

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



Apple Cranberry Coleslaw

Elevate your coleslaw with the nutritious punch of apples and cranberries! Apples are a great source of vitamin C which helps boost our immune system to keep us healthy. Apples also have Pectin which is a soluble fiber which helps regulate our digestive system! Cranberries are packed full of various antioxidants which help keep our bodies inflammation free as well as aiding our immune systems to help keep our minds & bodies healthy!



Apple Cranberry Coleslaw **SERVES 4**

INGREDIENTS:

THE SALAD MIX:

7 oz Green Cabbage
(shredded, about 1 1/8 cups, or roughly a quarter of a small head of Cabbage)
4 oz Red Delicious Apple
(chopped with skin on about 3/4 cup, or 1 small Apple)
2 1/2 tbsp Dried Cranberries

THE DRESSING:

1 tbsp + 1 tsp Honey
1 tbsp + 1 tsp Apple Cider Vinegar
1 tbsp + 1 tsp Olive Oil
2 tsp Fresh Lemon Juice



INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1. PREP THE PRODUCE:** Shred your cabbage into fine strands and chop the apple (leaving the skin on for color and nutrition) into thin, bite-sized matchsticks or strips.
- 2. COMBINE:** In a medium mixing bowl, toss together the shredded cabbage, chopped apples, and dried cranberries.
- 3. WHISK THE DRESSING:** In a separate small bowl, whisk together the honey, apple cider vinegar, olive oil, and lemon juice until the mixture emulsifies (blends smoothly together).
- 4. DRESS AND SERVE:** Pour the dressing over the cabbage mixture and stir thoroughly to ensure everything is evenly coated.

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 Indigenous 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!

