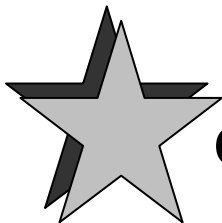
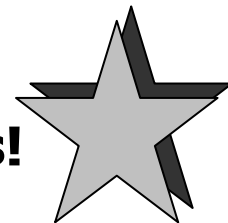


2008 NC Fruits & Veggies Nutrition Coalition Star Awards



Congratulations To This Year's Winners!



Gold Star Award for School District Camp Lejeune Dependents Schools Child Nutrition Department

Fresh fruits and veggies are a normal part of the school day at Camp Lejeune Dependents Schools. The school district participates in three different Farm-to-School programs, giving students regular access to everything from locally grown sweet potatoes and collard greens to the more exotic pluots and grapples. Children learn about the importance of good nutrition through classroom lessons and activities, and some even visited a local farm this past spring. The children were able to see produce growing and being harvested, and they even did a little harvesting of their own as they all enjoyed picking and eating the fresh strawberries!

Silver Star Award for School District Rowan-Salisbury Schools Child Nutrition Program

Elementary school students in Rowan-Salisbury schools saw fruits and veggies come to life last spring through the "Rainbow Groove," a 40-minute production that featured characters such as Ellie Eggplant, Gigi Grape and Bonita Banana. The "Rainbow Groove" was created by the Child Nutrition Department as a fun, interactive way to teach children about the importance of fruits, veggies and physical activity. The colorful, creative stage was complete with a giant salad bowl and a pot-of-gold that was full of fruits and veggies. Dances like the "fruit freeze" and the "salad groove" captured the children's attention and made the messages memorable. Watch out for the upcoming sequel, "The Rainbow Groove 2 – Coming to a School Near You!"

Shining Star Award for School District Ashe County Schools Child Nutrition Program

Vegetable soup made with stones? Fruit smoothies made with cottage cheese? Giant broccoli and corn characters mingling with children during lunch? These are just a few of the unique and creative ways that the Ashe County Child Nutrition staff has helped children get excited about fruits and veggies. The school system has worked to get parents excited too, by doing cooking demonstrations and even having "Cornelius Corn" and "Crunchy Broccoli" dance at a PTO meeting. And the best part of all – it's working! Teachers and cafeteria staff say children are choosing more fruits and veggies for their lunch. Children are asking the cafeteria staff to add their favorite items to the lunch menu, and some are even asking their parents to buy new foods they have tried at school.

Gold Star Award for Individual School/Childcare St. Mary Magdalene Catholic Church & School

Children at St. Mary Magdalene Catholic School aren't just learning about fruits and veggies in the classroom. They are getting hands-on experience by digging in the dirt! This past year, second-graders planted a cool season vegetable garden, kindergarteners planted cantaloupe, and third graders had a contest to see who could grow the biggest cabbage. Children got to taste the products of their garden during "fruit parties" and "salad celebrations." The fresh produce that wasn't used in the school was put to good use, as more than 50 pounds of veggies from the garden were donated to a local non-profit organization that helps neighbors in need. All the hands-on activities, combined with nutrition education and menu improvements, are giving the children at St. Mary Magdalene an early start at lifetime healthy habits.

Silver Star Award for Individual School/Childcare Gentilesse Place

Gentilesse Place Preschool has a goal of teaching children about fruits and veggies while allowing the children to have fun at the same time. The children ordered fruits and veggies from a menu at a pretend restaurant, shopped for produce in a pretend grocery store, planted a real garden, worked their way through a fruits and veggies obstacle course, and even had a "green slime" lunch day when their food was covered with "green gook," which was actually pureed fruits and veggies. What fun – the children loved it! Gentilesse place partnered with community businesses to secure seeds, aprons, produce and other materials for the educational activities. They also made some changes to reinforce the importance of healthy eating. On "Prize Fridays" children began receiving fresh fruit adorned with stickers rather than candy prizes. Parents got involved too; they received information and were encouraged to support healthy eating at home.

Shining Star Award for Individual School/Childcare Graham A. Barden Elementary School

Walk into the cafeteria at Graham A. Barden Elementary School, and you might think you've entered an airfield! Model airplanes hang from the ceiling and aviation-themed murals decorate the walls. The school, which is in close proximity to Cherry Point Marine Corp Air Station, chose a theme of "Be Cool, Refuel" for their participation in the 2007-08 USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. They created a "refueling station" in the cafeteria, which is stocked each morning with a fresh fruit or veggie. "Student pilots" visit the refueling station each day and select their snack for the day. Fruits and veggies are promoted during the morning announcements, in classroom activities, on bulletin boards throughout the school, and even during physical education class.

Gold Star Award for Worksite LiveWELL Carolinas!

The LiveWELL Carolinas! Initiative exists to promote preventive health and encourage healthy choices among employees of Carolinas HealthCare System. LiveWELL Carolinas! staff strive to incorporate messages about the importance of fruits and veggies in all their programs. They have worked with employee dining facilities to offer more fruits and veggies to employees. They provide a six-month weight loss program where participants track fruit and veggie consumption. They have identified "champions" in different departments who initiate projects such as stocking employee fruit and snack baskets as an alternative to traditional vending machine choices. They offer healthy cooking classes that showcase fruits and vegetables. Thanks to the LiveWELL Carolinas! program, employees at Carolinas HealthCare System now have more healthy choices, are eating better, and many are enjoying the benefits of losing weight and feeling great.

