The Fall Issue 2025

The Lunch Line Lowdown

Your quarterly guide to see what's cookin' at Madison Food Service Department!







INSIDE, WE ALSO TALK ABOUT:

Quarterly Focuses

Healthy Habits

NSLP Week

New Menu Highlights

Manager Spotlight

Taste Testing

Arizona Agriculture

Looking Ahead

Passion Projects

Madison Food & Nutrition

Website

Madison's Food & Nutrition services department is dedicated to ensuring all students have access to healthy meals to help them focus on learning during the school day. All meals include healthy grains, lean proteins, a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, and choice of nonfat white or flavored milk. Please see our School Meal Menus page for more information on our selection of school meals, as well as breakfast serving times for each school.

Follow Food Services on Social Media
Madison's Food & Nutrition Services is now on social media! Follow us for updated news, photos, and wellness tips:

Facebook: @MadisonAZFoodServices

Instagram: @MadisonAZ_FS

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Quarterly Nutrition Education Topics

Madison believes nutrition plays a key role in health and wellness. That's why our Food & Nutrition Services team is introducing quarterly nutrition focus projects; engaging, age appropriate themes designed to help students learn about health and wellness in fun, meaningful ways. Each quarter highlights a different topic, such as back-to-school healthy habits, Arizona agriculture, staying healthy during cold and flu season, and gut microbiome health, to connect lunchroom learning with real life choices. Through these initiatives, we're empowering students to make informed decisions about the foods they eat and inspiring a culture of wellness across our schools.



Join us this quarter as we explore Arizona agriculture and celebrate all the amazing crops grown right here in our state! From fresh citrus and leafy greens to cotton, dairy and dates, we'll discover how local farming helps nourish our communities and supports a healthy planet.

Healthy Habits Start at Home: Set the Stage for a Great School Year!

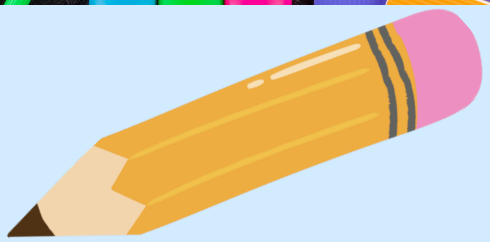


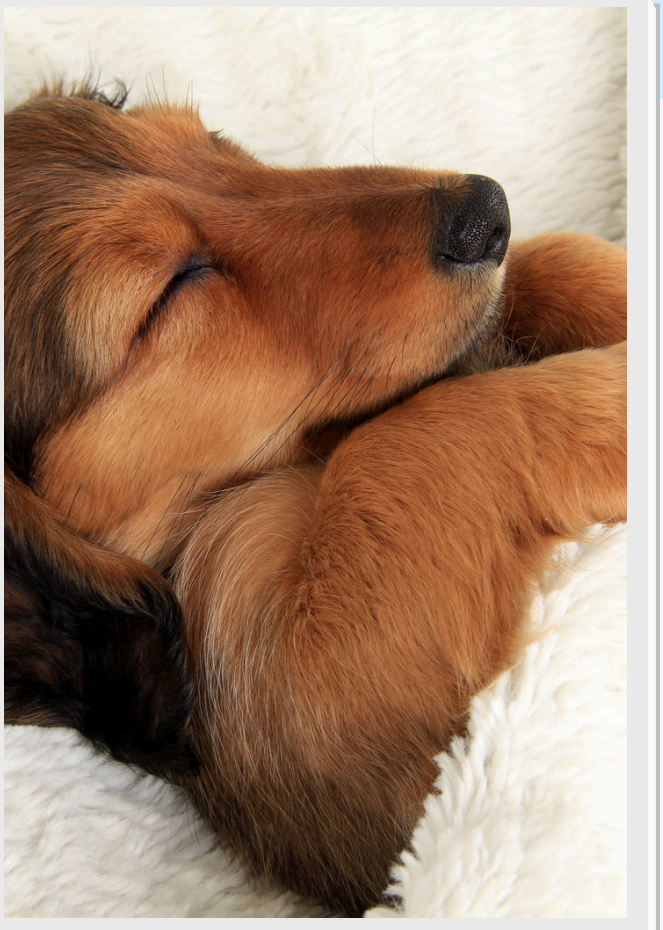
A new school year means new routines, and there's no better time to build healthy habits that help kids feel their best, stay focused, and succeed in the classroom. From powering up with a balanced breakfast to getting enough zzz's, small changes at home can make a big difference at school. Let's dive into some simple (and doable!) ways to start the year strong!

1. Get Back on a Sleep Schedule

Why it matters: Kids need 9–12 hours of sleep (depending on age) for focus, memory, and mood.
Tips:

- Wind down 30–60 minutes before bed by turning off screens and doing a quiet activity.
- Keep bedtime and wake-up times consistent, even on weekends.





Healthy Habits Start at Home!

