Awareness Month
- » National Noodle Month
- » National Nutrition Month
- » National Peanut Month
- » Women's History Month
- » Youth Art Month

Single-Day Events

- » Birthday of Peace Corps (Mar. 1)
- » Mardi Gras (Mar. 1)
- » Dr. Seuss' Birthday (Mar. 2)
- » Read Across America Day (Mar. 2)
- » National Grammar Day (Mar. 4)
- » Holi (Mar. 8)
- » International Women's Day (Mar. 8)

Weeklong/Multi-Day Events

- » Winter Paralympics Games (Mar. 4-13)
- » National Foreign Language Week (Mar. 6-12)
- » National School Breakfast Week (Mar. 7-11)
- » National Sleep Awareness Week (Mar. 13-19)
- » NCAA March Madness (Mar. 15-Apr. 4)
- » Passover (Mar. 27-Apr. 4)



- » National Meatball Day (Mar. 9)
- » Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Day (Mar. 9)
- » Girl Scouts of America Anniversary (Mar. 12)
- » Daylight Savings Time Begins (Mar. 13)
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- » Spring Equinox—First Day of Spring (Mar. 20)
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- » National Ag Day (Mar. 22)
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- » Major League Baseball Opening Day (Mar. 31)

MARCH 2022

IDEA

National Athletic Training Month

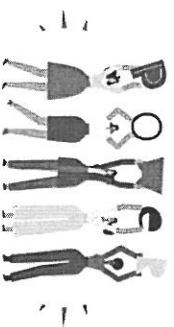
This is a great opportunity for outreach to the phys ed instructors, coaches and trainers in your school district to help raise awareness among students about the importance of good nutrition in athletic performance. They can become valuable allies and advocates of your school meal program if they understand the advantages offered to athletes of all ages. Market the attributes of individual foods and the entire meal, from high-protein items that provide "Strength" to carbohydrate that deliver "Endurance" and the mix of nutrient-dense fruits and vegetables that are considered "Power" foods.



IDEA

Women's History Month

This observance is a wonderful occasion to uncover the almost-lost-to-history



contributions of amazing women in every aspect of human progress. There are many ways you can share their stories. One is to identify a theme, such as famous women in food and agriculture, profiling a different leader each week during the month. Examples might include iconic chef Julia Child, livestock welfare advocate Temple Grandin, farm-to-table pioneer Alice Waters and SNA's own Shirley Watkins, the first woman and person of color to serve as Undersecretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services at USDA. See where a little research will take you!

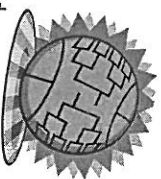
IDEA

NCAA March Madness

(Mar. 15-Apr. 4)

Unlike many professional sports,

in which championships are determined



across five to seven games in a series, the thrill of college's annual basketball tournaments (the women's competition runs Mar. 18-Apr. 3) are the one-and-done matches among the 64+ teams selected to compete. The fun of the "Madness" is trying to predict the results across "brackets" for each round of play. These brackets are easily adapted to

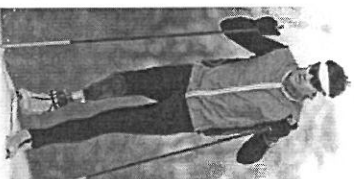
engage students in identifying favorite breakfast and lunch menu items. You can create a fun game with as few as eight "competitors," pitting, say, French toast against pancakes or cold cereal against hot oatmeal to determine the school's top pick.

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The Games, held in Beijing, China, will feature 78 events in six sports: Alpine skiing, biathlon, cross-country skiing, para ice hockey, snowboarding and wheelchair curling (which will feature mix-gender teams). More than 700 athletes are expected to participate. Use the internet to get to know more about the competitors' stories and share highlights with your students to encourage them to never lose faith in their own abilities.



