

## Maine 2006 3-A-Day of Dairy Grant Final Report

Name of Organization: Noble Middle School

Address: 46 Cranberry Meadow Road, Berwick, Maine

Contact Person: Mrs. Pamela Burnham

Title: FACS 7th Grade Teacher

Target Audience for Project: all 7th grade students in Family and Consumer Science (FACS classes)

### Description of Project

The goal of the project was to have middle school students utilize information about dairy foods from their Family and Consumer Science (FCS) classes in making food choices at home and school. Two hundred and fifty 7<sup>th</sup> graders from Noble Middle School's FCS classes participated throughout the year over the course of three, twelve-week trimesters.

A pre-and post-assessment tool was used to find out prior knowledge of nutrition, dairy, calcium and its affects on the body. Students prepared and advocated for healthier diets by learning about the importance of dairy in the diet and prepared and ate healthy dairy snacks daily.

They designed a Dairy Diary to keep track of their intake on a daily basis. The diary also included dairy questions of the day, a dairy tracker and recipes used in class. The diary lent itself to the school's focus on literacy for the year.

FACS students advocated by designing a "Morning Nutrition Message" encouraging all students to try the dairy item of the day. Students helped serve and set up a table for the disbursement of the dairy samples to students in the café each week.

FACS students presented information learned and data gathered at the completion of their 12-week class.

### Education/Behavioral Objectives

The Dairy Diary, Pre-and Post-tests, and daily snacks proved to be very worthwhile for the students' knowledge of dietary calcium and its importance for bone health through life. When we started the first day of the pre-test, they were each given a promotional "Got Milk" pencil with which to take the 10 T/F questions and then 3 multiple choice about mg. of calcium in foods. The Literacy piece flowed over into the lessons I needed to prepare for "Reading Across the Curriculum" each day for 25 minutes. We would look at definitions, empathy when it came to allergies, problem solving strategies, brainstorming ways to get protein if you are a vegetarian, and reading food labels for understanding. In FACS class those same terms were used on the cinder block wall highlighting "vocabulary words" that would trigger their prior knowledge.

In using the Dairy Diary each day, rewards were given to students weekly for effort on a particular question of the day, participation above and beyond, highest grade on nutrition quiz or cooking test, fullness of an explanation to the focus for the day which peaked their curiosity. Items were given such as 3-A-Day magnets and shopping list pads, wipe-off 3-A-Day trackers, change purses or lunch tote with 3-A-Day logo, 16 oz. tumblers and the biggest hit, T-shirts in various colors and sizes with "got Milk" black, brown, white, or cows

skateboarding etc. A few baseball caps and aprons of the 3-A-Day logo were also used by staff and principals helping to serve those special days.

As a culmination of the FACS classes in the 7th grade I arranged for a singer/entertainer for the last full day of school. At lunch all students received a low-fat ice cream treat. Then we had a "Julie and Brownie" song, dance and audience participation performance that was about good food choices, including 3-A-Day of Dairy, how diet and exercise affect health, and wellness in general. One song, "I love cheese" came on and the staff helped me circulate to pass out low-fat string cheese sticks to all kids. At the end of the performance, guidance chosen random names of 10 girls and boys got 3-A-Day frisbees, and 10 more girls and boys got to choose a t-shirt. All students went back to their team room to then get a packet with a pedometer and instruction booklet promoting health through walking for life. They were all imprinted with Noble Middle School, June 2007 Walking to Wellness, in FACS and for LIFE! The 8th graders who were out of the building on their promotion "Boat trip" were sent off with imprinted bookmarks and 4 oz. Trix yogurts as part of snacks and lunch that was provided by me and the PTSA. Feedback from both events was great! All loved the Julie and Brownie show and I highly recommend as they also say they can change the program for each audience and have done groups from K to 7th grade.