2. Eat a Balanced Breakfast

Why it matters: A healthy breakfast helps with attention, energy, and performance.
Tips:

- Join us at Madison for breakfast daily!
- Aim for protein + fiber (ex. eggs and toast, Greek yogurt and fruit, nut butter and banana).
- Set up a “grab-and-go” breakfast station with healthy options.
- Practice a morning routine that includes enough time to eat.





3. Practice Healthy Hydration

Why it matters: Staying hydrated helps with focus, digestion, and energy levels.
Tips:

- Start the day with a glass of water.
- Use a reusable water bottle and decorate it to make it fun.
- Choose water before sugary drinks. You can flavor water with fruit slices or herbs if needed.
- Include more fruit, vegetables, and milk as they are also sources of hydration.

Healthy Habits Start at Home!

4. Move and Stretch Every Day

Why it matters: Physical activity improves mood, concentration, and sleep quality.
Tips:

- Take a family walk, bike ride, or do a dance break.
- Try yoga or stretching together in the morning or evening.
- Limit screen time and encourage active play outdoors.





5. Involve Your Kids in Dinner Prep

Why it matters: Kids are more likely to eat healthy foods when they help choose or prepare them.
Tips:

- Let kids pick one fruit, veggie, or protein for the week.
- Practice creating a balanced plate together.
- Talk about “everyday foods” vs. “sometimes foods.”
- Involve them in the preparation of the meal.

National School Lunch Week!

October 13th -17th, 2026

This week, we celebrated our amazing Food & Nutrition Services team for serving up healthy, balanced meals every day!



ACTION FOR HEALTHY KIDS

Madison is proud to be an award-winning food service program. Madison has been awarded **Action for Healthy Kids** USDA awards in Innovation in Nutrition Education and Innovation in preparation of school meals. All of our lunch rooms received the Gold Smarter Lunch Room Status. Madison also receives multiple recognitions from the ADE annually.



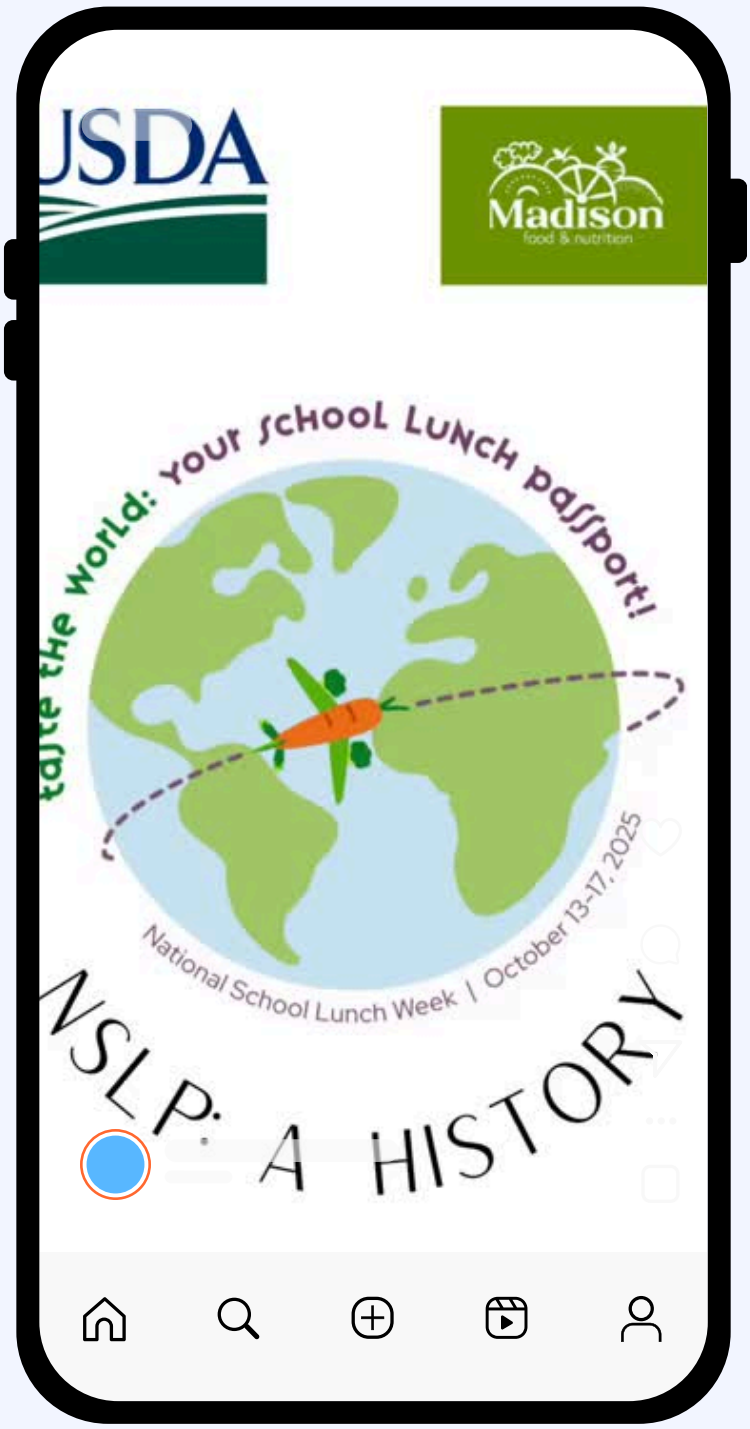
BBQ Ranch Chicken Salad

Ingredients: Chicken breast, romaine lettuce, roasted corn, black beans, tomatoes, red onion, tortilla chips, and BBQ ranch dressing.