WHAT

National School Breakfast Week (Mar. 7-11)

This year's theme is designed to help you leverage our collective fascination with



superheroes who fly into action and are always ready for the next new challenge. They exude energy and enthusiasm and are capable of great things. Doesn't that describe America's kids when they start their day with a healthy school breakfast? Resources to help you develop a super-duper celebration will be available at www.schoolnutrition.org/nsw in late Fall 2021.

WHAT

Dr. Seuss' Birthday & Read Across America Day (Mar. 2)

You can read them on a couch. You can read them when you slouch. You could read them with a bear. You could read them anywhere! Dr. Seuss taught readers of all ages important lessons on the environment, kindness and

believing in our limitless potential.

Read Across America, sponsored by the National Education Association, celebrates the legacy of Dr. Seuss. Each year, the program features a monthly calendar of recommended titles (one each

for elementary, middle grade and young adult students) that can be tied into school activities—including cafeteria promotions. You can find the complete SY2021-22 list at www.nea.org/professional-excellence/student-engagement/read-across-america/2021-2022-calendar.



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Similarly, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics offers a program to earn designation as a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN). RDNs are respected advocates for advancing the nutrition status of Americans and experts who can translate the science of nutrition into practical solutions. If your school nutrition team includes RDNs (or Nutrition and Dietetics Technicians, Registered [NDTRs]), promote their expertise as further validation of the healthy meals you serve every day.



FACT

World Water Day (Mar. 22)

Droughts, wildfires, floods. The extremes of climate change play out in a worsening global water crisis. Water is essential to our



food supply—and critical for human health and well-being. Today, there are 2.2 billion people without access to clean, safe water. School cafeteria teams can help raise student awareness during this observance, sponsored by the United Nations. Visit www.worldwaterday.org to access a toolkit and view the archives from previous years' events.

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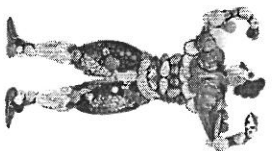
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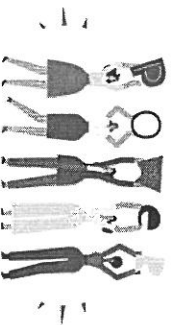
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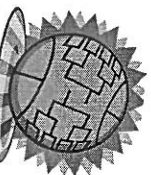


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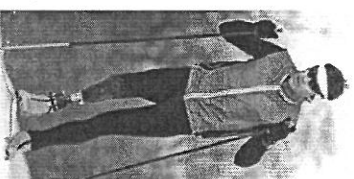
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APRIL 2022

National Garden Month

- ### Monthlong Events
- » Arab American Heritage Month
 - » Global Astronomy Month
 - » International Guitar Month
 - » Jazz Appreciation Month
 - » Keep America Beautiful Month
 - » National Child Abuse Prevention Month
 - » National Garden Month
 - » National Grilled Cheese Month
 - » National Humor Month
 - » National Kite Month
 - » National Poetry Month
 - » National Soyfoods Month
 - » National Volunteer Month
 - » National Youth Sports Safety Month
 - » School Library Month
 - » Scottish American Heritage Month
 - » Stress Awareness Month
 - » World Autism Month

Single-Day Events

- » April Fool's Day (Apr. 1)
- » National Sourdough Bread Day (Apr. 1)
- » Hans Christian Andersen's Birthday (Apr. 2)
- » International Children's Book Day (Apr. 2)
- » Ramadan Begins (Apr. 2)
- » International Carrot Day (Apr. 4)
- » National School Librarian Day (Apr. 4)
- » National Student Athlete Day (Apr. 6)
- » National Walking Day (Apr. 6)
- » National Burrito Day (Apr. 7)
- » World Health Day (Apr. 7)
- » National Pet Day (Apr. 11)
- » National Dolphin Day (Apr. 14)
- » ASL Day (Apr. 15)
- » Passover Begins (Apr. 15)
- » Tax Day (Apr. 15)
- » Easter (Apr. 17)
- » National Garlic Day (Apr. 19)
- » National Banana Day (Apr. 20)
- » Kindergarten Day (Apr. 21)
- » World Creativity and Innovation Day (Apr. 21)
- » Earth Day (Apr. 22)
- » Shakespeare's Birthday (Apr. 23)
- » World Penguin Day (Apr. 25)
- » Administrative Professionals Day (Apr. 27)
- » International Dance Day (Apr. 29)
- » National Arbor Day (Apr. 29)

