

**Davis Joint Unified School District's  
Efforts to Increase Farm Fresh Food in School Meals  
Evaluation of Measure Q  
School Year 2009 - 2010 Report**

**Prepared under contract with Davis Farm to School**



**by**

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# **Davis Joint Unified School District's Efforts to Increase Farm Fresh Food in School Meals Evaluation of School Lunch Program and Measure Q School Year 2009 - 2010 Report**

## ***Executive Summary***

In November 2008, the Davis Joint Unified School District (DJUSD) and the Davis Farm to School (DF2S) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to collaboratively support the health and education of all DJUSD students. The MOU identified four major goals: 1) increase farm fresh food in school food offerings; 2) reduce solid waste through a comprehensive district recycling program; 3) provide education opportunities to promote a healthy lifestyle and develop the whole child; and 4) research and evaluate programs and provide information to the community. To support DJUSD in accomplishing these goals, DF2S contracts with consultants such as Evans & Brennan, LLC to help increase farm fresh food in the school meals, and with UC SAREP to evaluate the program. With this report, UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SAREP) measures the progress relating to Goal #1 during the 2009 - 2010 school year.

## ***Procurement***

DJUSD made significant progress in 2008 – 2009 toward the goal of increasing farm fresh foods in school meal offerings. That progress continued in 2009 - 2010. Because of the work by Evans & Brennan LLC with Jim Mills of Produce Express to identify the source of produce purchases, total produce procurement increased substantially. Purchases from local farmers now stand at almost half (49%) of all district produce, a significant increase from the low of 16.6% in 2006 – 2007. Over 60 farmers now benefit from the arrangements between DJUSD and Produce Express.

## ***Participation/ Consumption***

The salad bars have remained popular throughout the year. They are well liked by the students according to several interviewees and observations. Tastings are appreciated to encourage students to try new fruits or vegetables.

Participation data show that salad bar days are generally MORE popular than non salad bar days although salad bar days often coincide with pizza days so the conclusion here is ambiguous in some schools. Overall participation has increased very gradually over the last few years. To achieve a significant and meaningful increase in participation, we recommend that SNS engage in a targeted marketing campaign for students, parents and staff, particularly for paid students.

On-site observations of the lunch program were conducted throughout this year. They were extremely rich and detailed, and acknowledge the gains made over the past year. A number of specific recommendations are offered to further enhance the ambience of the lunchroom.

## ***Professional development***

The cooking classes for food service staff continued to be a highlight of the year. The increased scratch cooking with fresh, regional products introduced students to superior quality cooked products (casseroles, pizzas, rice dishes, soups) and increased purchases of regionally sourced ingredients as well. These classes are very popular with the staff and RC and we encourage continuing them in the future.

## ***Institutionalizing Farm to School through Policy***

Institutionalizing local procurement, marketing for increased participation and professional development are all overseen in part by the Nutrition Advisory Committee (NAC.) The NAC is

appointed by the DJUSD Board of Trustees and meets four times a year with the Director of Student Nutrition Services. We recommend that the NAC be restructured so as to have the ability to have broader input to Student Nutrition Services and assist more directly with a marketing role to the individual school sites.

# Davis Joint Unified School District's Efforts to Increase Farm Fresh Food in School Meals Evaluation of Measure Q School Year 2009 - 2010 Report

In November 2008<sup>1</sup>, the Davis Joint Unified School District (DJUSD)<sup>2</sup> and the Davis Farm to School (DF2S), a project of the Davis Farmers Market Foundation, entered into an agreement to collaboratively support the health and education of all DJUSD students. The agreement, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), identified four major goals: 1) increase farm fresh food in school food offerings; 2) reduce solid waste through a comprehensive district recycling program; 3) provide education opportunities to promote a healthy lifestyle and develop the whole child; and 4) research and evaluate programs and provide information to the community.

With this report, Davis Farm to School, through its evaluator, UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SAREP) provides results from school year 2009-2010 relating to Goal #1: Increasing farm fresh food in school food offerings. This is the second year Measure Q,<sup>3</sup> funding has benefited the Davis Farm to School program. This report measures the progress during the 2009 - 2010 school year.

The Davis Joint Unified School District is a medium sized district of approximately 8,600 students (2008-09) located in Yolo County. It has 16 schools, including 9 elementary schools, three Junior Highs, 2 High Schools, one Alternative and one Continuation school. Student Nutrition Services participates in the National School Lunch Program, and serves approximately 2,000 meals per day. The Free and Reduced Lunch eligibility rate is 16.9%, as compared to a county-wide rate of 44.2%. The cost of a full cost lunch meal at DJUSD is \$3.25 (elementary) or \$3.50 (secondary).

## **Methodology**

Data for this report were gathered from DJUSD's produce invoices (distributors, individual farmers) and participation figures for each school by month. In-depth interviews were conducted with Rafaelita Curva, Director, Student Nutrition Services; Miyuki Carson, Central Kitchen Manager; Jim Mills, Produce Express, and Bob Corshen, Director Regional Food Systems for Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF). Informal interviews and discussions occurred with other food service staff at the Central Kitchen and those monitoring salad bars at school sites. Observations were conducted at each school site throughout the year. Data were also summarized from monthly reports of Evans & Brennan, LLC the contractors with Davis Farm to School who are responsible for facilitating progress on Measure Q relating to Goals #1 and #4.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: the original MOU was entered into November 15, 2007. It was amended in 2008.

<sup>2</sup> District statistics: 10 elementary schools; 3 Jr. Highs; 2 High Schools; 2 alternative & continuation schools. Student population is 8,484 (2007-08); Free & Reduced Priced meals = 14.9%; 63.8% White, 13.9% Hispanic, 22.3% other; Average Daily Attendance = 8,165 (96% of enrollment).

<sup>3</sup> Measure Q supports a variety of educational programs in the district and is voted on by the community every third year. See Appendix for a summary of the support Measure Q has given to Student Nutrition Services Program for 2009 - 2011.

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**Goal 1A: Increase farm fresh foods in school food offerings**

The goal outlined in the MOU is to increase the amount of farm fresh foods from local farms in the school meal and snack programs to 60% of total district produce by 2010. Davis Farm to School and DJUSD define “local” as the following: (1) DJUSD has a direct relationship with the small to mid-scale growers selling the product or the distributor provides transparent, verifiable information about the farmers, their production practices and where the product is grown; and (2) products are grown within a 300-mile radius from Davis.

As of July 31, 2010, the purchasing records for school year 2009 – 2010 show that 49% of produce purchases are coming from local farmers.

Purchasing during this school year went through several changes. At the beginning of the year, most produce was purchased from Fresh Point (previously Piranha Produce). Purchases from local growers were being made through Grower’s Collaborative (GC), a nonprofit distributor affiliated with Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF). At the time, GC was sourcing from small and mid-sized growers in the Sacramento region. In about October, conversations began with Jim Mills, the sales representative of Produce Express. Produce Express is a medium-sized distributor working primarily, though not exclusively, with Northern California growers. Through conversations with Georgeanne Brennan, who acts as “forager” for DJUSD under contract with Davis Farm to School, Mr. Mills agreed to “source identify” produce purchased through Produce Express, which involved a process of identifying the grower of a particular product and whether that product fell within DJUSD’s definition of “local.”

This relationship with Jim Mills has proven to be advantageous. Gradually Produce Express was able to modify their invoicing system to reflect the actual source of each produce item. Each farm could then be categorized as either local or non-local. As it turned out, much more produce being purchased through Produce Express was actually local produce (within the DJUSD definition) than had been previously realized.

The following chart (Table 1) and graph (Figure 1) show the trend in local purchasing since 2002.

**Table 1. Produce Purchases for DJUSD School Years 2002 – 2009, Adjusted for Inflation<sup>4</sup>**

	PPI factor (2009-2010 = base year)	Local Farmer Purchases	Local Farmer Purchases Adjusted (2009/10 \$)	Distributor/ Nonlocal Purchases	Distributor/ Nonlocal Purchases Adjusted (2009/10 \$)	Total Produce Purchases	Total Produce Purchases Adjusted (2009/10 \$)	% of Total that is Local
2002 – 2003	1.53	\$17,062	\$26,105	\$32,304	\$49,425	\$49,366	\$75,530	34.6%
2003 – 2004	1.417	\$16,201	\$22,957	\$25,970	\$36,799	\$42,171	\$59,756	38.4%
2004 – 2005	1.219	\$20,806	\$25,363	\$21,141	\$25,771	\$41,948	\$51,135	49.6%
2005 – 2006 [1]	1.25	\$9,105	\$11,381	\$22,251	\$27,814	\$31,356	\$39,195	29.0%
2006 – 2007	1.074	\$6,934	\$7,447	\$34,732	\$37,302	\$41,666	\$44,749	16.6%
2007 – 2008	1.021	\$15,028	\$15,344	\$52,594	\$53,698	\$66,622	\$68,021	22.6%
2008 – 2009	1.117	\$21,378	\$23,879	\$56,616	\$63,240	\$77,994	\$87,119	27.4%
2009 - 2010	1	\$41,763	\$41,763	\$43,388	\$43,388	\$85,151	\$85,151	49.0%