#### Barriers/Challenges

The first barrier I encountered was to find a place to take kids on a field trip to enhance their education about dairy. I contacted all the dairies in Maine: Hood doesn't do tours since 9/11 attacks, Oakhurst was under remodeling until spring, Smiling Hill Farm really doesn't have the working dairy part anymore, Stoneyfield Farms of Londonderry, NH was also under renovations. I thought when a class group was going on a field trip to Gray Animal Farm I would ask them to take a side trip on the way. Dates were hard to secure, and then the time frame the team had to work with wouldn't allow an extra 45 min. to an hour it would take to go to Pineland Farms in New Gloucester, ME. So, with most of them not happening via the team system to meet all of my students the end of the year assembly was the idea I had to overcome that challenge.

Some of the recipes used were in the original booklet pages of the Dairy Diary and others were printed at the request of the students but an official "cookbook" was not completed due to time constraints but has been added to a folder for future use.

#### Results/Outcomes

When I look at the description of the project I see that we completed 6 of the 8 items fully (pg. 3 of original proposal). The Shamrock Computer System for point of sale purchase was changed at the end other school year, so data were not available. We were looking to track the a la carte sales of some items that were used or mentioned in FACS to see if it had any bearing on the students' purchases. We tried to look for yogurt, cheese stick, 10 oz. milks or extra milks during lunches. The kitchen manager, Sheila mentioned in conversation that kids liked the larger milks. She saw increases on the days that announcements told them that they were part of lunch that day, and others would buy two or more of them.

The "3-A-Day Thursday" weekly messages were well received over the intercom by students each week emphasizing an important fact about calcium, osteoporosis, choices of low fat dairy products, and the benefits to hair, teeth, nails and more. Students seemed to ask questions in class about the announcement and/or volunteer to do the next one as well! They were given a sticker or pencil for their efforts in helping to advocate the dairy message.

The "Dairy Diary" that students put together and decorated with contact paper and fuzzy moo cow spots was a highlight each day to the program. They looked forward to the topic or question of the day, and made entries each day in class. They also filled out the date above

the week box and started to write-in the snack we had to help them remember how they were feeling. Each student was asked to look in other pages of the booklet to find out how many mg. of calcium the snack had, and then they chose a 1,2, or 3 as to how they felt and wrote in the proper spaces. I felt that this was a good way to show them whether or not there was a link between what they were ingesting and how their body was feeling. The questions and focus of the day were helped by issues in the news such as the outbreak of e. coli and the spinach of California and then the later scare of peanut butter in Wal-mart.

The wide variety of dairy snacks such as: smoothies with milk, ice-cream, and frozen yogurt, cheesy biscuits, types of cheese and crackers, low-fat cheese sticks, fruit kabobs with yogurt dip, nacho chips with homemade mozzarella cheese including low-fat and whole for comparison, apple dip of sour cream and brown sugar, english muffin pizza snacks, pudding with low-fat milk, mini carrots and onion dip, pretzel rods wrapped with swiss cheese, low-fat milk and animal crackers, or teddy grahams, and 4 oz. Trix yogurts used left me with very few fussy eaters and/or allergy problems.

I think the Dairy Diary can be replicated easily by using less pages and simplifying the information for the appropriate ages. The pre-and post-test was easy to score and administer so I could see the results in % increases of number of answers correct. I would take out the multiple-choice for a younger age and use pictures of the food items or glasses of milk for example. Student messages for 3-A-Day Thursday could be adapted as well for the reading level, but still could be announced from the school offices and kids really liked being involved. Graphs, numbers, percentages, and bar charts also helped visualize how we were doing and can be easily added to math lessons of the day. Using the My Food Pyramid.gov--Pyramid Tracker on line for the Diet Calculations tended to be cumbersome when looking for food items on the program. The student had to then go to another screen and fill in the amount of portion and how many they had and some could not figure out how many ounces they had eaten or quantify their food. I would look to another program or see what else is out there to work with.

Budget Recap: I have attached a sheet with the information of dated expenditures and checks paid out to vendors etc. Balance sheet is final numbers and all looks to be correct by our financial bookkeeper, Lore Burbank at the Noble Middle School office and myself.

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