Weeklong/Multi-Day Events

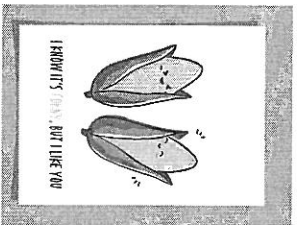
- » National Wildlife Week (Apr. 4-8)
- » National Student Employment Week (Apr. 11-17)
- » Administrative Professionals Week (Apr. 24-30)
- » World Immunization Week (Apr. 24-30)

APRIL 2022

IDEA

National Humor Month

It's time to get punny about school meals! Whether you want to Turnip the Beet, tell your customers they are One in a Melon or that they have a Pizza Your Heart, let's Taco 'Bout how effective food puns can be in using gentle humor and word play to engage kids and adults alike. There's no end to the clever and silly puns you can find in a quick internet search—the delivery is up to you! Create a calendar with one pun that you will share on the serving line and/or through social media each day of the month. Ask students to submit their own punny entries. SNA has created punny shareable content for social media that its members can download for free! After logging into My Account at SchoolNutrition.org, click on the following links: Learning Center, Communications & Marketing, PR Resources and then PR Campaign.



and engaging activities. Consider focusing on the wildlife of five different geographic areas that week. For example: the stealthy jaguar or endearing sloth of the Amazonian rainforest, the majestic elephants and giraffes of the spacious grasslands of the African savanna, the penguin colonies and other sea life of Antarctica, the leaping kangaroos and striking trilled-neck lizards of Australia's outback and the bears, bison and wolves of the Rocky Mountains. Kids can also learn about the wildlife in their own backyards at www.nwrf.org.

WHAT

National Student Employment Week (Apr. 11-17)

This observance is a great opportunity to recognize students who assist with meal prep and service in K-12 school foodservice. Don't have student employees—yet? Use this observance as a launch pad for the potential development of a regular program of student employment. It can work as a strategy to manage labor shortages, expose culinary students to the challenges and benefits of working in schools and create another group that can act as supporters and advocates for the complex business of school meals.



IDEA

National Poetry Month

Poetry slams, song lyrics and raps are all great ways to engage youth in appreciating this art form. Consider inviting a creative writing class or other student group to write poems or songs with a connection to the cafeteria. It could be an ode to a favorite food, a poem about a meaningful experience bonding with friends or being uplifted by cafeteria staff or a rap about health and nutrition. If, for example, you are working with a high school class exploring performance-style pieces, you might arrange for the class or group to visit an elementary school during lunch and perform their work for their younger peers.



FACT

International Carrot Day (Apr. 4)

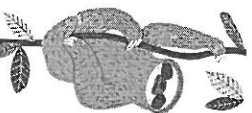


Carrots may seem as familiar as Bugs Bunny, but we have some fast facts that may be new to you—and to your students.

» Cultivated carrots are believed to have come on the scene in the area known today as Afghanistan back in 900 AD. After spreading throughout the Middle East and North Africa, they traveled to Spain and were popping up throughout Europe by the 1300s.

» There may be just two basic categories—domestic and wild—but these feature more varieties than you can count on two hands.

» Baby carrots aren't grown that way. They are either immature carrots that have been harvested before reaching full size or they are cut from larger carrots, peeling and chopping away any blemishes.



» Carrots count as an orange/red vegetable in the nutrition standards for school meal programs, but they actually come in many colors, including purple, white and yellow.

IDEA

National Pet Day (Apr. 11)

Pets can be the bridge that turns strangers into friends. Ask your school nutrition team to share photos of themselves with their beloved pet companions that you can post on social media and/or as part of signage in the serving area. Be sure to get key details, including the pet's name, gender, age and breed. Encourage students to share their own pet photos and create a giant collage of these in the dining area.



