

SCHOOL MEALS GET A *Fresh* LOOK



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NOTE TO PARENTS

When your child lines up for lunch this year they may see some changes that you, as a parent, can appreciate. Since 2004, Texas has been **ahead of the curve** in exceeding federal nutrition standards, and our schools will lead the way as they raise the bar for school meals, following new federal regulations. We will all experience some challenges while adjusting to the new federal mandates. Please know that the Texas Department of Agriculture will serve as an advocate for reasonable interpretation of the law and is here to support schools and parents through this transition.

Many Texas schools will make only minor adjustments as they are well poised to meet new requirements for **more fruits, vegetables and whole grains**, while others will make bigger changes to their menus. It's no secret that healthy lifestyles start with good nutrition, and all these school meals will offer the **fuel children need to succeed**. One thing is clear: healthy food is in! Lend your support by visiting the school cafeteria and enjoy these meals firsthand.



HEALTHY MEALS MEAN HEALTHY MINDS

The Texas Department of Agriculture is committed to ensuring children learn to make healthy choices for a lifetime. Our goal is to help every young Texan build a bridge to success using the **3E's of Healthy Living** —



Education



Exercise



Eating Right

BUILDING HEALTHY HABITS

HOME CONNECTION

- Put fruits and vegetables out at snack time
- Try whole grain pastas, cereals, tortillas or bread
- Offer fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk
- Season food with herbs for salt-free flavor
- Grill, broil or bake lean meat

SCHOOL CONNECTION

- Read the cafeteria menu each week
- Encourage your child to try new foods at school
- Reach out to your school nutrition director
- Make a school lunch date with your child
- Talk to your children about choosing healthy foods at school and at home

To learn more please contact your district's school nutrition director or visit www.SquareMeals.org.

GOOD EATS

YOUR CHILDREN'S MEALS MAY LOOK AND TASTE DIFFERENT THIS YEAR

As of July 1, 2012, meals that are part of the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program are required to meet new nutrition standards established by the federal government.

Your school nutrition professionals will develop menus that meet the new regulations by including the healthy foods required and limiting things like trans fats and sodium. When children are offered these new menu items, they will continue to see balanced meals that are appealing and appetizing like the one below. For more on how the new nutrition standards have changed school meals, reach out to your school nutrition director or visit www.SquareMeals.org to learn more.

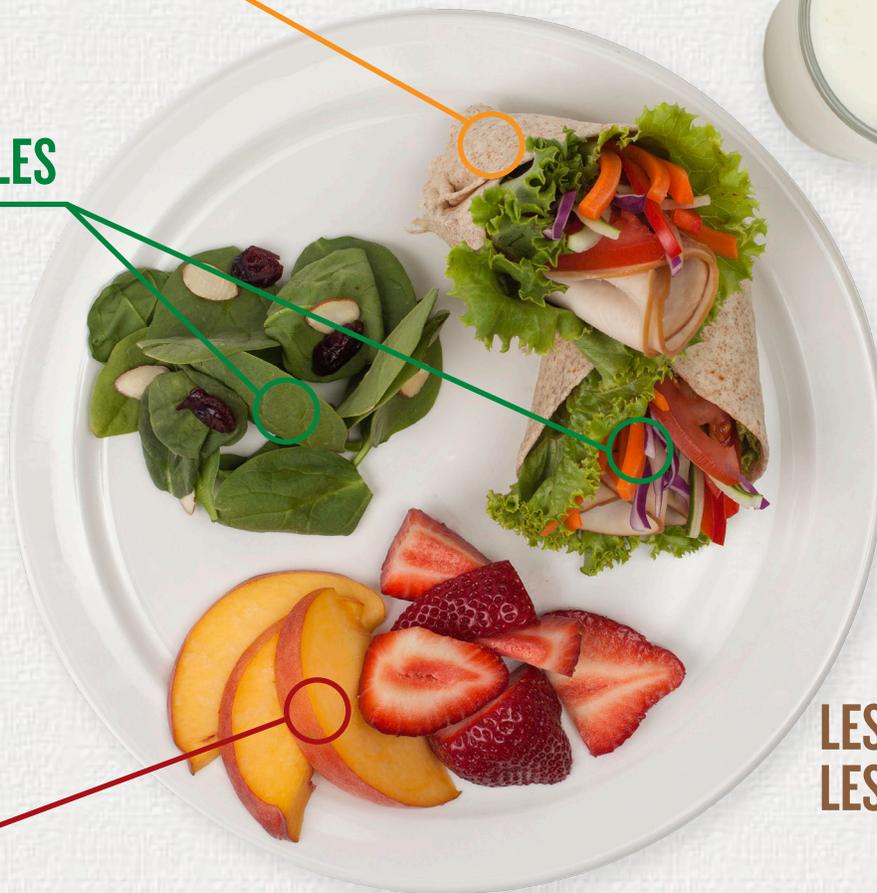
MORE WHOLE GRAINS

FAT-FREE/LOW-FAT (1%) MILK

MORE VEGETABLES

MORE FRUITS

**LESS TRANS FAT
LESS SODIUM**



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