



NEWS RELEASE

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Talking Taters at Fairfax School Salad Bar Celebration

Students at Lemon Road Elementary Enjoy Fresh Potatoes as Part of their School Salad Bar

Falls Church, VA (November 8, 2018) – Today, the National Potato Council and United Fresh Start Foundation joined students, teachers and school administrators at Lemon Road Elementary School in Falls Church, VA for a “Celebration of Potatoes” lunchtime event. Kindergarten students learned how and where potatoes are grown, about different varieties, as well as potato nutrition benefits. All students also enjoyed a Greek-inspired potato salad from the school’s new salad bar.

“Potatoes are highly nutritious cost-effective vegetables that kids love to eat. Salad bars empower schools to offer healthy potato options that meet all K-12 school foodservice guidelines,” said Kam Quarles, Vice President, Public Policy, National Potato Council. “We are proud to help Fairfax schools achieve their nutrition goals by introducing kids to new ways of enjoying potatoes,” added Quarles.

Earlier this year, the National Potato Council partnered with the United Fresh Start Foundation to provide three salad bars to the Fairfax County Public Schools, as part of the national *Salad Bars to Schools* initiative. The donations also are part of a larger, multi-year potato industry campaign, which, over the past three years, has provided salad bars to more than 300 schools across the country. Recipient schools receive salad bars along with potato recipes, serving suggestions and other materials to assist K-12 school foodservice operators with incorporating potatoes on their menu.

“The potato industry has been a valuable partner in helping to provide salad bars to schools across the country,” said Andrew Marshall, United Fresh’s Director of Foodservice & Foundation Partnerships, representing the United Fresh Start Foundation. “The generosity of potato growers, and the forethought of the potato industry to educate children about the different ways they can enjoy potatoes has yielded a successful partnership for all parties involved.”

Fairfax County Public Schools is the 10th largest school district in the country. Under the leadership of Rodney Taylor, the district’s nationally recognized Food and Nutrition Services Director, the Fairfax school district serves breakfast, lunch, supper and snacks, in nearly 200 schools throughout the county. Taylor’s goal since he started in the district in 2015, has been to have a salad bar in every elementary school. The district’s initial request for more than 140 salad bars has since been significantly whittled-down, thanks in-part to United Fresh, produce industry supporters and *Salad Bars to Schools* partners.

“We greatly appreciate the produce industry, supporters of the national *Salad Bars to Schools* initiative, as well as our local partners, who all have helped to make salad bars an important part of our school nutrition program,” said Rodney. “The salad bars give us the ability to increase offerings and encourage kids to choose fresh produce every time they eat with us. And guess what? They do!”

USDA nutrition standards for school lunch require offering students a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables each week. Salad bars provide an easy way for schools to meet this requirement. Children significantly increase their fruit and vegetable consumption when given a variety of choices in a school salad bar, and when offered multiple fruit and vegetable choices they respond by incorporating greater variety and increasing their overall consumption.

The United Fresh Start Foundation is a founding partner of the national *Salad Bars to Schools* initiative, working with the produce industry, foundations and allied businesses to support salad bars for schools, as a strategy for increasing children's access to fresh fruits and vegetables every day. To date, salad bars have been donated to more than 5,300 schools, benefitting 3 million children in all fifty states. For more information about the United Fresh Start Foundation or to specifically support the *Salad Bars to Schools* initiative, visit www.unitedfreshstart.org or contact Andrew Marshall, Director of Foodservice & Foundation Partnerships, United Fresh Produce Association at amarshall@unitedfresh.org or 202-303-3407.

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About The United Fresh Start Foundation

The United Fresh Start Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization focused exclusively on increasing children's access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Affiliated with the United Fresh Produce Association, the Foundation is committed to helping today's kids achieve the public health goal to make half their plate fruits and vegetables to live longer and healthier lives. The Foundation works to create an environment in which kids have easy access to high-quality, great-tasting and affordable fresh fruits and vegetables, whenever and wherever they are choosing snacks or a meal. More information at: www.unitedfreshstart.org.

About The National Potato Council

The National Potato Council is the advocate for the economic well-being of U.S. potato growers on federal legislative, regulatory, environmental and trade issues. NPC supports the U.S. potato industry by monitoring issues affecting the strength and viability of the potato industry, influencing regulators and legislators on issues crucial to the industry's long-term success, ensuring fair market access for potatoes and potato products, and bringing the unique issues and interests of diverse growing regions in the U.S. together on a national level.