FACT

National Dolphin Day (Apr. 14)



Dolphins fascinate us with their grace and playfulness. They are highly intelligent and very social, plus the shape of their face and mouth looks like a perpetually friendly smile! There are actually 40 species of dolphins. Dolphins stay with their mothers for a long time—up to eight years, and they are nurturing toward sick or injured animals in their pod, even when those pods have up to 1,000 dolphins! They have two stomachs! One is for digestion and the other is to store food. Celebrate Dolphin Day with a simple banana-and-fruit cup (pictured).

IDEA

International Dance Day (Apr. 29)

Dance is a great way to give your body the benefits of some physical activity, clearing the mind of stress and anxiety. Schedule unannounced surprise dance breaks during each lunch period. Blast some music through speakers set up in the dining area and have your team and lunchroom monitors encourage all the kids to get on their feet and shake their groove thing! Maybe it's freestyle, maybe you lead an impromptu conga line or teach everyone the Hokey Pokey. Keep it short and fun and throw away any sense of self-consciousness!



MAY 2022 National Egg Month

Monthlong Events

- » American Cheese Month
- » Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Heritage Month
- » Better Sleep Month
- » Celiac Disease Awareness Month
- » Food Allergy Awareness Month
- » National Allergy and Asthma Awareness Month
- » National Asparagus Month
- » National Barbecue Month
- » National Egg Month
- » National Foster Care Month
- » National Hamburger Month
- » National Military Appreciation Month
- » National Mental Health Awareness Month
- » National Physical Fitness and Sports Month
- » National Salad Month
- » National Salsa Month
- » National Strawberry Month

Weeklong/Multi-Day Events

- » National Wildflower Week (May 1-7)
- » Screen-Free Week (May 1-7)
- » National Pet Week (May 1-9)
- » National Teacher Appreciation Week (May 2-6)
- » Nurses Week (May 6-12)
- » National Etiquette Week (May 9-15)
- » National Police Week (May 15-21)
- » PGA Championship (May 19-22)

Single-Day Events

- » School Principals' Day (May 1)
- » Eid al-Fitr (May 2)
- » National Teacher Appreciation Day (May 3)
- » World Asthma Day (May 3)
- » Star Wars Day (May 4)
- » National Orange Juice Day (May 4)
- » National Astronaut Day (May 5)
- » Cinco de Mayo (May 5)
- » School Lunch Hero Day (May 6)
- » Kentucky Derby (May 7)
- » Mother's Day (May 8)
- » National School Nurse Day (May 11)
- » Be Kind Online (May 13)
- » World Baking Day (May 17)
- » International Museum Day (May 18)
- » World Turtle Day (May 23)
- » Screenshot Day (May 27)
- » Indianapolis 500 (May 29)
- » Memorial Day (May 30)
- » World Parrot Day (May 31)

MAY 2022

WHAT

Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Numbering more than 20 million, Americans of Asian and Pacific Island descent make our nation more vibrant through a diversity



of cultures, languages and religions. Their contributions and achievements enrich U.S. society, from business and law to science and the arts, and, as noted in the 2021 White House proclamation of this commemoration, "The American story as we know it would be impossible without [their] strength, contributions and legacies." Recognizing those who trace their heritage to the Asian continent and numerous Pacific islands, including Native Hawaiians, this event originated in Congress in 1978.

IDEA

Better Sleep Month

Medical experts note that school-aged children should be getting 9 to 12 hours of sleep every night. Tired kids aren't

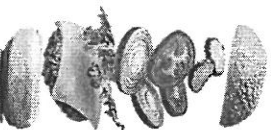


just grumpy; sleep deprivation has been linked to academic struggles, as well as a rise in chronic illnesses and obesity. One of the greatest sleep-related myths is that you can "catch up" on lost sleep over the weekend, but the truth is that you can't "bank" sleep. Promote your school breakfast program by pointing out that participation allows students—especially teenagers—to get a few more valuable zzzzs before school, as well as the health benefits of a balanced, nutritious morning meal.

