

# Food Facts:

## The real deal on school and summer meals

### MYTH:

*School meals are unhealthy, processed and low-quality.*

### FACT:

School and summer meals must meet high nutrition standards, which means they're a balanced mix of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, and low- or no-fat milk. These days, many schools are making meals from scratch with whole – sometimes even locally grown – ingredients.

### MYTH:

*School lunches are boring and don't include the kind of food we eat at home.*

### FACT:

Schools create menus with a variety of real ingredients and styles to appeal to a range of tastes. They are used to serving picky eaters, as well as kids with specific dietary needs. Schools strive to incorporate food reflecting different cultures and welcome feedback on their menus. School meals give your kids choices of the foods they like without having to leave the building.

### MYTH:

*School and summer meals are for low-income families and should be reserved for them.*

### FACT:

School and summer meals are available to all kids and teens – and the more students choose them, the more money schools get to keep making high-quality, nutritious meals for everyone. Selecting school and summer meals makes sure these programs keep getting funded.

The food you can find in a cafeteria or at a summer meal site has changed for the better since you were in school. But myths may linger. Let's get the facts.

### MYTH:

*Schools only provide lunches, or maybe a snack too.*

### FACT:

Schools participating in child nutrition programs can offer breakfast, lunch, snacks and summer meals. These meals are essential for keeping kids healthy and energized throughout the day so they can learn and grow.

### MYTH:

*School meals are the same as when you were a kid.*

### FACT:

School meals have come a long way since Salisbury steak was a staple. Thanks to initiatives such as the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, students access balanced and nutritious meals that get healthier every year. In Colorado, many schools use fresh, healthy ingredients to make meals a lot more like the foods you serve at home.



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education  
School Nutrition