Silver Star Award for Worksite Amdocs / ABCS Vision, Inc. / Charlotte, NC

Imagine going into your break room at work and having access to fresh fruits that are washed, sliced, and ready to eat. In the afternoon, imagine colorful trays with an assortment of fresh veggies for you to choose for your afternoon snack. Imagine that all this is available, every work day, at no cost to you! That's what employees at Amdocs, Inc. Charlotte experience every day, thanks to a company initiative that is striving to help employees eat more fruits and veggies. The company has also worked with a local farmer to set up an onsite farmer's market once per week during the lunch hour, giving employees easy access to fresh produce to purchase and take home. Both programs have been a huge success. Employees report eating more fruits and veggies, and many have lost weight and say their spouses have, too!

Gold Star Award for Community / Civic Group Inter-faith Food Shuttle

Staff at the Inter-faith Food Shuttle believe that "everyone deserves the opportunity to fill themselves with foods that benefit their physical and cognitive growth." The Food Shuttle extends that opportunity to as many people as possible by recovering, preparing and distributing wholesome, perishable foods to local citizens. In 2007, the Food Shuttle rescued over 2 million pounds of raw produce for distribution to over 200 programs and agencies serving low-income people. The Food Shuttle promotes fruit and veggie consumption in a variety of ways. In their quarterly newsletter, they highlight seasonal produce and share preparation and nutrition tips with their partner agencies. Through the Backpack Buddies program, children take home backpacks full of food, including fruits and veggies, for their weekend meals. The Culinary Job Training Program utilizes an onsite garden to teach students to identify and prepare fruits, veggies, and herbs. The garden is also a great teaching tool for the Operation Frontline program, which teaches people to prepare and eat healthy meals, including fruits and veggies, on a budget.

Gold Star Award for Healthcare Southeastern Regional Medical Center Community Health Services – Project HEALTH

Project HEALTH (Healthy Eating and Active Lifestyles for Tomorrow's Health) focused their nutrition education efforts on elementary school students, engaging them in a variety of activities ranging from planting a salad garden to visiting a "Healthy Snackin'" booth during an end-of-year Fun Day. Project HEALTH staff enlisted high school students to bring a new level of creativity, energy and enthusiasm on board. Teacher cadets from a local high school planned and delivered creative, interactive nutrition lessons to elementary students, while high school art students created giant wooden fruit and veggie characters to display in the elementary school cafeterias. The partnerships between the high schools and elementary schools was a fun and unique way to reach as many students as possible.

Silver Star Award for Healthcare FirstHealth of the Carolinas School Based Health Centers & Page Street Elementary School 3rd Graders

When the staff at FirstHealth of the Carolinas School Based Health Centers discovered that the 3rd graders at Page Street Elementary School were among the heaviest elementary students in the county, they knew they needed to focus on that group of children. In collaboration with Montgomery County Schools administration, they designed and implemented a 4-week program that stressed the importance of fruits and veggies. Lessons focused on everything from healthy snacking to making healthy choices in local restaurants. Parents were given information about increasing fruits and veggies, including tips for packing a healthy lunch. The School Based Health Center Staff consider the project a great success, and they hope it will increase awareness of the need for healthier snacks and more fruits and veggies in the school cafeterias.

Gold Star Award for Business / Other Rockingham County Cooperative Extension

Fruit and yogurt parfaits, fruit salsa on quesadillas, peanut butter dip with pumpkin hiding inside...what better way to get children excited about fruits and veggies than to let them taste these ingredients in scrumptious recipes! That was the idea behind the Rockingham County Cooperative Extension's series of Fruit and Veggie Tasting Events with two local elementary schools. The four sessions, titled "Ole' for Fruits and Veggies," "Holiday Treats with Fruits and Veggies," "Spring into Fruits and Veggies," and "Safe and Healthy Summer Treats," were well-received by the students, who couldn't wait to try the new recipes. Many of the students were trying certain foods, such as raw sweet potato and kiwi fruit, for the first time ever. Students also got to take the recipes home to their families. In a post-program survey, half the students at one school reported making the recipes at home...what a success!

Silver Star Award for Business / Other Pasquotank County Cooperative Extension

At three elementary schools in Pasquotank County, second and third grade children received hands-on experience through the "Kids in the Garden" program. Cooperative Extension agents worked collaboratively with the schools to engage the children in interactive lessons about plants, soil, nutrition and physical activity. In addition to classroom lessons, the children planted and harvested fresh fruits and veggies from a garden at their school. Imagine the smiles when their tiny seeds turned into tasty cabbage, squash, cucumbers, cantaloupes, tomatoes and strawberries!

The NC Fruits & Veggies Star Awards are presented annually as part of the NC Fruits & Veggies Nutrition Coalition Symposium. The awards are presented to organizations for their innovative efforts to design and implement programs that increase fruit and vegetable access, awareness and consumption for North Carolinians.

If you are interested in applying for the 2009 NC Fruits & Veggies Star Awards or are interested in contributing to these awards, please contact Diane Beth at Diane.Beth@ncmail.net

The NC Fruits & Veggies Nutrition Coalition wishes to thank Dole Food Company, Inc. for their generous sponsorship of the 2008 Fruits & Veggies Star Awards!