



NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION

to get **REAL FOOD** in schools · Labor Day, Sept. 7, 2009

A SLOW FOOD USA CAMPAIGN

KEY MESSAGES AND TALKING POINTS

Key messages

- We're calling for Congress to pass a Child Nutrition Act that **gives schools the resources to serve REAL FOOD for lunch.**
- On Labor Day, Sept. 7, people in communities all over the country are gathering for public potlucks to take part in the *Time for Lunch* National Eat-In. This day of action sends a clear message to Congress: **It's time to provide our children with REAL FOOD at school.**
- It's time to invest in children's health, protect against food that puts children at risk and teach children healthy habits that will last through life.

Talking points

- By giving schools the resources to serve real food, we can build a strong foundation for our children's health.
- By teaching children healthy eating habits, we can make a down payment on health care reform.
- School cafeterias that purchase locally grown fruits and vegetables are economic engines for developing small businesses, supporting family farmers and creating jobs in our communities.
- **Real food is good at every link in the chain.** It tastes good, it's good for us, it's good for the people who grow it, it's good for our country and it's good for the planet.
- Our schools lack the resources to serve children the real food they need. To solve this problem, Congress must:
 - Invest in children's health. Give schools just one more dollar per day for each child.



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- Protect against food that puts children at risk. Establish strong standards for all food sold at school, including food from vending machines and school fast food.
- Teach children healthy habits that will last through life. Fund grants to start innovative farm-to-school programs and school gardens.
- When children learn that real food is both delicious and good for them, they will ask for it at school and at home. Michelle Obama says, “What I found with my kids [is that] if they were involved in planting and picking it, they were much more curious to give it a try.”
- On Labor Day, Sept. 7, 2009, people in communities across America will sit down to share a meal with their neighbors as part of our **National Eat-In**. This day will send a clear message to Congress: It’s time to provide our children with real food at school.

Counter the anti-real food messages

- Bad message: “Real food is too expensive.”
Counter: “The costs of the status quo are obesity, a bad economy, more pollution and global warming. Real food is an investment in our nation’s future. Food that keeps kids healthy is a down payment on health care reform. \$1/child/day is a small price to pay now for the dividends real food will pay in the future.”
- Bad message: “We’ve got more important things to worry about than school food.”
Counter: “You can’t fix health care, the economy, energy or climate change without changing the way we grow food and get it to our plates. The best place to start is at school, where children can learn healthy habits that last through life. There is nothing more important to the health and security of our nation than our children’s wellbeing.”
- Bad message: “Kids like junk food and fast food, not real food.”
Counter: “When food is fresh and local and delicious, children try it and enjoy it. Most kids never get the chance to enjoy real food. Show them how to plant, pick and cook food in school gardens and kitchens, and they will start asking for it at school and at home.”