IDEA

National Hamburger Month

This is a great opportunity to feature a build-your-own burger bar, offering a wide variety of both patty options (beef, turkey, chicken, portobello mushroom) and toppings (veggies, cheeses, condiments). Display combo suggestions, such as pairing



the patty with mushrooms and Swiss cheese for a Marvelous Melt; with barbecue sauce, onion strings and Monterey Jack for a Cowboy Burger; or a "fiesta" burger topped with black beans, pepper rings and a guacamole spread. This can be a special pop-up once during May or market it as a weekly event throughout the month.

FACT

National Salsa Month

All salsas are not created the same—and we're not just talking about different levels of spicy heat, either. The Aztecs, Incas and Mayans are



believed to be the first to combine tomatoes and chile peppers into a chunky sauce. Tomato-based salsas have found competition from salsas made with fruit, corn and black beans. Beyond a topping for corn chips, salsas are used to accompany various meat dishes or as a condiment for potatoes, pastas and pizza. In other countries, there is a very thin line between salsa and relish, so you may find kewpie mayo and shishito peppers in the salsa served in Mexican restaurants in Japan or cornichon pickles and ketchup in France.

IDEA

National Etiquette Week

(May 9-15)



The cafeteria can be a great place to teach little ones some basic good table manners.

Coordinate with teachers, aides or monitors to organize a family-style meal one day during this week and discuss lessons that they may not get at home. These include: washing hands before the meal, putting a napkin on the lap, waiting until everyone is present to begin eating, chewing with mouth closed, requesting someone pass a menu item rather than reaching for it and refraining from making rude noises like slurping or burping.

WHAT

School Lunch Hero Day (May 6)

This annual event from SNA, occurring on the first Friday in May, is inspired by and coordinated in partnership with

children's author and illustrator Jarrett J. Krosoczka, who created the famous "Lunch Lady" graphic novel series in celebration of his childhood cafeteria staffer. Visit www.schoolnutrition.org/sldd to discover innovative ideas to engage students and the community in thanking their cafeteria teams for their



unfailing efforts in fueling students for success.

IDEA

International Museum Day

(May 18)

Even smaller communities have museums worth exploring. Reach out to area museums for flyers



that you can make available on an information table in the cafeteria. If they can staff the table during meal periods, even better! Request that they consider offering a few free passes as a special giveaway. Find out if they have children's programming that they would like to promote. Be a conduit to help children connect with local history, wildlife, arts and more through museum exploration. Need help to identify options? Try these two internet search tools: ww2.aam-us.org/about-museums/find-a-museum and www.museums4all.org

FACT

World Parrot Day (May 31)



When teaching kids about wildlife, our fine feathered friends are often given less attention than a cuddly koala or prowling panther.

The colorful parrot makes for an easy and vibrant cafeteria promotion as the school year draws to a close. Here are some fun facts to share:

- » There are more than 350 kinds of parrots, including parakeets, cockatiels and cockatoos.
- » Wild parrots live in rainforests and woodlands in Africa, Australia, Asia and Central and South America
- » Parrots can imitate human speech.
- » They are believed to be one of the most intelligent bird species.
- » Parrots can live up to 80 years old and are very social.

JUNE 2022

IDEA

National Camping Month/ Great Outdoors Month

There's just something about a night spent cozy in a sleeping bag in a tent! And while Great Outdoors Month encourages out-of-the-house exploration, you can observe many of the fun and novel aspects celebrated during National Camping Month within four walls (and without bugs, bad weather and bathroom challenges). Erect a pop-up tent as a set for a selfie station with a lantern, a faux campfire and some stuffed animal critters. Serve up franks 'n' beans, a baked potato, some trail mix and a special s'mores-inspired treat.