National School Lunch Week!

October 13th -17th, 2026

Click the video or follow the link to learn about the history of the national school lunch program



Did you know the National School Lunch Program started as a response to WWII? From feeding soldiers to feeding students, it's a story of nutrition, policy, and progress. Let's celebrate the meals that fuel young minds every day!

Fresh Flavors Ahead! New Menu Highlights for a Nourishing New Year

Fall 2025

This school year, we're cooking up something special! Get ready to see some exciting new creations on our breakfast and lunch menus. Think crave worthy dishes, colorful sides, and bold flavors that'll have your student asking, "What's for lunch?" in the best way.

To kick things off, we're spotlighting brand new menu items we think your kids... and their taste buds will love!

Lunch gets a flavorful twist with this Asian inspired noodle bowl! Featuring 51% whole grain ramen, tender teriyaki glazed beef, and vibrant steamed broccoli, this dish brings the umami while packing in the nutrients. We predict this one will become a school lunch superstar!



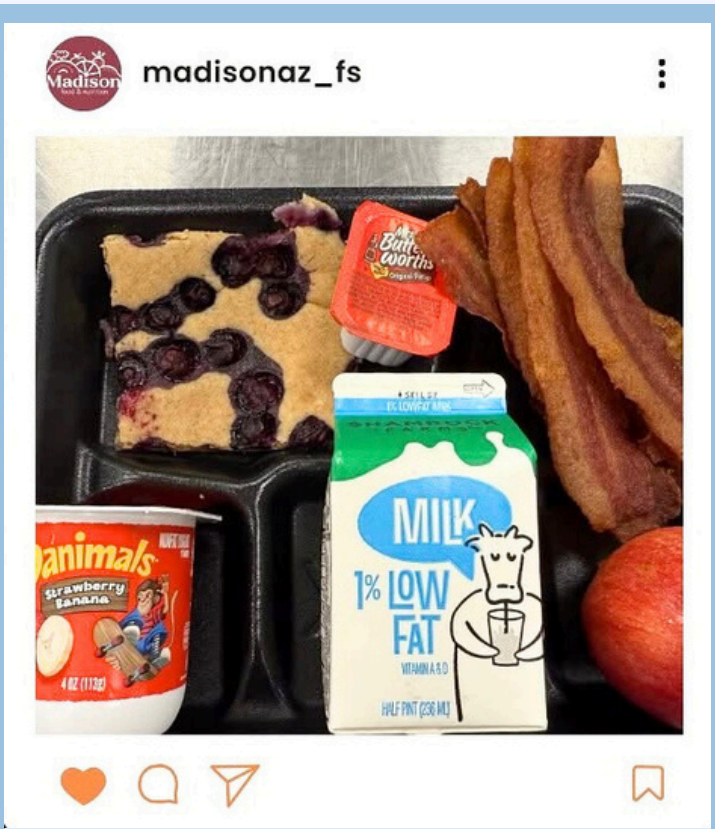
Teriyaki Beef & Broccoli Noodle Bowl

Fun Food Fact: What's Umami?

Umami (pronounced "oo-MAH-mee") is known as the fifth taste, alongside sweet, salty, sour, and bitter. It's that deep, savory flavor found in foods like soy sauce, mushrooms, and yes, teriyaki beef! It adds a "wow" to your taste buds and makes meals extra satisfying.

Whether your student's discovering a new favorite or sticking to their go-to, we're here to make every lunch delicious and nourishing. Remind them it's always okay to try something new, if it's not their thing, we're happy to offer a swap.

Mornings just got a whole lot brighter! These fluffy pancakes are made with whole wheat flour, naturally sweetened with honey and applesauce, and bursting with juicy blueberries for a boost of antioxidants. A perfect balance of wholesome and delicious breakfast just might become their favorite part of the day.



Blueberry Sheet Pan Pancakes



Philly Cheesesteaks!

Get ready to bring the flavor. Our brand new Philly Cheesesteak is sizzling onto the school lunch lineup!

Juicy beef, melted cheese, and warm grilled peppers all packed into a soft roll, it's the perfect combo of hearty and delicious.

Did you know?

Myth: Schools serve fried, greasy food.