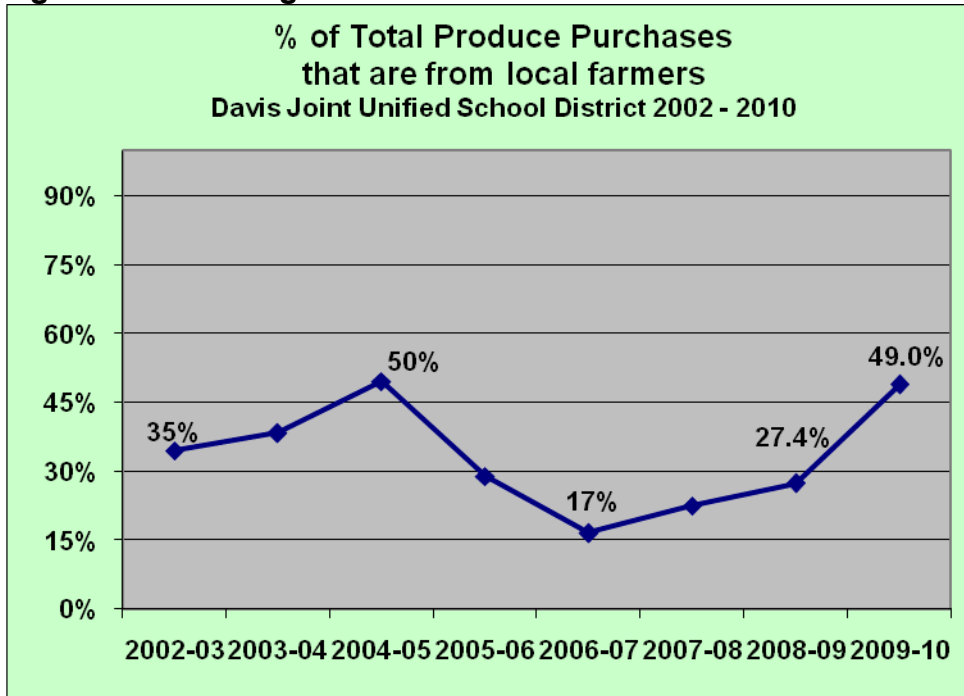
As Table 1 shows, the percentage of fresh produce purchased from local growers has been increasing since 2006 – 2007. When adjusted for inflation, the total dollars spent on produce in 2009-2010 (\$85,151) is almost as high as 2008-2009; however, the dollars spent on local produce has increased by 75% from last year. (Figure 1).

There appear to be three main reasons for this large increase in local produce procurement:

- First, DJUSD, with support from the NAC, defined a fairly wide radius for its definition of what constitutes “local” produce. In contrast to other food service management companies that use 150 mile radius, DJUSD decided to use 300 miles since that allowed it to include fruits and vegetables produced in the Central and the Salinas Valleys, natural neighboring production areas.
- Second, once SNS had access to the farm source information for each purchase, the evaluators could quantify the local and nonlocal procurement data far more accurately.
- Third, the DF2S forager spent considerable time with Jim Mills at Produce Express and Miyuki Carson, the Central Kitchen Manager, to substitute more local produce into the menu as often as was economically feasible.

<sup>4</sup> Highlighted columns are adjusted using the Producer Price Index, Farm Products-Fruits & melons, fresh/dry vegs and nuts, not seasonally adjusted, averaged for Sept-June in each year.

**Figure 1. Percentage of Fresh Produce from Local Growers**



The number of local farmers being supported by DJUSD purchases rose from about 20 in 2007-08 to about 30 in 2008-09 to over 60 in 2009 - 2010. Most of the farmers supply the district through Produce Express.

This year, three farmers sold directly to the district: one, who has supplied fresh kiwis to DJUSD for the past seven or eight years, one who supplied apples in the fall, and a third who supplied strawberries in the spring. In these cases, the Student Nutrition Services Director and Central Kitchen Manager have formed personal relationships with the growers and have come to trust the quality, pricing, and consistency of their product.

In addition to produce, DF2S forager Georgeanne Brennan connected the Central Kitchen Manager with Produce Express for sourcing bulk California Olive Ranch extra virgin olive oil (Arbequina) after conducting a taste testing of different olive oils to educate the staff on the taste and quality of California Extra Virgin Olive Oil in contrast with what was being used.. The Central Kitchen Manager had requested assistance with finding a bulk source of EVO (extra virgin oil) for use in couscous salad and other recipes which she learned about during the professional development cooking classes (see Goal 1C). Student Nutrition Services (SNS) purchased several batches of Arbosana Olive Oil, a local olive oil from Butte County. Also, SNS purchased over \$6,000 in local organic white rice, as well as about \$1,000 each in local beef (Lucky Dog Beef) and local bread products (Upper Crust) using whole grains milled in nearby Woodland.

**Local Sourcing: F2S Forager (Georgeanne Brennan)**

As per recommendations from the 2008/2009 evaluation report, Georgeanne and RC revised and formally defined the role of the DJUSD forager for the 2009/2010 school year. It included:

- Answering questions about sourcing, choosing and using local products;

- Meeting at least once per month with DJUSD Nutrition Services staff for up to one hour to introduce new available local products, taste test and suggest uses in the menus, and discuss upcoming availability for menu planning;
- Alerting DJUSD Nutrition Services staff via email about any anticipated changes from local growers or distributors in upcoming products; and
- Recommending local farmers/vendors or distributors to SNS.

Monthly reports reflecting progress in local purchasing have been submitted to Davis Farm to School as part of Evans & Brennan's reports.

***Local Sourcing: Miyuki Carson, Central Kitchen Manager***

RC is responsible for creating and monitoring the overall district produce bids for the major produce vendor(s). Once the primary vendor has been selected, SNS places produce and other orders for school lunches with RC's approval. Miyuki reported that the arrangements with Jim Mills and Produce Express were very satisfactory last year. In the early part of the year, DJUSD tried various vendors for local produce, but none met all their requirements. However, purchases with Produce Express went very smoothly. Miyuki said that she "loves using them." They are "very flexible, prompt and responsible." She is able to call in orders, even sometimes at the last minute, and have the orders filled. She does not have to worry about quantity or quality, as it is very consistent. Produce Express delivers to the Central Kitchen early in the morning, which is an arrangement that is beneficial for both parties. In addition to Produce Express, DJUSD used FreshPoint, which is designated as the primary vendor. In 2009-2010, FreshPoint did not have the ability to identify the location of the produce on the invoices.

Miyuki sometimes orders beef from Lucky Dog, and is pleased with the product. However, because of the availability of commodity meats, she is not able to use Lucky Dog on a regular basis. She has tried Upper Crust, but found that the kids did not like the product. They thought the bread rolls were "too dry." Miyuki plans to order from Upper Crust for an upcoming catering job and will speak to Trudy, the owner, about possibly modifying their product recipe so that she can try it again.

***Local Sourcing: Distributors***

***Growers' Collaborative Sacramento Area Coordinator***

In the beginning of school year 2009 – 2010, Growers Collaborative was supplying to DJUSD for local produce. However, according to Bob Corshen, Director of Local Food Systems for Community Alliance with Family Farmers, the operation was not able to make enough money to keep it afloat, and therefore closed business in the Sacramento area. In its place, Produce Express began to identify the source of its produce, much of which is local. This arrangement was more suitable to the needs of DJUSD. As Growers Collaborative closed shop, they nevertheless negotiated some relationships with farmers they had previously done business with (particularly Hmong growers in the Sacramento County area) so that those farmers could continue to supply to Produce Express, and hence DJUSD.

***Jim Mills, Produce Express representative***

About October 2009, Evans & Brennan made contact with Jim Mills, Sales Representative for Produce Express (PE), a local distributor of wholesale fruits and vegetables to investigate the possibility of supplying local and seasonal produce to DJUSD. Produce Express already maintains several restaurant accounts in Davis, so it was seen as a potentially convenient arrangement on both sides to add DJUSD as an account. The main point of discussion centered around whether PE would be able to identify the source of specific produce purchases on the

invoices they submitted to DJUSD. Jim Mills indicated that this would not be difficult at all, and indeed, he began this practice for DJUSD's account immediately. This made it possible to know where the produce was grown, and the extent to which it was in season.

According to Mr. Mills, the account has worked out extremely well on both sides. It does not require extra work on his end, because they already are making deliveries in Davis and they can drop off their delivery to DJUSD in the morning at the Central Kitchen, one stop. No additional structures or arrangements are necessary. The only unique aspect is the addition of the source information on the invoice, which Mr. Mills said is no problem.

For the coming year, 2010 – 2011, the situation is uncertain. This year, because of the large amount of local produce they could provide, Produce Express was required to put in a bid along with other vendors. DJUSD's bidding language requires vendors to provide as much local produce as possible (using DJUSD's definition of 300 miles). In the bidding process, it was determined that FreshPoint was more responsive. The provenance of all produce will be identified on the invoices and the prices were better. DJUSD can purchase from more than one produce vendor; so, for some items, RC will still have the flexibility of being able to purchase from a local company, such as Produce Express, that can meet SNS bid specifications and goals.

**Measure Q expenditures: Meeting the community's expectations**

On November 6, 2007 voters within the Davis Joint Unified School District (DJUSD) approved a renewal of the district's parcel tax, which included approximately \$70,000 annually for four years to "improve nutrition at schools by providing students with fresh farm produce." The following year, DJUSD and Davis Farm to School entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to collaboratively support the health and education of all DJUSD students. The MOU identified four major goals, of these, the major portion of funding was to be applied to Goal 1: increase farm fresh food in school food offerings.

