

Introduction

The cafeteria tastings were first piloted in the fall of 2015 to increase meal participation at secondary sites. In order to measure the success of the tastings, data was collected of lunch participation before and after the tastings. While the findings were inconclusive, frequent tastings will become integrated into high school lunch periods.

The tastings have four main goals:

1. Increase participation
2. Provide nutrition education
3. Train cafeteria staff to engage with customers
4. Create the opportunity for the cafeteria to become part of the school culture

Overview

Tasting

The cafeteria tastings during lunch are a great way to expose students to nutritious items on the menu with the goal of increasing participation, providing nutrition education, engaging cafeteria staff with customers and creating an opportunity for the cafeteria to become part of the school culture.

During the cafeteria tastings, the tasting team will distribute samples and share nutrition information about the item being sampled. Then, the team will encourage students to share their opinion about the item by giving them a ticket to vote. The students will be asked to place their ticket in one of three labeled bowls:

- LOVED IT
- LIKED IT
- NO THANKS

After the tasting, the team will count the votes from the ticket bowls and record the counts on a reflection sheet to be returned to Revere. This information will be used to better understand our students' school lunch preferences.

Before the Tasting

2 weeks before

- Choose the tasting item from **Suggested Tasting Items** list on page
- Contact tmcnamara@sandi.net to request promotional fliers and tasting materials. Please provide date of the tasting and name of sampled item. You will then be sent a packet that includes:
 - signage to display near the tasting area the week of the tasting
 - signage to be displayed on an A-frame near the table during the tasting
 - talking points to use when interacting with the students during the tasting
 - Yummy app cards
 - a reflection form to give feedback about the tasting
 - raffle tickets to collect feedback from students
 - labels to display in front of the raffle ticket bowls
- Contact jgarcia3@sandi.net to request a canopy
- When choosing the date of the tasting, inform the principal, Associated Student Body and other clubs on campus to avoid conflicting schedules (see attached **Letter to Principal** on page 12)
- Order all necessary tasting materials (see attached **Tasting Materials** list on page 10)
- Have appropriate staffing for the day of tasting. At least two employees will be needed on the tasting team to successfully complete a tasting

1 week before

- Determine the number of samples that will be served (a good number is 10-15% of the school population—anywhere from 150-300 samples)
- Order enough product for the samples
 - Tastings increase student participation on the day of the tasting, so be prepared to have extra entrees of the sampled item available
- Inform the BSS of the tasting event and ask the BSS to set up a table and assist with setting up the canopy on the day of the tasting
- Hang up fliers near the cafeteria and prominent areas around the school
- Contact active student groups on campus to assist with promoting the tasting and handing out samples, including ASB, cheerleaders, cooking clubs or other related groups (see attached **Letter to Students** on page 13)

Tasting Day

Before the tasting

- Include sufficient product preparation time- **this is very important!**
- With the help of the BSS, set up the canopy, A-frame with sampling poster and table
 - Set up the tasting station near the POS cart that serves the actual entrée of the item being sampled
- Make sure that there is a waste bin next to the tasting table
- On the table, lay out table cloth, napkins, the ticket bowl and an example of a full reimbursable meal (using the sampled item) on the black platter



Table display with canopy set up



Table display with samples, reimbursable meal and YumYummi app cards



A-frame example



Reimbursable meal example

- Prep the product
 - Be sure to prep extra entrée items for the POS carts and inside lines because taste tests usually increase participation for that item



During the tasting

- Always have gloves on (even if you are using tongs) when distributing samples
- When possible, take photos during the tasting to use for social media
 - Media releases are required for all identifiable students in the photos
 - Send all photos to tmcnamara@sandi.net



- Talk to the students! Utilize the talking points from your tasting packet. Key talking points include:
 - Nutritional benefits, where to purchase the product on campus, what days the item is available
 - If a student has a question about allergens or nutritional content, tell them to download the YumYummi menu app and hand them an app card



- Keep track of the number of samples served
- Hand out tickets and encourage students to vote to give feedback using the ticket

After the tasting

- Pack up all tasting materials and return table and waste bin per the instruction of the BSS
- Count the votes from the ticket bowls and fill out Tasting Reflection Form to send to Revere attention Tara McNamara
- Send all requested items back to your Prep Kitchen

Suggested Tasting Items



Fish and chips



Mandarin Chicken



Carnitas Burrito suggestion : Sample only the carnitas meat, not the cut up pieces of burrito



Ava's Avocado Salad suggestion: Pre-toss salad in large bowl then distribute in small tasting cups

Serving the Samples

For a cold sampling, not pre-portioned:

- Put the sampled item in a 2-inch senior pan
- To keep the item cold, place three blue ice packs at the bottom of a 4-inch senior pan and place the 2-inch pan inside of the 4 inch pan
- Serve item directly from the 2-inch pan using toothpicks or tongs

For a hot sampling, not pre-portioned:

- Place the sampled item in a 4- inch senior pan
- Keep the item warm by placing the pans inside of a CresCor holding cabinet
- Bring the CresCor to the tasting table and take out one pan at a time when distributing samples
- Serve item directly from the 4-inch pan using toothpicks



For a pre-portioned sampling:

- In the kitchen, prepare the sampled item and portion the item into 2 oz. soufflé cups
- Place the cups on sheet pans (bun pans)
- Keep the item warm or cold by placing the sheet pans inside of a CresCor holding cabinet



- Bring the CresCor to the tasting table and take out one pan at a time when distributing samples
- Distribute the sample cups with toothpicks or small spoons

Tasting Materials

- ☐ Napkins (request from your prep kitchen)
- ☐ Disposable table cloth (request from your prep kitchen)
- ☐ Gloves (found in your cafeteria kitchen)
- ☐ A-frame (found in your cafeteria kitchen)
- ☐ Multiple pans (found in your cafeteria kitchen)
- ☐ Ice packs (found in your cafeteria kitchen)
- ☐ CresCor holding cabinet (found in your cafeteria kitchen)
- ☐ Canopy (request from Jesus Garcia at jgarcia3@sandi.net)
- ☐ Tasting Packet (request from tmcnamara@sandi.net), including:
 - **Fliers**
 - **Sign for A-frame**
 - **Talking Points**
 - **YumYummi app cards**
 - **Raffle tickets**
 - **Tasting Reflection Form**
 - **Labels to display in front of the raffle ticket bowls**
- ☐ Any necessary tasting items- toothpicks, soufflé cups, utensils (request from your prep kitchen)

Reference Page

The following Area Supervisors and Site Supervisors participated in tastings and can be used as resources for trouble-shooting and best practices.

Mira Mesa High School

- Area Supervisor—Darlene Brenha
- Site Supervisor—Hermie Link

Morse High School

- Area Supervisor—Bill Cheney
- Site Supervisor—Sophia Glover

Pershing Middle School

- Area Supervisor—Lucina Laserna
- Site Supervisor—Craig Ambrose

UC High School

- Area Supervisor—Jan Wendt
- Former Site Supervisor—Renee Corti

If you would like extra assistance conducting your taste test, please contact our Farm to School specialist at jmanzano@sandi.net.