WHAT

National Soul Food Month

While the term "soul food" didn't become popular until the 1960s, this regional cuisine extends back to the era of slavery in the American South, and is influenced by traditional foods of West Africa and Native American peoples. In the wake of the Great Migration to northern cities, Black-owned soul food restaurants took root as places for social connection. Soul food staples include cornbread, fried catfish, barbecued ribs and chitterlings. Today, it is a celebrated aspect of mainstream American food culture. Learn more about soul food and other cuisines from the American South in the June/July 2022 issue of *School Nutrition* magazine.



WHAT

National Little League Week (June 13-19)

Founded in 1939, Little League Baseball and Softball is the world's largest organized youth sports program. It is played in an estimated 6,500 communities across 80 countries around the world. Little League is based on a core vision of the power of youth baseball and softball to teach life lessons that build stronger individuals and communities. Celebrate the young athletes in your school who are a part of Little League teams this week.



FACT

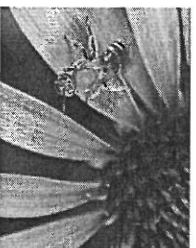
Pollinator Week (June 20-26)

Picture a world without any grains, fruits or vegetables—or bright flowers. Hard to imagine, right? Most food production relies on a helping hand from various insects, birds and animals. In fact, one out of every three bites of food you eat can be credited to bees, bats, hummingbirds, beetles, butterflies and certain small mammals. With their populations threatened, so are certain foods that we all love! Help raise awareness to the role of pollinators and why they need protecting by sharing some fascinating facts:

» More than 200,000 species of animals act as pollinators.

» An estimated 75% of all flowering plants rely on animal pollinators.

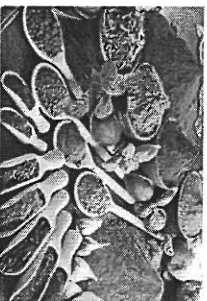
» Approximately 1,000 plants grown for food, beverages, fiber, spices and medicines need to be pollinated by animals in order to reproduce. These include apples, strawberries, blueberries, chocolate, peaches, tomatoes, pumpkins and almonds.



IDEA

National Herbs and Spices Day (June 10)

Sage and rosemary and cumin and basil, oh my! The transformational power of herbs and spices can extend the versatility of staple items like center-of-the-plate proteins and powerhouse vegetable side dishes. Whether used in the cooking process or as part of a final seasoning hit at service—especially in place of salt—herbs and spices are always worthy of a menu highlight. To celebrate this day, produce a fact sheet that explains some of the signature seasonings that are at the heart of favorite dishes, such as basil in pesto, oregano in pasta sauce, chives with baked potatoes and cilantro with salsa.

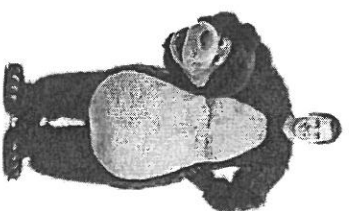


IDEA

National Mascot Day (June 17)

Ask high school mascots to make a special guest appearance in one or more elementary school cafeterias.

Or if school is out and you are serving summer meals, invite them to ride the (air-conditioned) meal distribution bus. Arrange for selfie photo opportunities to allow youngsters to get their pictures taken with the costumed creature. It's a great way to inject some school spirit into your summertime activities.



IDEA

National Selfie Day (June 21)



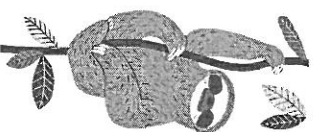
As school winds down—or summer meal service revs up—celebrate the season with a little social media selfie action. You

can create frames or establish selfie stations with hashtags about summer fun. Consider giving a special showcase to this year's class of graduating seniors. Also, be sure to highlight your cafeteria team members, too, especially those who are headed into retirement. Flood your social media channels with happy photos as everyone celebrates the end of another great year!