The table below outlines Measure Q expenditures as supplied by RC as of August 10, 2010. Exact figures are not yet available, but the figures below represent a close estimate. DJUSD expenditures identified as Measure Q expenses included: (1) additional equipment for use in salad or bulk hot bars or equipment needed for cooking menu items from scratch; (2) food designated as coming from local farmers/ranchers (within 300 miles)<sup>5</sup> and (3) additional personnel needed to staff the salad bars (twice per week in elementary schools; every day in secondary schools) or hot bars (every day in one elementary school) or prepare salad/hot bar menu items or other cooked from scratch items. The total expenditure of funds that were designated for Measure Q exceeded the limit of \$70,000/year by \$30,202. RC will pay the overage from the rest of her budget. This table shows the approximate proportions spent in each of the three major categories.

**Table 2: Measure Q Expenditures 2009 - 2010**

Equipment costs (salad bars & prep equipment)	Food Costs for local produce (300 mi radius)	Labor Costs (for additional labor required for salad bars & prep)	Total

<sup>5</sup> Some of these local foods may have been purchased anyway. Measure Q provided the funds that allowed DJUSD SNS to document provenance as well as spend somewhat more on selected items without exceeding budget constraints.

\$7,711 (7% of total)	\$49,204 (47% of total)	\$49,016 (46% of total)	\$105,931
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Table 3 shows a comparison to the previous year's Measure Q expenditures.

**Table 3: Measure Q Expenditures 2008 – 2009**

<b>Equipment costs (salad bars &amp; prep equipment)</b>	<b>Food Costs for local produce (300 mi radius)</b>	<b>Labor Costs (for additional labor required for salad bars &amp; prep)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>\$23,000 (33%)</b>	<b>\$21,378 (31%)</b>	<b>\$25,006 (36%)</b>	<b>\$69,378</b>

**Equipment** (approximate)

Equipment costs were much lower in the second year because new salad bars or hot bars (bulk serving model) were not purchased this year. The main equipment expenditures were for a hot bar and an additional ozonizer (kills e-coli in fresh foods). Although, RC hoped to open new hot bars at all elementary sites, with service at a minimum of twice per month at each site, this did not materialize in 2009/2010. Income from participation was not sufficiently high to warrant much greater equipment expenditures.

Next year, because of a three-year grant from the California Department of Education, RC plans to open hot bars at North Davis Elementary and Willett. She needs new equipment for those schools; so equipment costs will probably rise in 2010-2011. RC continues to be aggressive in purchasing equipment that allows her to utilize more local products in salad bars and entrée items.

**Produce**

Produce expenditures are explained above in Goal #1A. Overall local purchases increased from the previous year from \$23,879 (27.4% of total produce purchases) to \$41,763 (49% of total produce purchases). RC's figures for total local food costs (in the table above) are \$7,441 higher. The difference can be accounted for because RC included non-produce local food--Next Generation organic white rice, Lucky Dog Beef, Upper Crust Bakery, and Arbequina olive oil.

**Labor** (approximate)

Additional labor was required this year for (1) staff on site during salad bar days, (2) prep staff for preparing fresh products for salad bars and hot bars and (3) cooking staff to prepare more entrees from scratch. RC found that scratch cooking takes more time than she had anticipated. Ideally, for two from-scratch entrée dishes every day, 5 people @ 6 hrs/each are needed. For the entire school year, this comes to \$62,265 (175 days x 30 person hrs x \$11.86/hr). RC had to limit the number of entrees from scratch or freshly prepared items in order to meet her budget (see definitions of "from scratch" and "freshly prepared" on pages 15-16).

As DJUSD plans for renewal of the community parcel tax termed Measure Q, it is clear that labor is the highest priority. It is definitely the limiting factor in the budget for accommodating more healthful, sustainable, regional food.

RC calculates that the additional labor (monitoring and extra prep) needed for each school (13 sites) to have a salad bar every day would cost her \$166,500. The additional labor needed for scratch cooking is mentioned above. Clearly, Measure Q cannot pay for everything. However, asking for \$100,000 per year minimum would cover approximately 25% of the labor needs plus most of the food and/or some equipment. Since Measure Q is up for renewal in Spring 2011, Davis Farm to School and DJUSD should plan for such a substantiated request.

RC maintains that improved quality is directly tied to increased labor. However, before she can hire the additional labor, she has to show where her revenue is coming from. This is a bit of a “Catch-22.” It takes more labor to provide quality food that will translate into more sales and more revenue; but she can’t hire more labor unless she proves there is the revenue to do it. Measure Q has been able to break this cycle by providing some funds for more labor. RC is slowly improving meal quality; improvements are incremental.

#### ***RC’s Food service goals for 2010 – 2011***

- Continue working towards improving meal quality.
- Commence new hot bar service at two elementary sites daily.<sup>6</sup> North Davis and Willett Elementary are designated to be the first sites for this expansion. This will bring the total to three sites (including Korematsu).
- Explore viable ways to reduce processed items and transition students to fresh (e.g., reduce the number of choices of processed and use the extra revenue for new food items that include fresh)
- Continue working with Produce Express and identifying sources of produce. Pilot items with other vendors selling locally as long as purchases are economically viable.
- Continue purchasing equipment that facilitates cooking from scratch.
- Continue working on strategies for generating revenue (increasing participation, increasing labor).

#### **Evaluators’ Recommendations for Goal 1A—Increasing farm fresh food in school meals**

- SNS should continue working with a mid-scale distributor such as Produce Express, as long as they can continue to identify the provenance of the produce and meet bid specifications. If other produce vendors are selected, be sure they can provide data on the provenance of all produce on the invoices.
- DF2S should continue to provide a forager to DJUSD to provide suggestions for incorporating seasonal, local produce into the menus.
- DF2S should consult with DJUSD administrative assistant about how to document local produce on an ongoing basis for sustainability of the project.

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<sup>6</sup> This type of service includes a hot lunch entrée—for example, taco bars or baked potatoes—served in an open ‘self-serve’ format in addition to an open salad bar. The hot entrée often includes ingredients that have been sourced from local farmers, and the salad bar includes fresh, local, and seasonal produce as well.

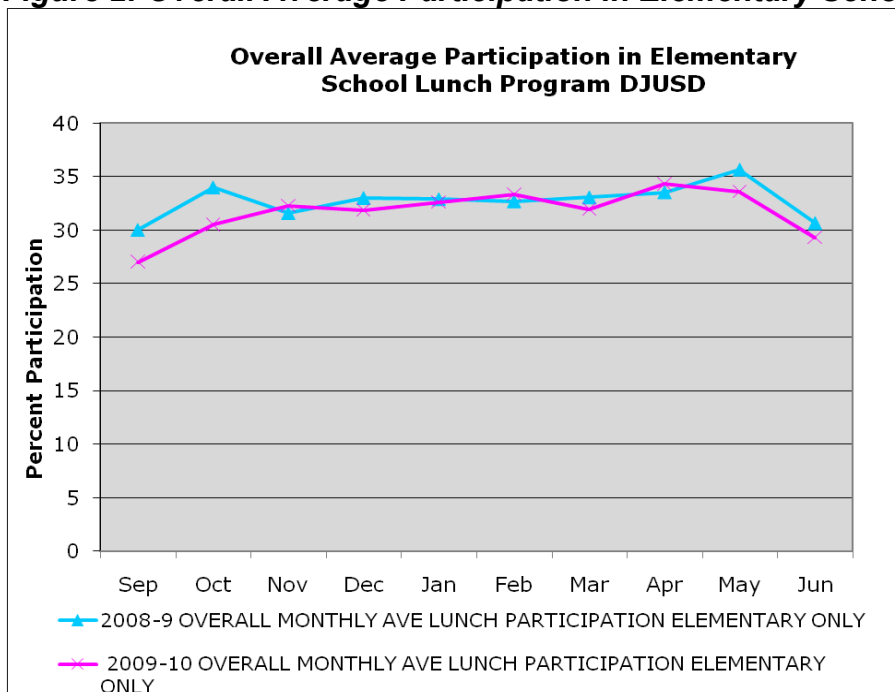
**Goal 1B. Encourage students to increase their consumption of fresh produce Participation in the School Meals Program<sup>7</sup>**

In line with incorporating more fresh and seasonal produce into the school lunch menus, it is a goal of Davis Farm to School and DJUSD to encourage greater student participation in the school lunch. This is not only to enhance the students’ access to delicious food, and to educate them about the pleasures and value of eating well, but also to ensure that those children who are eligible for free or reduced lunches are taking advantage of the lunches. Research has shown that children who are well fed perform better in school, both socially and academically.

**Overall lunch participation.** Overall participation in the lunch program since the onset of Measure Q has not changed significantly. The figure below charts participation in the elementary schools during the 2008 - 2009 school year and the 2009 - 2010 school year, and it can be seen that they are almost identical.

Nevertheless, overall participation has increased slightly over the years. Since 2000, elementary school participation averaged 27% overall with a range of 26% to 29%. This year’s participation averaged 32% with a range of 21% to 38%. Even though this does not show a large increase in participation, it does show a gradual incremental increase. This is important to note for a district that supports a relatively high socioeconomic population and therefore a relatively low rate of students eligible for free and reduced lunch<sup>8</sup>.