Fact: While we may offer pizza, chicken nuggets, and fries. All our food is baked and never fried. It is whole grain-rich, low in sodium, low in saturated fats, and served with fruits and veggies.

Importance of Trying New Foods!

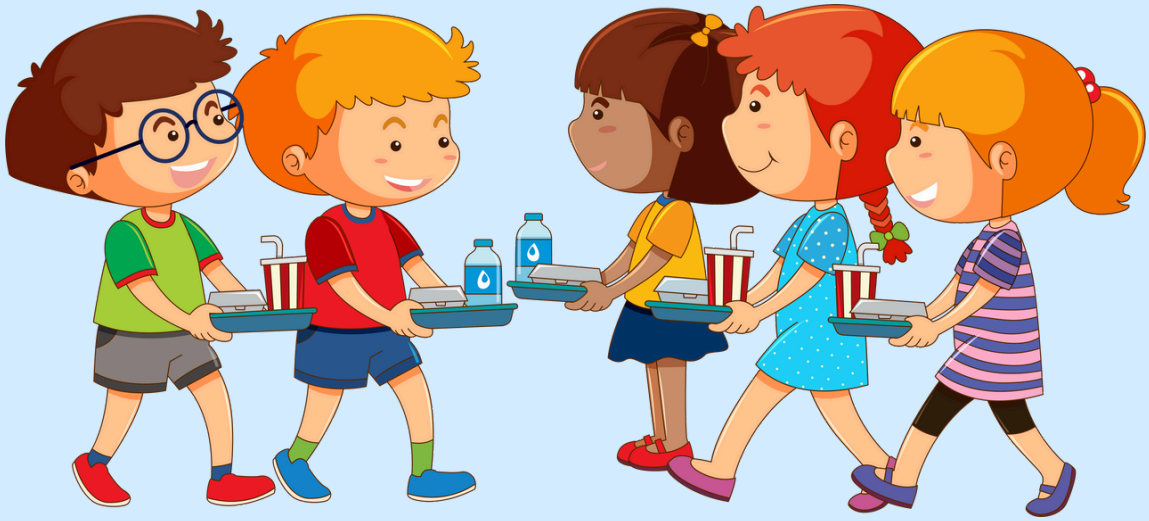
Trying new foods can be an exciting adventure! Kids are sometimes hesitant to try something unfamiliar, but research shows that it can take 8 to 10 tries before they really decide if they like a new food.

That's why it's important to keep offering new menu items in a fun, no pressure way. Even if something isn't a hit at first, persistence and positive role models can make a big difference. These new dishes don't just taste great, they can also introduce students to new cultures, flavors, and ideas they can share with their families at home.

With scratch-made recipes using fresh, minimally processed ingredients, students get more nutritious meals that help them feel energized and focused. Who knows? They might even discover a new healthy favorite that beats the usual heat-and-serve options—and gives their brains a boost!

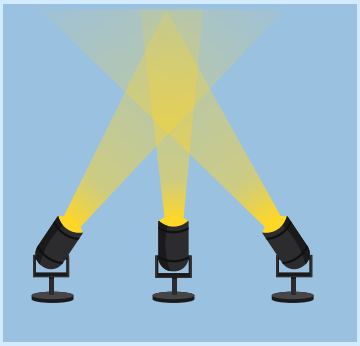
Madison School District is motivated to build curious and adventurous eaters!





Food Service Manager Spotlight!

Say hello to Ms. Nohemi!





Food service manager at Madison Simis Elementary School

Q: How long have you worked at Madison School District?

A: “I’ve been working for the Madison School District for 6 years.”

Q: What is your favorite part of what you do?

A: “My favorite part of what I do is when I see students get excited about the food we prepare for them and seeing their smiling faces daily.”

Q: If you could give any advice to students, what would it be?

A: “If I could give students advice, it would be to appreciate and respect their parents and teachers because these are the adults who truly want the best for them.”

Q: What is your favorite menu item or entree you serve?

A: “My favorite menu items are nachos, cheeseburgers, and chicken sandwiches.”

Q: What is your dream future destination to travel to or your favorite place you have visited?

A: My future dream destination is Europe. I visited New Orleans a couple of weeks ago during the fall break. New Orleans is a beautiful city with so much history and I loved it.

Taste Testing Adventures!