IDEA

World Rainforest Day (June 22)

Need some enrichment activities for your summer meals program? Repurpose the coloring sheets from the WILD About School Lunch National School Lunch Week 2021 celebration, as many of the featured animals call the rainforest home. (Download these from www.schoolnutrition.org/nslw early while they're still available! Click on the "Toolkit & Handouts" link.) An internet search will reveal other easy activities for different grade levels that educate and entertain. Offer a meatless menu on this day to explain how even a minimal reduction in meat consumption can help preserve the rainforest.



JUNE 2022 National Camping Month

Monthlong Events

- » Caribbean American Heritage Month
- » Great Outdoors Month
- » Immigrant Heritage Month
- » LGBTQ Pride Month
- » National Camping Month
- » National Dairy Month
- » National Internet Safety Month
- » National Migraine & Headache Awareness Month
- » National Rivers Month
- » National Safety Month
- » National Soul Food Month
- » National Zoo and Aquarium Month
- » Turkey Lovers' Month

Single-Day Events

- » National Running Day (June 1)
- » World Milk Day (June 1)
- » Doughnut Day (June 3)
- » D-Day Anniversary (June 6)
- » World Food Safety Day (June 7)
- » World Oceans Day (June 8)
- » National Herbs and Spices Day (June 10)
- » National Kitchen Klutzes of America Day (June 13)
- » Flag Day (June 14)
- » National Mascot Day (June 17)
- » National Flip-Flop Day (June 17)
- » Juneteenth (June 19)
- » Father's Day (June 19)
- » First Day of Summer (June 21)
- » International Day of Yoga (June 21)
- » National Selfie Day (June 21)
- » World Giraffe Day (June 21)
- » World Rainforest Day (June 22)
- » National Hydration Day (June 23)
- » National Onion Day (June 27)

Weeklong/Multi-Day Events

- » National Fishing & Boating Week (June 4-12)
- » National Gardening Week (June 5-11)
- » National Little League Week (June 13-19)
- » National Men's Health Week (June 13-19)
- » U.S. Open Golf Tournament (June 16-19)
- » Pollinator Week (June 20-26)

JULY 2022 National Peach Month

Weeklong/Multi-Day Events

- » Comic-Con International (July 20-24)
- » Lumberjack World Championships (July 28-30)

Single-Day Events

- » Anniversary of the First U.S. Zoo (July 1)
- » Tour de France Begins (July 1)
- » World UFO Day (July 2)
- » Independence Day (July 4)
- » Fried Chicken Day (July 6)
- » Blueberry Muffin Day (July 11)
- » World Population Day (July 11)
- » Bastille Day (July 14)
- » Shark Awareness Day (July 14)
- » World Emoji Day (July 17)
- » Major League Baseball All-Star Game (July 19)
- » International Chess Day (June 20)
- » Moon Day (July 20)
- » National Mango Day (July 22)
- » National Carousel Day (July 25)
- » "The Lord of the Rings" Publishing Anniversary (July 29)
- » International Tiger Day (July 29)

Monthlong Events

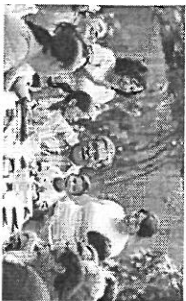
- » Family Reunion Month
- » National Baked Bean Month
- » National Blueberry Month
- » National Culinary Arts Month
- » National Grilling Month
- » National Hot Dog Month
- » National Ice Cream Month
- » National Parks and Recreation Month
- » National Peach Month
- » National Picnic Month
- » National Watermelon Month

JULY 2022

IDEA

Family Reunion Month

Bring together members of your school cafeteria family by inviting retired staffers who are still living in your community to volunteer at summer meal distribution sites and reconnect with students. Many children will be delighted to see favorite "lunch ladies and lunch dudes" who made a positive impression, and many retirees will welcome the special occasion to engage with their former customers. Make sure your guests don't feel like you're putting them to unpaid work, but are honoring their contributions to the department and recognizing the connections they had with students.