**Figure 2: Overall Average Participation in Elementary School Lunch Program**



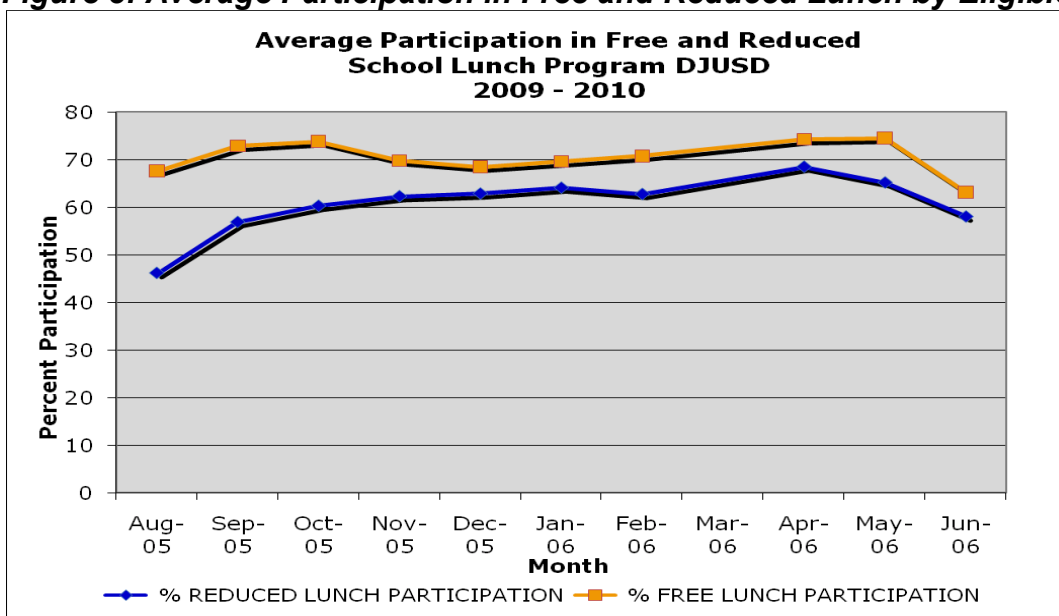
<sup>7</sup> The DAVIS JOINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT takes part in the National School Lunch and/or School Breakfast Programs. Meals are served every school day. Students may buy lunch for \$3.25 (elementary school) /\$3.50 (secondary school) and/or breakfast for \$1.75 (elementary school) /\$2.00 (secondary school). Eligible students may receive meals free or at a reduced price of \$0.40 for lunch and/or \$0.30 for breakfast. Students may buy milk for \$0.35.

<sup>8</sup> DJUSD’s Free & Reduced rate is 16.9% as compared to the county average of 44.2% (based on 2008-2009 CDE data).

### Participation by Free & Reduced Lunch Eligible Students

One area this year that was of particular concern was the level of participation overall and particularly of the Free and Reduced eligible students. This year, RC and other district administrators wanted to increase participation in the Free and Reduced program to 100% of eligible students to ensure that all children who needed lunch were taking advantage of it. Therefore, the evaluators tracked free and reduced participation during the year to see if participation increased. The baseline was the California Basic Educational Data Systems (CBEDS) figures, collected each year by the California Department of Education, for eligible students during the month of October, which is the official reporting month to the state. The figure below shows the percentage of eligible Free and Reduced students who ate lunch.

**Figure 3: Average Participation in Free and Reduced Lunch by Eligible Students**



Here we see that participation of students eligible for Reduced Price Lunch was about 61% overall, with a rise during the winter and spring and a dip again in the final month of school. Participation of students eligible for a free lunch was just over 70% overall, rising during the fall and spring, and dipping a bit in the winter.

Aside from these small variations, participation did not significantly increase over the year in either category. At the same time, the percentages shown are not small. RC noted that for many districts (excluding those with over 90% eligible), a participation rate of 80% Free & Reduced is very good. Considering that only about 17% of DJUSD’s school population is eligible for Free and Reduced lunches (based on applications in October), a 70% participation rate can be considered quite respectable.

### Salad Bars and Local Produce

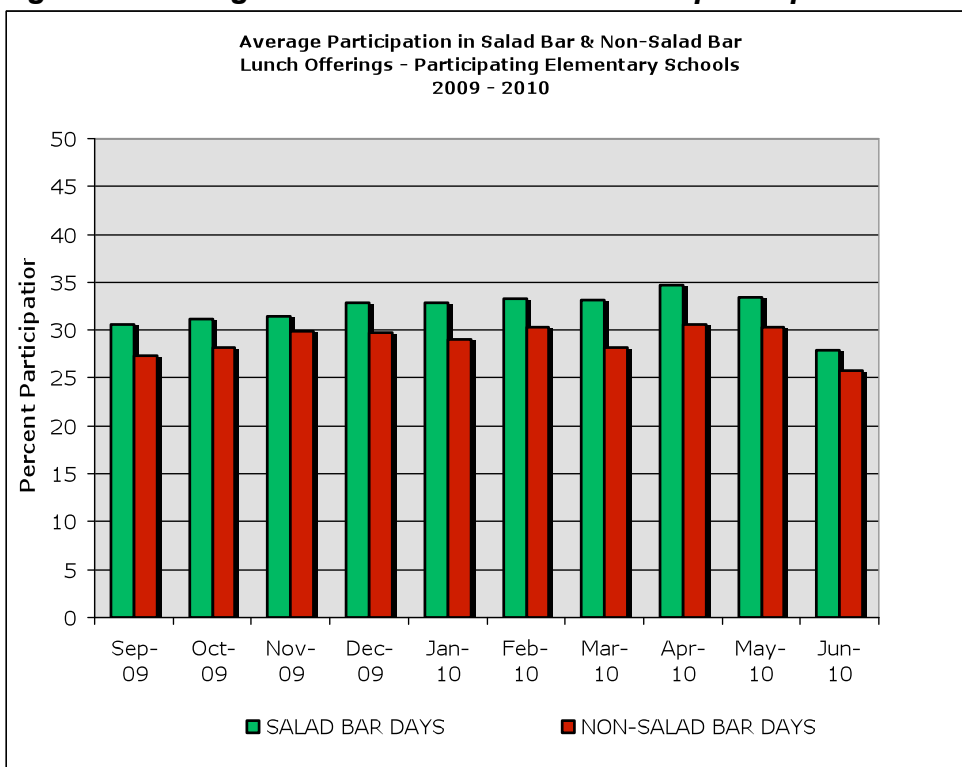
Since 2008 – 2009, farm fresh local produce has been available to elementary students in an open salad bar format at least two days a week, and in secondary schools every day (with the exception

of Korematsu, which has salad bar every day). They also receive local, seasonal produce in other forms: incorporated into pasta salads with locally purchased whole grains; in pasta and pizza sauces; in soups, tacos, rice bowls, pizza toppings and other hot entrees. In this way, the whole meal becomes a source for fresh, locally grown produce and for educating students' palettes.

While local produce is incorporated into cooked entrée items, the salad bars are typically where students have the opportunity to make fresh produce choices. Earlier studies have shown that students tend to eat more fresh produce when it is served on a salad bar (as opposed to packaged containers). To measure the trends in fresh produce consumption, the evaluators gathered school lunch meal participation data and compared salad bar and non-salad bar days.

The figure below shows overall average participation in those elementary schools with a salad bar on two days per week for September 2009 through June 2010. Participation is expressed as a percentage of total school enrollments. Korematsu Elementary is excluded from these figures, as it has a salad bar/hot bar every day.

