

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!

Dietitian's 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 4 National Taco Day

Oct 8 National Pierogi Day

Oct 12 Columbus Day

Oct 12 Indigeneous Peoples' Day

Oct 12-16 National School Lunch Week

Oct 17 National Pasta Day

Oct 20 National Chicken & Waffles Day

Oct 20 International Chefs Day

Oct 21 National Apple Day

Oct 29 National Oatmeal Day

Oct 31 Halloween

HEALTHY HALLOWEEN: Smarter Treat Choices

Halloween is all about spooky fun, creativity, and, of course, delicious treats! While enjoying seasonal favorites is part of the celebration, choosing a variety of nutritious foods can help keep energy levels steady throughout the day.



This Halloween, try balancing sweet treats with better-for-you options such as air-popped popcorn, homemade trail mix, fresh fruit, or a creamy yogurt parfait. These tasty choices can add a little festive fun while providing important nutrients.

Our cafeterias will also feature special Halloween-themed offerings that bring the spirit of the season to the school lunch experience. Let's celebrate Halloween with delicious choices that keep students energized, nourished, and ready for all the fun ahead!

