



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Renegade Lunch Lady establishes foundation to create healthier school lunches

Food Family Farming provides 'Lunch Box' of tangible tools for school districts

BOULDER, Colo. (July 28, 2009) — Changing the way children eat — one school lunch at a time — self-proclaimed Renegade Lunch Lady Ann Cooper announces the formation of the Food Family Farming Foundation (F3). The foundation will work with individual schools, school districts, families, farms and local producers to encourage sustainable eating values while providing K-12 public school food service directors the necessary tools to serve made-from-scratch, nutritious meals to students.

Universal change is needed. According to the 2009 School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study 42 percent of the schools surveyed did not offer fresh fruits or raw vegetables daily in the school lunch, and whole-grain bread products were offered in fewer than 5 percent of lunches overall.¹

The percentage of obese or overweight children is at or above 30 percent in 30 states according to *F as in Fat: How Obesity Policies Are Failing in America 2009*, a July 2009 report released by the Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Through the Lunch Box Project, a comprehensive set of “why” and “how to” online tools, F3 will transition the typical processed-food-based school meal program to a menu plan full of food procured locally and prepared from scratch. Trading in the canned cheese and Tater Tots for fresh vegetables, baked chicken and whole grains, lunch providers will experience firsthand how eating healthy is attainable. A comprehensive beta Web site will be launched August 15, making it possible for any children’s health activist in the U.S. to have easy access to the same tools Chef Cooper has introduced in school districts in New York, California and Colorado.

“We’ve already experienced success with this program in Berkeley, Calif.’s public schools and am presently transitioning Boulder Valley School District’s meals,” said Cooper, who is the interim director of nutrition services for Boulder Valley School District. “But this change has to occur everywhere for the health of our children. More than 30 million school lunch meals are served each school day in this country. The set of tools F3 is offering will help all school districts seeking to implement change.”

F3 Foundation will provide school food service directors with training programs, direct services, an online community and the Lunch Box Project Web portal with numerous resources. Such resources include the menus and production records needed for compliance with the National School Lunch Program; recipes that are nutritionally analyzed, priced, tested and scalable; teaching tools (videos, photos, manuals) linked to the recipes so that help is available immediately for things like learning how to roast chicken for 3,000 meals; and procurement tools and methodology to help a district

transition from one-stop shopping with a single national distributor to understanding how to find, purchase and manage real food.

"I'm inspired to see F3 come to life," said Nicole de Beaufort, F3's executive director and president of Fourth Sector Consulting, Inc. "The work of Ann and F3 are a continuation and fulfillment of the vision that we can make a difference for all children in America, by changing the food they eat."

de Beaufort's experience consulting with foundations and nonprofit initiatives focused on food systems change, particularly as it relates to children's health, is an ideal match to the organization's mission. Founder Ann Cooper along with long-time colleague and business partner Beth Collins will serve as the driving force for change through their daily interactions with students and food service directors while working in the school cafeterias. Cooper's progressive visionary goals are expressed to parents and change agents around the nation through her numerous speaking engagements.

Founding partners and supporters of the F3 Foundation are the Chez Panisse Foundation, the Kellogg Foundation, the Orfalea Foundations, the Colorado Health Foundation and Whole Foods Market Inc.

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About Food, Family, Farming Foundation:

Founded by Chef Ann Cooper, The Food, Family, Farming Foundation (F3) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization organized to change the food system in America from a chemically dependent and resource-depleting agricultural model to an ecologically sound, sustainable one. By empowering schools, families, farms and producers to operate sustainably, F3 enables schools to serve nutritious whole food to all students. F3 educates through training programs, direct services, a Web portal and collateral resources. Visit www.foodfamilyfarming.org for further information.

¹ Condon E, Crepinsek MK and Fox MK. "School meals: the types of foods offered to and consumed by children at lunch and breakfast." *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 2009.