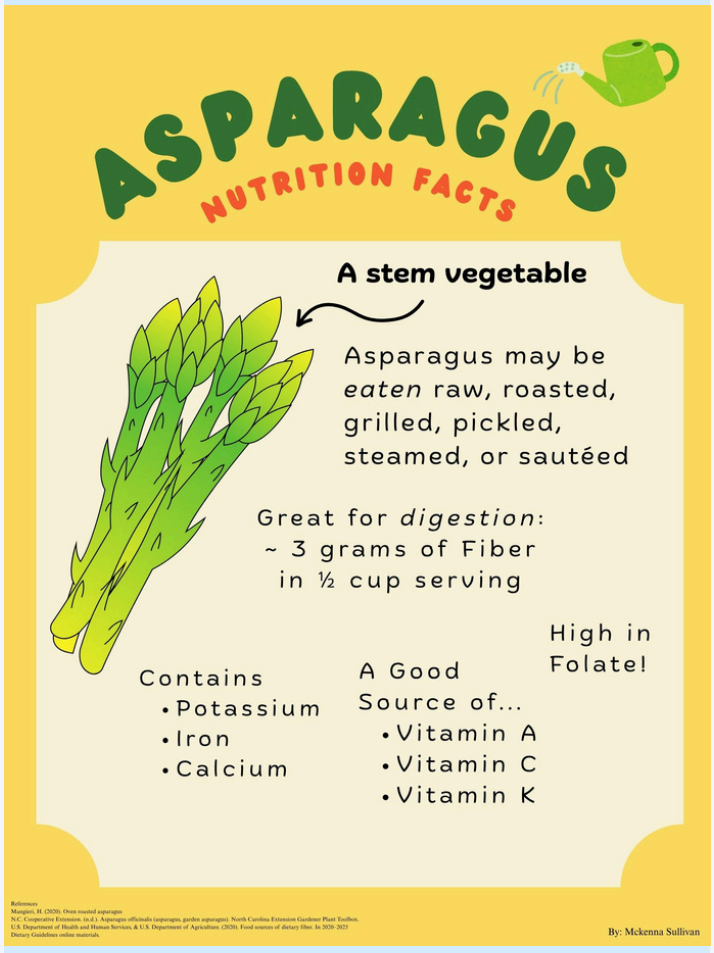


This quarter, our elementary students got brave with their taste buds and tried many new food items! Let's highlight some of them!

Fresh Roasted Asparagus

We're thrilled to report that it was a big hit, with 87% of students giving it a thumbs-up!

The taste test was all about exploring new veggies in a fun, no-pressure way. Students discovered that asparagus can be crunchy, flavorful, and even a little sweet when prepared just right. Thanks to everyone who participated and made the event such a success. Our young food explorers are proving that trying new things can be delicious!





Taste Testing Adventures!



Chilaquiles Taste Test

Our middle schoolers took their taste buds on a trip this week with a chilaquiles taste test at lunch! Students sampled the flavorful dish and voted with a thumbs up or thumbs down. Many shared their thoughts in a quick optional survey.

The results are in, and they're delicious: 90% of students said "yes!" to seeing chilaquiles on the school menu. We loved seeing so many students try something new and enjoy this tasty, scratch-made recipe inspired by traditional Mexican flavors. Big thanks to everyone who participated, your feedback helps shape the future of our lunch menu!

90% of middle school students gave a thumbs up!



Mckenna, our Dietetic intern from ASU, who is a master's student studying to be a registered dietitian, developed the recipe for the students!

Check out the flyer and survey on the next page!

New Breakfast Entree!

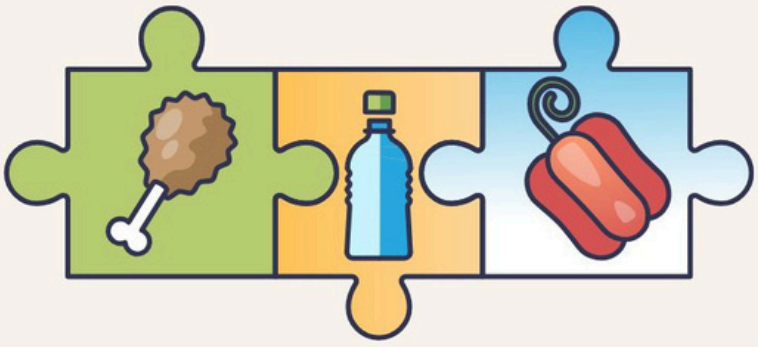
CHILAQUILES

(chee-lah-kee-lehs)

INGREDIENTS: CRUNCHY TORTILLA CHIPS, CHEESE, EGGS, AND SALSA

A BALANCED BREAKFAST!

- Protein = 14 grams per serving!
- Filled with fiber, grains, vitamin A, calcium, potassium, and flavor!





LEGACY OF CHILAQUILES

A Mexican dish with roots in the Aztec Nahuatl culture. Which is now Central Mexico.



Nahuatl language translation means

"CHILIS AND GREENS"



Chilaquiles were created as a way to use leftover tortillas, helping to reduce food waste.

REGIONAL DIVERSITY:

Today, there are a wide variety of Chilaquiles preparations. Additional ingredients and salsas are unique to preferred family recipes and/or regions!



References:
Chilatruck. (2016) *Chilaquiles: History & Tradition.*, Garcia, J., (n.d.) Traditional mexican Green Chilaquiles Dish, Amigo Foods.

Madison food & nutrition

BREAKFAST SURVEY

What is your grade level?

