

TONKA FRESH

A Monthly Newsletter from Minnetonka Nutrition Services

Welcome to Tonka Fresh, the official newsletter of Minnetonka Nutrition Services! This new monthly newsletter will showcase what we do, how we do it, why we do what we do, and to offer families a behind-the-scenes look at our program so that you are informed about the meals students are offered through our district.

Did you know that many of the foods we serve in our school meals are grown and produced locally? In this first edition of Tonka Fresh, we will showcase some of the local produce available to students every day and highlight a new partnership that began this fall.



Fresh Produce is Top of Mind in District Meal Planning

Minnetonka Nutrition Services considers fresh, local produce first when sourcing products for student meals. Our fresh produce is provided locally by BIX Produce, a company which gathers fresh fruits and vegetables from over 30 local farmers, within an average of 60 miles of the Twin Cities.

This fall, Minnetonka Nutrition Services conducted surveys with students to ensure their voices were heard regarding the fruits and vegetables they would like to see more of during school meals. A few new items that have been added so far include roasted vegetable blends, edamame and guacamole. Students can also look forward to upcoming taste tests, where they will be able to try new fresh produce during lunch.

Local Partner Spotlight: Suburban Farm Co-Op and Hydroponically-Grown Lettuce



This fall, Minnetonka Nutrition Services formed a partnership with Suburban Farm Co-Op in St. Louis Park. Students selecting a Chef Salad entree at lunch get an extra crunch with hydroponically-grown lettuce. “Our produce is grown hydroponically indoors in water instead of in soil,” shared Mary Nieting, Agricultural Director for Suburban Farm Co-Op. “This allows us to grow locally and year-round, which is quite the feat given the harsh Minnesota climate. It also means we do not have to use any pesticides in our growing operations, while also using organic fertilizers. We recapture the water at the end of the cycle and use it to water our indoor flower operation.”

Suburban Farm Co-Op's mission is to provide customers with the freshest, highest-quality produce. "We're committed to sustainable farming practices that protect our land for future generations," said Nieting. "We believe that local agriculture builds stronger and healthier communities."

Students can keep their eyes peeled for this salad option on their school's lunch menu!

Stay Connected! Follow @TonkaFresh on Instagram

Join us on Instagram to peek behind the scenes and see what goes into making Minnetonka Nutrition Services. Follow [@TonkaFresh](#) for updates on new menu items, vendor spotlights, Q&As and more!

Learn more by visiting the updated Minnetonka Nutrition Services website:

minnetonkaschools.org/nutrition