**Figure 4. Average Salad Bar & Non-Salad Bar participation 2009 – 2010 by month**



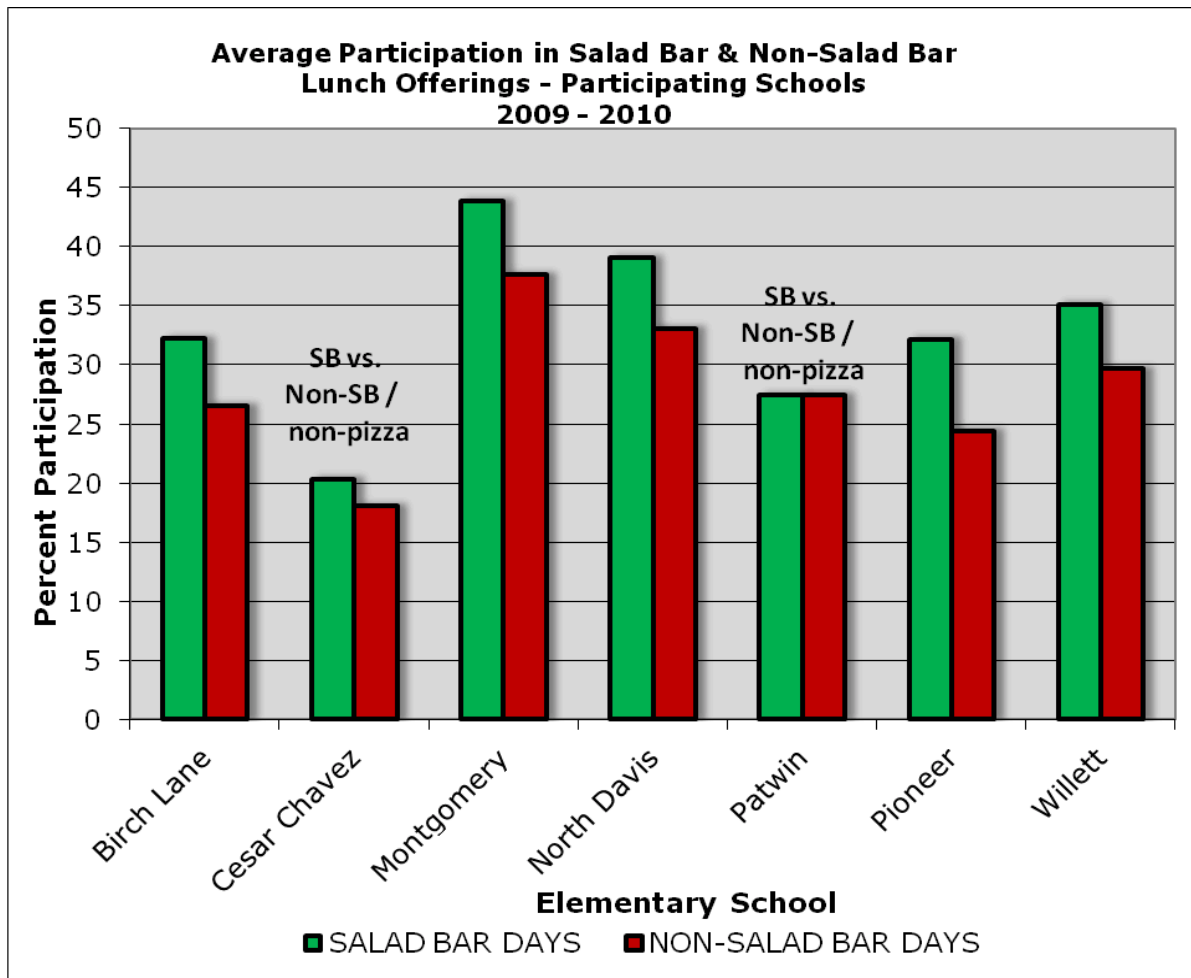
**Analysis of Participation**

As the graph shows, overall participation for most schools is higher on salad bar days than on non-salad bar days. However, the data do not show any (statistically) significant difference between salad bar day participation and non-salad bar day participation for any of the months. The reason for this lack of statistical significance is that schools vary widely in their participation rates. When they are all put together in the monthly data, the differences between the salad bar vs. non-salad bar means are not large enough to be considered significant.

Showing the data school by school gives a truer picture of the relationship between salad bar days and non-salad bar days. When the same data is presented **school by school**, significantly higher

participation was shown on salad bar days for six of seven elementary schools: Birch Lane, Montgomery, North Davis, Pioneer, Willett, and Cesar Chavez ( $t < .05$ ) as shown below. For Patwin, the higher participation on salad bar days was not statistically significant.

**Figure 5. Average Salad Bar & Non-Salad Bar participation 2009 – 2010 by school**



An analysis of the salad bar vs. non-salad bar participation data shows that participation tends to be much higher on pizza days. For example, in a typical week at Birch Lane, lunch participation might be about 150 (~25%) on non-pizza days and 230 (~35%) on pizza days. When pizza days fall on salad bar days, it is possible that the higher participation was due to pizza rather than the salad bar. For five of the schools above (Birch Lane, Montgomery, North Davis, Pioneer and Willett), it is impossible to test whether pizza or salad bars were increasing participation. However, for two of the schools (Cesar Chavez and Patwin), pizza days fell on non salad bar days. For those two schools, salad bar days could be compared with non pizza/ non salad bar days and to find out the true impact of salad bars on participation. This comparison (salad bar days vs. non salad bar/ non pizza days) is shown for these two schools above. For Cesar Chavez, the salad

bar days have statistically higher participation; for Patwin, the difference is not statistically significant.

It is clear that pizza is a big draw for students. However, the salad bar also contributes to higher participation. Last year, the evaluators suggested that serving pizza and the salad bar together would result in higher participation and more students taking the salad bar. However, one food service interviewee suggested that students do not care about the salad bar on pizza days. Pizza offers students an opportunity to eat quickly and move on to recess. It is possible that even less salad is consumed on pizza days than on non-pizza days. This year, since it appears that the salad bar increases participation irrespective of pizza days, it may make sense to serve them on separate days.

Additionally, RC now incorporates a “Farm to School” vegetarian pizza in which ingredients come from local growers and the toppings are freshly processed (in addition to three other fresh pizzas made on site at SNS: Hawaiian, cheese, pepperoni.) The Farm to School pizzas have been served at several district catering events, to much acclaim. Principals have requested that the Farm to School pizza be served instead of Cenarios. This is a revenue source that could be explored by SNS, which would require an upfront investment of more labor and equipment in return for a projected higher meal count on those days, fresher product and potentially higher nutritional quality.

## **Increasing consumption in the School Meals Program**

### **School Lunch menu redesign**

In July 2009, Evans & Brennan LLC worked with RC to redesign the DJUSD SNS menus to reflect more healthful offerings that incorporate more seasonal produce. This allowed communication through the menu of the latest changes to the school lunches, focusing on salad bar days at each school site. A new fall menu template was drafted, using language and definitions of terms provided by Evans & Brennan LLC and agreed upon by DF2S, NAC and SNS that reflects the school lunch changes with seasonal fruits and vegetables. Recipes were reviewed by Evans & Brennan LLC for which category they fell into to provide both a marketing opportunity and truth in advertising to parents purchasing school lunch for their students. The new menu definitions, also on the SNS website include:

### **Definition of Terms Used**

**Artisan Bread.** Bread that is crafted, rather than mass produced. Baked in small batches rather than on a vast assembly line, artisan bread differs from prepackaged supermarket loaves in a number of ways. Special attention to ingredients, process, and a return to the fundamentals of the age old breadmaking tradition set artisan bread apart from soft, preservative-laden commercial breads. Made with whole grain where possible.

**Crunch Mix** – refers to the recipe used for the primary base of greens used in the Seasonal Salad Bar. Part of the mix is purchased locally and the mix is freshly prepared by staff.

**Deli Sandwich** – freshly prepared sandwich using whole grain bread, commodity meat, green leaf lettuce, and condiments.

**Farm to School** – with regard to the lunch format, one or more ingredients is purchased locally. More broadly, it refers to a healthy school environment which supports increasing local foods in school food offerings, reducing solid waste through a comprehensive recycling program and

providing educational opportunities to promote a healthy lifestyle and develop the whole child. This includes programs that implement the DJUSD Student Nutrition Services goal of “Eating to Learn and Learning to Eat” such as tastings local product offered in the school lunch, school gardens and farm visits.

**Farm to School Pizza** – pizza freshly prepared to USDA NSL specifications using seasonal raw vegetables or herbs and contain commodity product such as pineapple, meat, cheese, tomato sauce. These pizzas include: Hawaiian Pizza (ham, cheese, pineapple, sage, mozzarella cheese); Seasonal Vegetarian Pizza (e.g. Winter Vegetarian – seasonal, local vegetables and or mushrooms, herbs, cheese, tomato sauce); Cheese Pizza (mozzarella cheese, tomato sauce, herbs).

**Freshly Prepared** – when menu items are assembled in the Central or Satellite DJUSD Kitchens from minimally processed ingredients and delivered for use the same or next day.

**Local** – product raised or grown within a roughly 300 mile radius of Yolo County, which incorporates growing regions such as the Central Coast, Central Valley, Sierra Foothills. It goes north to the Oregon border and south to Bakersfield and encompasses the Central Valley.

**Made from Scratch** – when a menu item is created in the Central or Satellite DJUSD Kitchens using whole foods that are raw, fresh and seasonal ingredients, including meats, vegetables, fruits, whole grains, dairy products (with few additives), herbs, spices with no or minimal use of additional prepared products such as sauces and mixes.

**Seasonal** – refers to three seasons:

- Fall – August, September, October, November
- Winter – December, January, February
- Spring – March, April, May, June

**Seasonal Salad Bar** – (Fall, Winter, Spring) will contain at least:

- Crunch Mix
- Local fruit and vegetables (one each)
- Two “Made from Scratch” Salads: one based on a seasonal vegetable and one based on a whole grain in combination with seasonal fruit or vegetables
- Cheddar or Cottage Cheese
- Meat, Fish or Eggs
- Canned Beans

Photos of the seasonal produce and finished entrees, as well as what produce to look for in the three seasons defined by SNS are included in the menu redesign. Kitchen and cafeteria staff leadership can now use these new meal descriptions in signage at the cafeteria sites. Winter and spring cycle menu templates were similarly developed to reflect scratch cooking lessons and menu changes at the elementary and secondary levels. Astral Matrix, a professional designer, designed and produced the Winter and Spring cycle menus. For the first time, the February menu was sent to all site principals to send to their PTAs with the regular school newsletter. By March, RC and the redesign team decided to use a different background color for each of the monthly (seasonal?) menu templates which they can now use in house to create K-12 menus throughout the year.

Additionally, RC worked with Evans & Brennan to redesign the SNS brochure and created a new SNS logo to promote cross branding between DF2S and the DJUSD school lunch. The new logo incorporates elements of the Davis Farm to School logo design. These and other communications were part of a campaign based on the report “School Lunch Campaign – Davis Farm to School

Connection – January 2010” written for Davis Farm to School by marketing professional Caren Weintraub.

### ***Observations of the Salad Bars/ Full Service Bars/ Lunchroom activity***

Under contract to DF2S and in cooperation with RC, Evans & Brennan made three rounds of lunchtime site visits to each of the campuses during the 2009 - 2010 school year (See Appendix C for list of “Best Practices”). Evaluation notes and photographs have provided a rich view of the progress SNS has made in offering fresh and local products in their daily menus. Observations have also revealed some challenges.

***Lunch food.*** Several elementary schools are doing an excellent job of serving fresh, local and seasonal fruit and vegetables in a salad bar format. Observations included comments such as “beautiful and fresh,” “very appealing,” “excellent job of serving in an attractive way.” Students loved the sugar snap peas, strawberries, pasta salads with spring vegetables, kale and beet salad and fresh salsa on the taco bar day.