Grade Level: ☐ 5th ☐ 6th ☐ 7th ☐ 8th ☐ Prefer Not to Answer

INSTRUCTIONS:

Read each questions and check off the corresponding rating scale. There is no right or wrong answer :)

QUESTIONS:	RATING SCALE:
Have you heard of Chilaquiles before?	Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure ☐
Have you eaten Chilaquiles before?	Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure ☐
Did the chilaquiles look appetizing?	Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure ☐
Rate the spice level of the Chilaquiles.	Not Spicy Enough ☐ Just Right ☐ Too Spicy ☐
Rate this recipe on a scale of... 1= yuck! to 5 = yum!	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐
Would you eat this recipe again?	Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure ☐
Do you generally enjoy Mexican food? For example, tacos, enchiladas, nachos.	Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure ☐

What would you change about the breakfast, if any?

Arizona Agriculture

Topics:

- Fall harvest
- The Five C's of Arizona

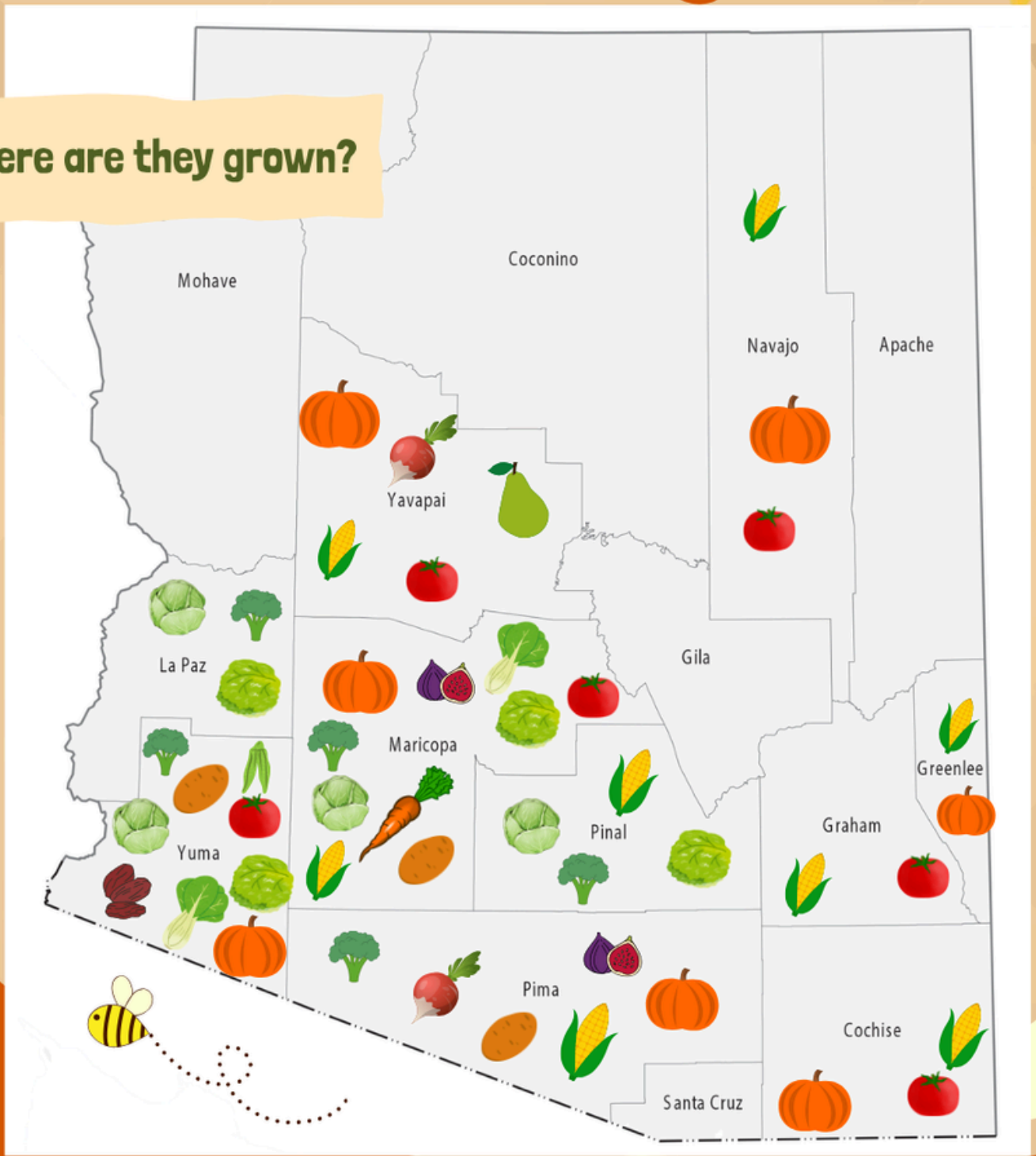




Arizona Agriculture

Fall Fruits & Vegetables

Where are they grown?