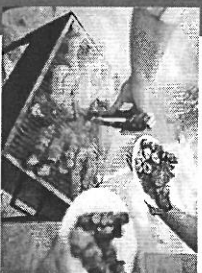


WHAT

National Grilling Month

July is a griller's favorite time of year and a time to showcase your skills and new recipes. If you have a portable grill, plan to bring it to various summer meal sites throughout the month. Remember important food safety protocols:

- » Keep grilling ingredients chilled until you are ready to put them on the grill. Letting them sit at room temperature or outdoors allows bacteria to grow.
- » Don't mix raw and cooked foods. Keep raw foods separate from each other. Use a clean dish for cooked meats.
- » Keep hot foods warm to at least 140°F until they are ready to be served. For salads and cold foods, keep them chilled on ice.



FACT

National Peach Month

Different organizations have declared National Peach Month to be in June, July and August, so you can celebrate this delicious fruit all summer long! Every year, U.S. growers—mostly in California, Georgia and South Carolina—harvest 1.9 billion pounds of peaches. A peach tree can produce up to 66 pounds of fruit each year for about 12 years. The fruit has three



different flesh colors: yellow (the most common in the U.S.), white and red. The fuzzy skin is perfectly edible, but if you or your students don't like the texture, simply switch to a nectarine instead—it's the same fruit!

WHAT

Comic-Con International (July 20-24)

Founded in 1970, this multi-genre entertainment convention is held annually in San Diego. Attendees revel in science fiction, fantasy, comics and popular culture in general—ranging from the mega-franchises of *Harry Potter*, *Star Wars* and superheroes to meta TV shows like *The Big Bang*



Theory to heightened dramas like *The Walking Dead*. Comic-Con is a chance for devoted followers to get together and share their enthusiasm in a positive, inclusive forum. The OG Comic-Con has been so successful that other iterations have spun off all across the country, with the New York Comic-Con eclipsing the San Diego original. Checking these out in-person or online is a great way to learn entertainment touchstones that resonate with your students.

IDEA

Tour de France Begins (July 1)

As the most famous bike race in the world gets underway, celebrate by giving all kids who show up at summer meal sites



on bikes and trikes a reflective safety sticker—and give all students an eraser with a bicycle picture imprinted or of the French flag. Do you have access to a stationary blender bike? Set it up at a site with high participation and challenge students and adults alike to "pedal up" a delicious smoothie beverage! You can also invite a local bike shop owner to offer a safety or maintenance clinic at the site.

IDEA

World UFO Day (July 2)

Grab your tinfoil hat because the aliens are taking over! On this fun day, go wild celebrating the last frontier—stars, planets, rocket ships and alien creatures are great decorations to don cafeteria walls. Give your students an

out-of-this-world menu with these options:

- » Flying Saucer Burgers
- » Planetary Pizza
- » Moon Rocks (aka Tater Tots)
- » Big Bang Beef & Broccoli
- » Close Encounter Corn Dogs
- » Extraterrestrial Enchiladas

FACT

World Emoji Day (July 17)

Students don't need an introduction to the wonderful world of emojis, but they might be interested in some fun facts!



» 95% of all internet users add emojis to their communications.

» More than 10 billion emojis are sent every day.

» As of September 2021, there are 3,633 emojis, which includes sequences for gender and skin tone.

» New emojis introduced in 2021 included Heart on Fire and Face in Clouds.

» The "Most 2021 Emoji" selected in a worldwide Twitter vote was the syringe emoji.

» Throughout the summer, engage kids in the World Emoji Awards vote at <https://worldemojiawards.com> before the winners are announced on July 17.

WHAT

National Mango Day (July 22)

While mangos are too difficult and/or expensive for most school meal operations to menu on a regular basis, you can use them for special occasions, treats and nutrition education activities. The mango was first grown in India more than 5,000 years ago. Today, it's popular all across the globe. In many Latin American countries, mango on a stick, with the skin peeled back is sold by street vendors. You can try serving the versatile mango in smoothies, salads, salsas, chutneys, desserts or plain as a sweet and juicy snack! Visit www.mango.org for recipes.