Efforts have continued to move fresh produce to “the center of the plate,” and with this in mind, food service staff featured pizzas and soups and other main dish items made with fresh produce from scratch. Students particularly liked these “from scratch” items, as they were appealing not only to the eye, but to the nose as well. Evaluators noted more than once the pleasing aroma wafting from the lunch line when soups were on the menu. Junior High school students favored items such as the Chinese take-away style dishes (e.g., chow Mien and sweet and sour chicken) and pasta salads. Davis High students remarked on the pork stew, winter vegetables and fish taco with coleslaw.

A number of issues were noted as the evaluators visited the lunch sites. While very good progress has been made, there are still instances in which it appears that too much is being offered in the way of packaged food, and those foods are mainly processed. Similarly, the salad dressings typically contain high fructose corn syrup and could be replaced with simpler, less processed ingredients. Note that Georgeanne Brennan conducted a course on making salad dressings from scratch to provide an alternative. These recipes need to be scaled up and integrated into the program. Also, the issue of sporks arose on several occasions as the students cannot easily eat some from scratch entrees with sporks.. See below for further recommendations.

***Ambience.*** The ambience of the lunchrooms sets the overall feeling as students enter for lunch. A welcoming and warm environment can influence students’ lunchtime experience, affect food choices they make, and ideally can set the stage for pleasant social interactions. When the lunchroom physical setting and logistics are arranged in such a way as to encourage a calm atmosphere in which kids can enjoy one another’s company, they are learning lessons about social interaction and civility that can go beyond the school day.

Atmosphere in the school lunchrooms has also generally improved. SNS is enhancing the Multipurpose Room with white or colorful oilcloth table cloths, and colorful nutrition posters. In several schools, especially where adult leadership was prominent, there was a clean, well organized feeling about the lunch that encouraged children to relax and talk pleasantly among themselves. There is still room for improvement in this area, however, as some of the schools are not as bright and inviting as they could be. For example, the High School MPR is rather dark and could use remodeling. Also, in some of the elementary schools, lunch is still rushed, and there is an overemphasis on adherence to rules. Staggering lunch times and having more adults on hand

during the lunch periods can help to offset these kinds of problems (see recommendations below). Evans & Brennan, LLC is providing the Superintendent a list of no cost best practices observed at elementary schools for improving school lunch environment to be distributed under his direction.

**Lunchroom personnel.** SNS food service staff is dedicated to the students and to their jobs and do excellent work. They are justly proud of the offerings that they prepare each day for the children. They also are in a position of “gatekeeper” for healthy food choices and nutrition education for the kids. Staff can offer a personal touch as well as encouragement to kids to try new foods or to be sure to choose a balanced lunch with plenty of fruits and vegetables.

In general, staff are aware of their ability to have a positive influence on the children who come through the lunch line. However, in several instances, only one person is at the lunch line to take care of both serving and processing payments, and this can add stress to the smooth running of the lunch. Whenever teachers, custodians, students or parents are available to help out during lunch, there is less stress and a lighter load for the food service person. Below are some recommendations for addressing this issue.

**Education and Marketing.** “Sampling is a key to marketing and increasing count.” Davis Farm to School ran a sampling program this year in cooperation with SNS. When samples were provided, children were more willing to try a new food, or even a food that they were familiar with but had decided not to try. Giving out samples seemed to make a big difference in students’ attitudes and willingness to try an unfamiliar dish. In some schools, labeling and signage of local produce and/or nutrition was good, but in others it was not apparent. This is an area that requires constant attention.

**Increasing consumption: Miyuki Carson, Central Kitchen Manager**

In general, Miyuki feels that the children like the school lunch. She states that participation has definitely seemed to go up recently. A recurring issue is the students’ preference for pizza. Previously, DJUSD had thought that combining a salad bar with pizza day would encourage students to take more salad items, since they are visiting the lunchroom at higher rates on those days. However, Miyuki noted that the children just grab the slice of pizza and eat that very quickly so that they can go out to recess. The main preference is for the pizza, and she is not sure that the students take any more salad on those days. Encouragement by the lunchroom staff helps in some cases, but not most. The hot bar lunches actually bring more produce to the children, because it is offered in more than one way (i.e., incorporated into the hot offering and salad bar). This issue bears reconsideration.

For improvements, Miyuki suggested improving the lunchroom atmosphere, as they did at Patwin with the colorful tablecloths. She feels this atmosphere makes a big difference in the feeling students and adults have when they enter the lunchroom area. She also suggested a variety of marketing and taste-testing activities that seem to improve student participation and willingness to try new food.

Miyuki was not certain whether encouraging adult participation would result in increased adult sales. However, it might be worth doing a brief survey to ascertain demand and whether it would be possible to increase adult participation. Evans & Brennan, LLC has provided DF2S with a program model, approved by RC, to this effect. RC and SNS implemented a free coupon program, designed and marketed by DF2S which did not prove well used.

## **Site Visit Recommendations**

Acknowledging that tremendous progress has been made by DJUSD's Student Nutrition Services, the site visit team offers the following recommendations for the 2010 - 2011 school year. These recommendations are based on the SNS Framework as well as the three rounds of site visits conducted during the school year.

### **A. Amend MOU Goal One**

The goal written in 2007 for school lunch identifies a goal percentage for purchasing local product. Solid progress has been made toward this goal. Goal One is now ready to be enlarged to include several key areas for consideration in developing a ten-year vision in line with the SNS Framework.

#### **1. Foods to be served in school lunch:**

- a) Salad Bar every day in every school, adhering to the seasonal recipe/composition designed by SNS to include a made-from-scratch or freshly prepared whole grain salad and seasonal vegetable or fruit salad among other components.
- b) Hot Bar every day at every elementary school serving made-from-scratch or freshly prepared entrée using seasonal produce and providing a variety of ethnic flavor profiles.
- c) "Farm to School" pizza at every school whenever pizza is served.
- d) Beverages without sugar and high fructose corn syrup or corn syrup sweetening.
- e) Made-from-scratch salad dressings.
- f) Entrée items reflecting whole foods.

#### **2. Foods to be decreased or eliminated from school lunch:**

- g) Chocolate milk (Possibly served one day per week)
- h) Overly processed, pre-packaged foods such as Taco Sticks, Corn Dogs, Uncrustables, Blueberry Grahams, MJM Vanilla Grahams, Croutons, etc.
- i) Overly processed, purchased bulk and packaged salad dressings.
- j) Packaged entrees on Hot Bar days.

### **B. Provide Marketing and Education:**

1. Offer taste testing at every school, once a week minimum. Davis Farm to School will coordinate with the Central Kitchen to taste test what is being served and to pilot a new dish.
2. Provide simple source of nutrition education for SNS to use in the lunchroom.
3. Educate staff, students, and community about the fresh, local food being purchased and served for school lunch.
4. Create a tab for each school's website for school lunch. Provide a link to Davis Farm to School website, SNS website, and provide information on school lunch improvements and the method for prepaying meals.

### **C. Increase Waste Reduction:**

1. Provide forks and spoons for utensils at every school site. Eliminate sporks.
2. Reduce, with a view to elimination, overly processed, pre packaged foods such as Taco Sticks, Corn Dogs, Uncrustables, Blueberry Grahams, MJM Vanilla Grahams, Croutons, etc.

### **D. Lunch Room Environment:**

1. Discuss kitchen and lunchroom facility improvement plans and suggested priorities with appropriate DJUSD personnel.

## **Evaluators' Recommendations Goal 1B: Increasing Participation & Consumption**

### **Salad bars**

- School food service lunchroom monitors could be reminded to encourage students to take produce from the salad bars so they have a well-rounded meal.

### **Increase paying student participation**

- **We recommend that Davis Farm to School and SNS refocus their commitment from increasing free and reduced participation to implementing a thorough and targeted marketing campaign in order to increase participation of the paying students, their parents and other adults.**

In general, we feel that participation by free and reduced eligible students will not increase by much. Although we made a commitment to increase the Free & Reduced participation this year, this did not happen. Participation for this target group could increase if SNS aggressively and consistently pursues parents of eligible students. However, given time and resource constraints, energy would be better placed in drawing in more of the full-pay students.

In conversation with RC, we have learned that in order to grow her program, she needs more labor, and in order to afford more labor, she needs more revenue. The revenue RC receives from her entitlement dollars is relatively fixed. The only way additional revenue can be generated is by drawing in the paying students and adults. Additional revenue from this sector will benefit all the children in all schools, as it will allow RC to bring on additional labor to create the kind of lunch menu she wants.

**Currently approximately 16% of enrolled students are participating in school lunch as paying students. We recommend that SNS and Evans & Brennan set a target for the 2010 - 2011 school year of 20% participation of enrollment for paying students.**

### **Conduct a parent survey**

Conduct a parent survey to understand more about what parents want and would be willing to pay for in school lunches for students and for themselves.

Possible information to gather would include their knowledge of the farm to school program and about fresh foods in the school lunch; how often they pay for their child's lunch; how much more often would they be willing to pay; how much money would they be willing to pay for a school lunch; what other information they need (e.g., besides on-line menu, etc.); what they would like to see in order to keep them informed about school lunch.

### **Conduct a marketing campaign**

At this point, SNS has made substantial progress with the purchasing and distribution systems. With the new arrangements with Produce Express, these elements appear to have taken on a sustainable structure. In addition, strides have been made (and are continuing to be made) with SNS staff with their engagement in the cooking classes and creativity in developing new food items. Adding a targeted marketing campaign will generate more

parent involvement, which--like Grad Night or other Booster Clubs--should create a self-generating structure. The key will be to agree on and implement new improvements and use these in a new marketing campaign to increase participation.