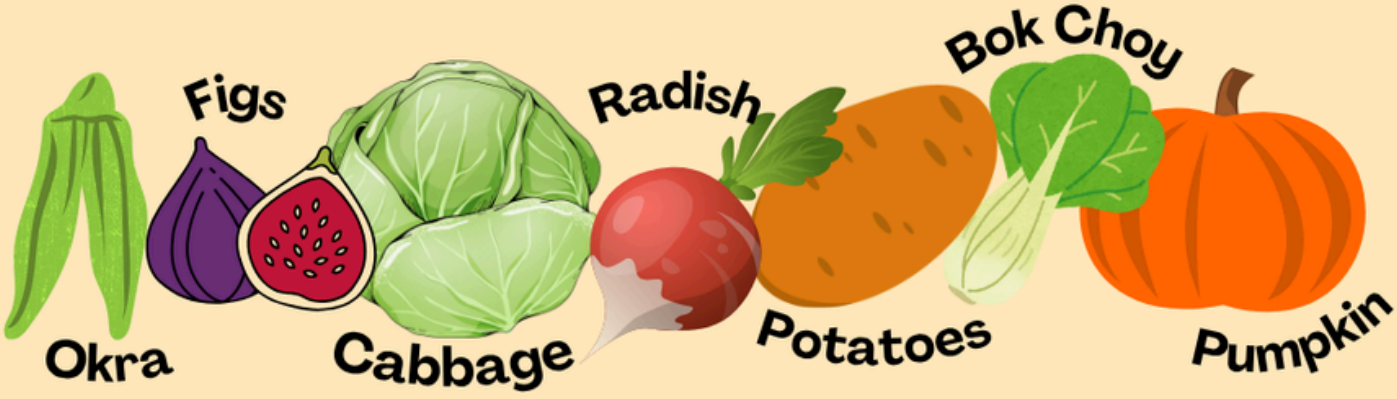


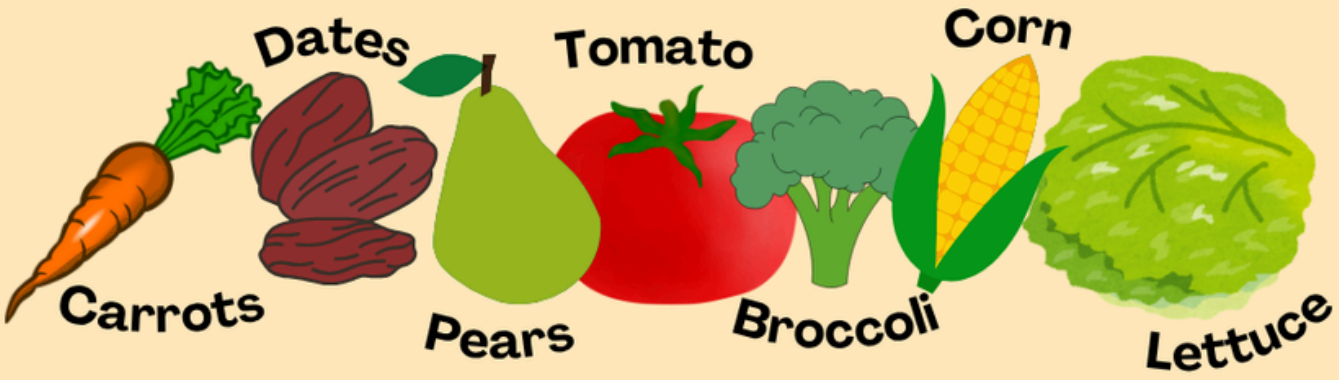
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Arizona Fall Harvest





Remember to thank Arizona bees!



- Bees can visit 5,000 flowers in a single day when collecting pollen.
- Pollen is used to help grow healthy fruits and vegetables.
- 75% of the fruits and vegetables we eat require pollination!

Resources Agriculture in the Classroom Arizona Farm Bureau. https://www.azfb.org/agriculture-in-the-classroom/Resources., Arizona Department of Agriculture. https://agriculture.az.gov/.

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Arizona
Agriculture

The Five Cs of Arizona



About Arizona

Agriculture in Arizona is unique and ever-changing. Early on in the development of Arizona, there were five main areas that drove the economy since the state was recognized in 1912.

These areas are copper, cotton, cattle, citrus, and climate. Over 100 years have passed, and although these five Cs are less prevalent, they are critical to the history, culture, and significance of Arizona as the 48th state in the United States of America!

What are the Five Cs?

