

Cafeteria Connection

OCTOBER 2026

NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK: Eat Well, Learn Well

October 12-16, 2026

Eating well helps us learn well! A balanced meal provides the nutrients our bodies and brains need to stay energized, focused, and ready to take on the day.

During National School Lunch Week, October 12-16, we're celebrating the important role school meals play in nourishing students and supporting their success in the classroom. It's also a great opportunity to explore the variety of delicious and nutritious choices available in the school cafeteria.

Encourage students to build a well-rounded meal featuring lean protein, whole grains, colorful fruits, and vegetables. Every bite is an opportunity to make a healthy choice—and small choices can add up to big benefits.

Let's fuel our bodies, nourish our minds, and celebrate school lunch all week long!

Dietitians Pick



Sweet Corn Elote Salad

Supercharge your summer with this refreshing & unique twist on a summer salad! Corn is rich in fiber which helps regulate our digestive system! It is also packed with lutein & zeaxanthin which help protect our vision. Corn also contains potassium which can help reduce inflammation & allow our muscles to work properly!



Sweet Corn Elote Salad

INGREDIENTS:

5 ears Sweet Corn (kernels cut from cobs)
2 heads Romaine Lettuce (trimmed and cut in half longways)
1 small Jalapeño (seeded and diced fine if desired for heat)
2 Sweet Bell Peppers (seeded and diced small)
1 teaspoon Olive Oil
1 tablespoon Garlic (minced)
1/4 cup Mayonnaise
2 Limes (juiced)
1 teaspoon Chili Powder
1 teaspoon Smoked Paprika

1/4 cup Cotija Cheese, grated
(feta or parmesan can be a substitute)
1/4 cup Fresh Cilantro (chopped fine)
1 cup Charred Florida Tomato Dressing
(<https://followfreshfromflorida.com/recipes/charred-floridatomato-dressing>) (or your favorite dressing)
Sea Salt and Fresh Ground Pepper (to taste)



INSTRUCTIONS:

Preheat a large sauté pan over medium heat. Carefully add the olive oil and corn kernels to the preheated pan. Cook the corn for about 2 minutes and add the garlic. Stir the corn occasionally and cook another 2 minutes. Remove the corn from the pan and let it cool to room temperature. Add the cooked and cooled corn kernels to a medium mixing bowl. Add the jalapeño, sweet bell peppers, lime juice, mayonnaise, chili powder, smoked paprika, Cotija cheese and cilantro. Stir ingredients to combine. Taste and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper. Place a half of the romaine head each on a chilled salad plate. Evenly dress each salad with a quarter cup of the Charred Florida Tomato Dressing. Add an even amount of the corn mixture to the top of each dressed salad. Serve chilled.

OCTOBER HOLIDAYS

Farm to School Month

Vegetarian Month

National Chili Month

National Pizza Month



Oct 1	World Vegetarian Day
Oct 1	Feast of St. Therese of Lisieux
Oct 2	Feast of the Guardian Angels
Oct 4	Feast of St. Francis of Assisi
Oct 4	National Taco Day
Oct 5	Feast of Saint Faustina
Oct 7	Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary
Oct 8	National Pierogi Day
Oct 12	Columbus Day
Oct 12	Indigenous Peoples' Day
Oct 12-16	National School Lunch Week
Oct 13	Columbus Day
Oct 13	Indigenous People's Day
Oct 15	Feast of Saint Teresa of Avila
Oct 17	National Pasta Day
Oct 20	National Chicken & Waffles Day
Oct 20	International Chef's Day
Oct 21	National Apple Day
Oct 22	Feast of Saint Pope John Paul II
Oct 29	National Oatmeal Day

NATIONAL PASTA DAY: A Meal Made for Sharing

October 17



There's something special about gathering around a table and sharing a delicious meal—and pasta has a wonderful way of bringing people together. From classic spaghetti and meatballs to baked ziti, ravioli, and comforting pasta dishes filled with vegetables, there's a pasta favorite for everyone!

National Pasta Day on October 17 is a fun opportunity to celebrate one of the world's most beloved foods while remembering that mealtime is about more than what's on our plate. Sharing a meal gives us a chance to slow down, connect with one another, and express gratitude for the food we enjoy and the people who help bring it to our tables.

At Maschio's Food Services, we love creating meals that bring students and school communities together. Pasta can be a delicious source of energy when paired with nutritious ingredients such as vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains.

This National Pasta Day, let's celebrate the simple joy of a good meal and the importance of coming together, sharing with others, and being grateful for the blessings around us. Good food tastes even better when it's shared!