RC has addressed the issue of a marketing campaign over the years, and Davis Farm to School agrees that marketing is key to enticing more students to eat lunch at school. To date, several marketing activities have taken place. For example, DF2S engaged Caren Weintraub to create an overall communication plan for SNS, and more recently a plan targeted specifically for parents. (The parent-specific plan is specific to Willett elementary school since Ms. Weintraub is a parent of a student at that school.)

However, they have not had the resources to implement a full-fledged comprehensive and targeted campaign. RC feels as though the marketing has been an overall effort, but that it needs to be more specifically targeted to the audiences SNS wants to reach. Hopefully, with a successful marketing campaign and consistent product to market that shows parents changes are being made in school lunch and presented on the days they are advertised, SNS will bring more paying students and adults to the school lunch, and the lunch program will become more sustainable because of the additional revenue stream. The process is iterative. Marketing cannot occur too soon before there is a reliable product to market, and such a product is dependent on more participation.

- **Begin the marketing campaign by reviewing the recommendations provided by Caren Weintraub the School Lunch Communication Campaign and Parent Outreach Communication Plan documents and decide on a structured and strategic approach to marketing and outreach.**
- **A portion of fundraising by Davis Farm to School should be directed towards a marketing campaign.**

### **Goal 1C. Provide professional development opportunities for food service staff**

As described in the MOU, Davis Farm to School provides a “forager” to work as a liaison between farmers and the student nutrition services staff to increase the availability of local produce for school lunch meals. Georgeanne Brennan, of Evans & Brennan LLC, acts in this capacity. She also provides professional development throughout the year to food service staff in the form of cooking classes.

The cooking classes have been a significant way of introducing fresh foods and scratch entrees into the menus. They often focus on new flavor profiles, either emphasizing an ethnic group’s traditional dishes or a suite of herbs and spices that reflect a certain type of dish. The professional cooking classes have been extremely well received by staff. Evaluations collected after each class reflected 100% “excellent”. Some specific feedback includes the following:

- *Directions were given very clear. Everybody was organized. I really always look forward for the next class.”*
- *“I like the variety of the classes.”*
- *“Is my first time taking cooking classes and is amazing the way that I could prepare a complicated dish in a few minutes with the chef help. Thanks.”*

These classes have truly enhanced DJUSD Student Nutrition Services staff’s professionalism and sense of accomplishment. Staff members regularly express their pride and pleasure in the fact that they are increasing their professional culinary skills.

#### **Recipe and menu development: Evans & Brennan**

Georgeanne Brennan and food service staff have met 5 times during the school year to continue their professional training and development of menus for using fresh and seasonal produce in menus that can be adapted to the school food scale. The professional development workshops include nutritional information, cultural and culinary information about foods and methods of food preparation. They draw upon the skills, expertise and cultural backgrounds of the food service staff, who have been active participants in developing menus that work for DJUSD’s operation.

As the staff develops menus, they use them in school lunches and also in catering venues for district administrators, School Board members and community events. In addition to incorporating seasonal produce in recipes, menus this year also presented alternatives to commodity salad dressings, which typically contain sodium and High Fructose Corn Syrup.

- ❖ ***New Soups and Salads for Fall*** on October 28, attended by 11 staff members.
- ❖ ***Incorporating Winter Fruits and Vegetables into the Menu and Flavor Profiles of South East Asia*** on December 16, attended by 11 staff members. Poppy Strode delivered nutrition education information.
- ❖ ***Cooking with Winter Fruits and Vegetable: Flavor Profiles of the Mediterranean*** on January 20 with staff and Julie Cross from the Davis Food COOP. As partner to Davis Farm to School, Ms. Cross provided staff with passes to Davis Food Coop cooking classes.

- ❖ **Salad Dressings from Scratch** on March 24, attended by 13 staff members and visitors from DJUSD Board of Trustees, Susan Lovenberg, Zenobia Barlow, Executive Director of Ecoliteracy, and additional guests.
- ❖ **Summer Vegetables and Fruits and the Flavor Profile: Asian and Mediterranean** on May 5, attended by 11 staff and Rene Rianda of Morning Star of Woodland and her guest. Poppy Strode delivered nutrition education information.

Additional supportive professional development activities included:

- Negotiated new purchasing and distribution system with Jim Mills of Produce Express. During the year, Evans & Brennan worked with Mills to develop a system whereby Produce Express designates the name and location of growers supplying to DJSUD. This has made a tremendous difference in SNS's ability to track local and non-local purchases.
- Met with Miyuki Carson, Central Kitchen Manager to discuss menus, produce needs, and ordering logistics;
- Facilitated relationships with some local farmers for direct purchases.
- Attended and contributed to Nutrition Advisory Committee meetings.
- Met with RC on an ongoing basis to discuss successes and challenges of implementing fresh produce in the salad bars; supplying her with seasonal produce listings for menu planning.
- Arranged meetings with DJSUD Superintendent and garnering district support for SNS.
- Arranged catering events for SNS with as a means of marketing with PTAs, School Board and others.

**Professional development: Miyuki Carson**

Miyuki reaffirmed once again that the professional development cooking classes led by chef, Georgeanne Brennan are very enjoyable and beneficial for staff cohesion. They are a way to not only learn new cooking techniques and recipes, but to gather together as a team and share knowledge and friendship over food. These cooking classes are appreciated by all the staff, and she would like them to continue.

**Evaluators' Recommendations Goal 1C: Providing Professional Development**

- Continue the very successful professional development cooking classes with DJUSD SNS staff. As with the site visits, continue to invite district and outside personnel to observe the classes in order to raise awareness of the benefits of incorporating local produce into the menu.

#### **Goal 4: Community Outreach**

Community outreach activities were much more formalized and tracked in 2009 - 2010 than in the previous year. A key lesson from the previous year was that there was still a lack of knowledge and understanding about farm to school programs in general and what Davis is doing in particular. This year, community and professional outreach activities have helped to provide information and inspiration about the Davis Farm to School program to various audiences. DJUSD in collaboration with Evans & Brennan LLC have significantly increased the program's visibility in the community. Activities included a film series, a very successful "Tour de Cluck" tour of backyard chicken coops in Davis, and others (see below).

#### **School district outreach**

**Nutrition Advisory Committee.** In July 2009, RC, Evans & Brennan LLC discussed RC's plans for quarterly meetings of the Nutrition Advisory Committee. These were carried out. RC intended to develop a strategic plan for the NAC; however, this did not materialize during the year.

**Vision for School Food.** Evans & Brennan LLC suggested that they work with RC to develop a vision of the goal for school lunch in 10 years. This vision could then drive a 5-year capital improvement plan for school lunch facilities. Due to cost and time constraints, this plan was not reasonable to pursue at this time. However, efforts are underway for 2010 - 2011. Evans & Brennan LLC have recommended that such a plan be taken up as a first step with the newly appointed DJUSD-DF2S Liaison Committee to decide on to proceed

**Marketing Plan.** Marketing suggestions provided by the NAC , were to include the following elements:

- Regular events at each school site such as "Bring an adult to school lunch day"
- PTA president participation in the NAC. The current new superintendent has agreed to send a letter soliciting their support. It will be sent out in early fall.
- Poster contest with a prize (~\$100) from Davis Farm to School
- Menus and newsletters in the Back to School Packet
- Menu redesigns

One of RC's goals for the marketing plan, in addition to greater community and school district visibility, was to get 100% of eligible free and reduced price kids to participate in the program. During the year, one letter was sent out to eligible families. No additional outreach or targeting of this group was done during the year. Generally stable participation of this group (about 70% for free; 60-65% participation for reduced) reflects that although participation did not fall, it also did not increase. . The NAC did not have the human resources to carry out the above ideas.

**Other marketing materials.** Evans & Brennan LLC worked with RC to conceptualize and write some content for other marketing materials being developed including the **SNS newsletter**, to be distributed or published quarterly; an updated **website page**; the catering menu; and the DJUSD SNS brochure.

**Meetings with DJUSD Superintendent.** In December, Evans & Brennan met with Dr Hammond, the then Superintendent, to encourage his leadership on school lunch. He was very supportive and included Evans & Brennan LLC on future outreach with his cabinet. In January 2010, Evans & Brennan LLC met with the Administrative Leadership Team and Superintendent's Parent Advisory

Committee to describe changes in the school lunch program, pass out new menus, and provide a sample of SNS's Farm to School pizzas and seasonal fruit platters, prepared by the Central Kitchen. The "DJUSD Elementary School Nutrition and Wellness Assemblies" to be held quarterly were abandoned for 2009/2010.

**School lunch tastings.** In February, SNS launched weekly tastings at school sites throughout the district supported by a Davis Farm to School intern program. Local produce and items cooked from scratch were showcased.

**School Open House Family meal** catered by SNS. In March, SNS provided a simple pizza dinner for the Willet Open House. Almost 200 people attended despite rain. Davis Farm to School supported this event as a template for all elementary schools as a part of a parent focused marketing and outreach campaign about changes taking place in school lunch. The site PTA and Principal were very supportive and used it as a fundraiser as well as an education and community building opportunity. This should be done at every site as a marketing opportunity.

**PTA presentations & visits.** Evans & Brennan presented an update on school lunch to Montgomery PTA in March. In May, they visited 12 schools and met with teams including PTA presidents.