1. Cattle
2. Copper
3. Cotton
4. Citrus
5. Climate







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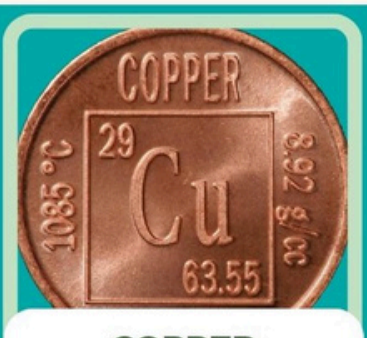
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CATTLE



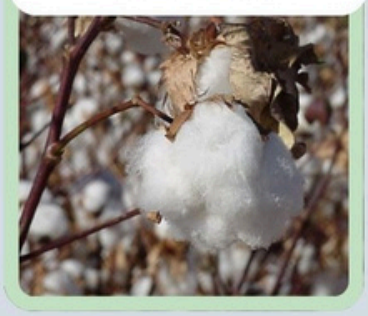
Cattle and calves are one of Arizona's most valued farm products. There are over 7,000 farms or ranches in the state with cattle. Arizona raises both dairy and beef cattle . Arizona's ranches produce enough beef to feed over 4.6 million Americans each year. Not only do cattle provide us with milk and beef, but there are many by-products of cattle, too. For example, 99% of the cattle are processed and include the production of marshmallows, jello, crayons, baseballs, piano keys, and more.

Arizona is known as the "Copper State" due to its significant impact on the copper mining field. Copper cannot be grown; it must be mined from the earth! Without copper, society would not have advanced as it has today. For example, there would be no electricity without copper! You can visit Copper Queen Mine tour in Bisbee, Gold King Mine and Ghost Town in Jerome and Morenci Mine, in Morenci, Arizona!



COPPER

COTTON



Goodyear was the birthplace of cotton farming in Arizona. There were 230,000 acres of cotton in Arizona by 1920. Shortly, after WWII, the cotton boom quieted down and now Arizona has 98,000 acres of cotton, which is known as the cotton belt. In 2021, over 300,00,000 pound bales of cotton were produced across the state. You can visit Caywood Farms in Casa Grande for an insightful tour and an opportunity to pick your very own Arizona cotton.

Phoenix soil began growing citrus in 1889 when W.J. Murphy planted experimental trees. In one year, over 150,000 citrus trees were growing in 1,500 acres in Phoenix. The climate of Arizona allowed for citrus to be prosperous to sell to eastern states. At the peak of production there was 80,000 acres of land producing citrus. Lemons are still the most plentiful citrus in Arizona as the 2nd largest producer. You can visit Arizona citrus locations at Justice Brothers Ranch in Waddell, Hagen Farms in Queen Creek, and Cotton Lane Citrus in Surprise



CITRUS

CLIMATE



Arizona's climate patterns are a unique feature for agricultural benefit. It is a biologically diverse state with six different biomes (desert, grassland, chaparral, woodland, forest, and tundra). The dry semi-arid climate and an 8-inches of rain per year in the agriculture area of Arizona allows for frequent harvesting each month. Farmers relay on irrigation systems programed for the exact amount of water each crop may need. The ability to relay on irrigation rather than weather for water allows for unexpected storms to be less of a factor in Arizona agriculture.

Looking Ahead!

Quarterly Focuses

Healthy Habits for Back to School



Healthy Habits for Back to School

Staying Healthy During Cold and Flu Season

Gut Microbiome Health

Food Service Passion Projects:

This year, our Food & Nutrition Services team is taking innovation to the next level with site-based passion projects! Each of our food service managers has chosen a unique project focused on improving their cafeteria, supporting student wellness, or enhancing the overall dining experience. From sustainability efforts to creative menu ideas, these projects showcase our team's dedication to making a positive impact in Madison schools. Read about all of the exciting projects in progress below!

Madison #1:

Provide engaging activities to students to increase involvement in nutrition choices.





Camelview:

Ensure students have the best possible experiences when students dine with us in our cafeteria.

Simis & Heights:

Sustainability! These two sites are kicking off their passion in waste reduction by utilizing compostable trays during service!





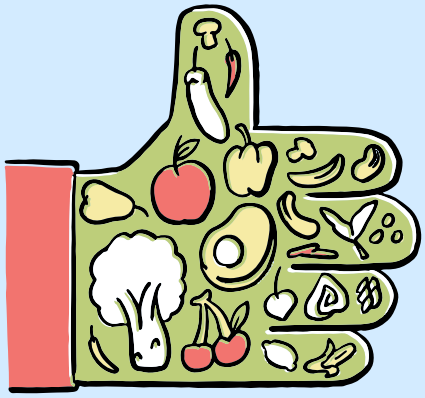
Rose Lane:

Foster curiosity and acceptability of new foods with Rose Lane preschool students through fun and engaging activities

Park:

Utilize a culinary Zoom! They will provide nutrition education through virtual cooking classes and resources to increase nutrition education





Madison Traditional Academy:

Education! Increase nutrition knowledge through various activities.

Meadows:

Expand student's pallets to different tastes and textures through culturally diverse foods.



Thats a wrap on
The Lunch Line Lowdown!

Remember to check-out our socials and Website

Facebook: @MadisonAZFoodServices

Instagram: @MadisonAZ_FS