### **Community Outreach and Marketing**

A central purpose of these events is to raise the visibility of the vision and goals of DJUSD's Farm to School Program within the community – to "show not tell." The hope is that the community will gain a deeper understanding of the benefits of the program, and a sense of vested ownership of the program, through tasting the DJUSD menu items, meeting DJUSD staff, as well as Farm to School Steering committee members. The events provide cross marketing opportunities, and nest DJUSD's Farm to School programming inside ongoing community activities such as Chamber of Commerce luncheons and wine tasting at the Davis Food Co-op. The success of this program depends on community support.

Davis Farm to School organized and/or hosted several events in the community or at the school district to raise the visibility of the program and thank active school district participants. These included:

- **Willett Elementary School's Annual Open House** SNS provided a full salad bar/farm to school pizza dinner as a fundraiser for the PTA. This allowed parents to meet their student's "lunch lady" and to taste the actual school lunch. Parents paid for the cost of the meal plus a small donation to the PTA, and were able to have a delicious meal while socializing with the school community.
- **September Back to School Monthly Luncheon Davis Chamber of Commerce** Business leaders got to experience the changes in school lunch, and hear an update on the Student Nutrition Services program.
- **"Souper Bowl"** SNS participated in the Davis Food Co-op's annual fundraiser for "Meals on Wheels" with other restaurants in town. Each made their best soup, served it to guests who then voted on the soup they liked the best. SNS featured a soup they had learned in a Cooking School class offered through Davis Farm to School's Georgeanne Brennan, and which they were featuring that month on the menu. Guests loved the soup.

- **Night Out on the Town** Davis Chamber of Commerce fundraiser which invited restaurants to serve up a signature dish for guests who walked around the room sipping wine and tasting the best of Davis. Over 300 people tasted “Morrocan Tangine with 7 Vegetable Stew” over coucous. Guests, once again, were surprised to know this was “school lunch” in Davis.
- The 5<sup>th</sup> annual **Custodial Luncheon** in July 2009.
- **Full Moon Dance/Benefit** A community concert, dance and fundraiser Concert (Jan 30<sup>th</sup>). This was a sold out event and raised \$4,300 (net).
- **A Taste of Davis** on March 12<sup>th</sup> 2010. The DJUSD Student Nutrition Services served their 7 Vegetable Moroccan Tajin to over 300 guests at the annual Chamber of Commerce fundraiser, Staff also enjoyed this activity.
- **Nourishing the Kids of Katrina: The Edible Schoolyard film showing.** On March 26th the Slow Food Yolo Film Series benefitting Davis Farm to School continued with a special screening of at the Davis Senior High performing Arts Building.
- **Tour de Cluck** a bicycle tour/fundraiser of selected chicken coops of Davis (May 22<sup>nd</sup>). Widely publicized, this event brought in \$12,500 and brought in people with their bikes from as far away as Los Angeles.
- **Village Feast** is Davis Farm to School’s signature community event and fundraiser. Each summer on the last Saturday in August, over 200 community members and visitors sit together under the sycamore trees in Central Park and enjoy a meal together of local meats, cheeses, nuts, wine, fruit and vegetables. In 2009, the Village Feast attracted about 300 community members and brought in about \$20,000. At this forum DF2S’s annual awards are given to teachers and others who support the school gardening programs.
- **Artisan Baking on Wheels (ABOW)** is a nonprofit public corporation formed to purchase and cook local, whole grains from Yolo county into cooked from scratch pizzas using a portable, wood fired oven. The project invites K-12 student participation (for community credits) to help cook and serve the pizzas and market the products and their benefits to the community. ABOW now appears at Picnic in the Park (March-Oct) at the Davis Farmers Market. Proceeds from the pizza sales will be used to provide a sustainable economic base for the Davis Farm to School Program.
- The 2008/2009 Annual report was finalized, printed and distributed in the summer of 2009.
- In March 2010, Davis Farm to School produced its first e-newsletter, distributed to over 400 people.

## ***National and Professional outreach***

In July 2009, ideas surfaced about conducting a state or regional workshop about SNS professional development. This did not occur as a standalone event; yet, the innovative cooking classes have been incorporated into a variety of other outreach venues. In January, SNS Director, RC, DF2S President, Dorothy Peterson, Georgeanne Brennan of Evans & Brennan LLC and Gail Feenstra, Food Systems Coordinator at UC SAREP, participated in a panel at the California School Nutrition Association annual meeting to present on ***“The role of community in the success of school nutrition programs.”*** The packed room of school food service directors was very engaged in the topic and excited about the presentation.

In the spring, Ann Evans of Evans & Brennan, and Gail Feenstra, from UC SAREP, published an article in *“Poppy Seeds,”* journal for the California Child Nutrition Professional; Volume 53, No 4, pp. 18-19 about ***“Creating Community Partnerships to Support a Healthy School Food Environment in Davis, California.”***

### ***National outreach***

***USDA Undersecretary Visits.*** In an effort to gain national visibility for the Davis Farm to School Program, DF2S invited two USDA officials to visit its program. **Rayne Pegg**, administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, visited the Davis Joint Unified School District on March 8 to observe first-hand one of the nation's most-promising public school-lunch models. District officials were honored to host the visit and showcase Davis' pairing of commodity foods with local produce as well as community partnerships with Davis Farm to School, Sutter Davis Hospital and the Davis Farmers' Market.

At a reception May 20th hosted by Davis Farm to School and held at the Robert Mondavi Institute for Wine and Food Science at UC Davis, **Dr. Janey Thornton**, Deputy Under Secretary of USDA Food and Nutrition Service, addressed a crowd of 60 school food service directors, professionals, parents and students. She praised the Davis school lunch program for being “ahead of the curve,” working with the community and local business and providing the students with a healthy, local lunch.

Feedback from both of these events has generated national awareness of the Davis Farm to School Program in Washington DC as one of the foremost programs in the nation, according to several reports to evaluators Feenstra and Ohmart.

### **Evaluators' Recommendations Goal 4: Community Outreach**

- Continue the excellent work Evans & Brennan LLC have done in establishing relationships with the SNS Director and the Business Officer and with other district administrators and the Board of trustees.
- Work with the Superintendent to encourage PTA sites to send representatives to the Nutrition Advisory Committee and with RC to develop ways to make this entity more viable and useful in marketing. Find out where the barriers are.
- Continue to take advantage of statewide and national opportunities for promoting the Davis Farm to School program.

## **Summary: 3 “P’s” – Procurement, Participation, Professional development**

The following are summary observations and recommendations from the evaluation team.

### ***Procurement***

DJUSD made significant progress in 2008 – 2009 (first year of Measure Q) toward the goal of increasing farm fresh foods in school meal offerings. That progress continued in 2009 - 2010. Because of the work by Evans & Brennan LLC with Jim Mills of Produce Express to identify the source of produce purchases, total produce procurement increased substantially. Purchases from local farmers now stand at almost half of all district produce, a significant increase from the low of 16.6% in 2006 – 2007.

Over 60 farmers now benefit from DJUSD produce purchases, most through Produce Express distribution. Although there were some difficulties with distribution at the beginning of the year, the arrangements with Produce Express have proved to be an efficient way to bring in produce that is within DJUSD’s definition of local.

From the district’s perspective, equipment and labor also are necessary expenditures to keep fresh, local products moving through the meal program. This year, RC needed to invest considerably less of the Measure Q funds in lunchroom equipment for “bulk service” or “food bar service.” However, she foresees using more of the funds towards equipment next year, as she plans to transition two more schools to the daily choice food bar model.

### ***Participation/ Consumption***

The salad bars have remained popular throughout the year. They are well liked by the students according to several interviewees and observations. Fruit is especially popular, especially kiwi and strawberries. Tastings are always appreciated to encourage students to try new fruits or vegetables. Trainings, assemblies or other educational events that remind adult staff to encourage students would be a good addition to next year’s action plan.

Participation data show that salad bar days are generally MORE popular than non salad bar days although salad bar days often coincide with pizza days so the conclusion here is somewhat ambiguous in some schools. Overall participation is increased very gradually over the last few years. To achieve a significant and meaningful increase in participation, we recommend that SNS engage in a targeted marketing campaign for students, parents and staff, particularly for paid students.

On site observations were conducted at three points throughout this year. They were extremely rich and detailed, and provided supportive evidence for the conclusions here. With each round of site visits, more members of the school community and outside visitors have been brought in, which has helped to raise people’s awareness of Davis Joint Unified School District’s lunch program as a local, state, and national model.

### ***Professional development***

The cooking classes continued to be a highlight of the year. The increased scratch cooking with fresh, regional products introduced students to superior quality cooked products (casseroles, pizzas, rice dishes, soups) and increased purchases of regionally sourced ingredients as well. These classes are very popular with the staff and RC and we encourage continuing them in the future. Adding a regular, written evaluation component so that SNS has ongoing data about the impacts of these classes has helped create a feedback loop and track trends.

### ***Institutionalizing Farm to School through Policy***

Institutionalizing local procurement, marketing for increased participation and professional development that capitalizes on local foods is logically overseen by the Nutrition Advisory Committee. We strongly suggest that the NAC be structured so as to have a dedicated PTA site component and the ability to have direct input to Student Nutrition Services as well as reporting back to site PTA's about new developments.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A: Measure Q Parcel Tax Summary

Appendix B: Davis Joint Unified School District Student Nutrition Services Nutrition Framework

Appendix C: Best Practices from Site Visits