

Lunch Break for Schools

Current and Hidden Valley Original Ranch Dressing and Dips, Jan 1,2013

Summary: 2013 Silver Anvil Award Winner — Events and Observances (Seven or Fewer Days) — Consumer Products

Instead of Sloppy Joes and fries, imagine kids eating school lunches including chicken and black bean quesadillas, bell peppers with low-fat ranch dip, and fresh cantaloupe.

That transformation was the goal of the White House's [Chefs Move to Schools program](#) and in 2012, Hidden Valley® Original Ranch® Dressing teamed with celebrity chef Cat Cora the American Culinary Federation (ACF) to realize that dream.

The inaugural [Lunch Break for Schools fundraiser](#) took place Feb. 27 – March 2. Seventy-eight chefs nationwide, including chefs in eight key markets, sold healthy lunches to support Chefs Move to Schools and efforts to encourage childhood nutrition.

Events and observances (seven or fewer days) includes programs or events scheduled for one to seven consecutive days (not including planning and preparation). Events may include commemorations, observances, openings, celebrations or other special activities, and must occur within a time span of one week.

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RESEARCH

President Obama's signing of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act sparked a national discussion that put the focus not only on moms at home, but also on school lunches.

Four of the new lunches featured in the recommended school lunch menu featured low-fat ranch dressing, providing national and governmental support to position ranch as the best option for increasing veggie consumption. This "dip it in ranch" revolution helped to shape the planning process by giving low-fat ranch credibility and the right to play in the crowded space of childhood nutrition.

Additional research showed:

- Children tend to consume more vegetables when paired with a moderate amount of ranch dressing.[1](#)
- Consuming a moderate amount of fat with vegetables/salads may be beneficial to the

body's ability to adequately absorb fat-soluble nutrients.²

- Parents participating in a home-based intervention program about fruits and vegetables led to increased knowledge and availability of both in the home, which was a significant predictor of their children's increased consumption..³

The formation of the White House's Chefs Move to Schools program offered a chance for Hidden Valley to encourage childhood nutrition (and vegetable consumption) both at home and in schools by partnering with chefs participating in the program.

PLANNING

To further support the efforts of the White House and Chefs Move to School, and allow for Hidden Valley to be a part of the timely national discussion about childhood nutrition, the brand created the Lunch Break for Schools fundraiser.

Armed with research insights, Current was ready to execute a multi-platform fundraiser, benefitting Chefs Move to Schools that reached:

- Eight of the largest US markets through strategic partnerships with local chefs
- Nationally with a program executed through the American Culinary Federation (ACF). The ACF would use their wide network to recruit additional chapters in smaller markets to take part in the fundraiser (70 in total).

Although outreach was hyper-local, Hidden Valley saw the opportunity to create a movement through the banded efforts of chefs nationwide.

The objectives of the Lunch Break for Schools fundraisers were to:

- Increase vegetable consumption by highlighting the occasions for dipping raw veggies in Hidden Valley
- Create consumer awareness for Hidden Valley's products in helping kids learn to love their veggies through 150 million media impressions.
- Highlight the opportunity for companies, municipalities, schools, chefs, NGOs and parents to come together to better childhood nutrition.

Current created a multi-layered strategy to support our objectives. Our efforts included:

- Tapping chef spokespeople to connect Hidden Valley to the Chefs Move to Schools movement.
- Hosting and executing eight local events in large markets to promote Lunch Break for Schools messaging and ACF/Chefs Move partnership.
 - Extensive media relations efforts in those chosen markets.
- Partnering with the ACF to create the tie to the Chefs Move program and help with the execution of the fundraiser. The ACF was charged with recruiting chefs nationwide in smaller markets to participate in Lunch Break for Schools.

EXECUTION

Tapping chef spokespeople

- Enlisted celebrity chef, mom and Chefs Move participant Cat Cora to act as national spokesperson.
- Partnered with eight notable chefs in key markets to host fundraisers and conduct media relations. Chefs included Michael Kornick (Chicago), Geoffrey Zakarian (New York), Suzanne Goin (Los Angeles), Ericka Burke (Seattle), Russell Jackson (San Francisco), Brenda Langton (Minneapolis), Ford Fry (Atlanta) and Stephan Pyles (Dallas).

Execute local events

- Coordinated eight local events in Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, Seattle, San Francisco, Minneapolis, Atlanta and Dallas. Collaborated with chef spokespeople to promote events taking place at their notable and locally-acclaimed restaurants:
 - **2/27/2012:** Suzanne Goin, Los Angeles at LA Tavern
 - **2/28/2012:** Michael Kornick, Chicago at mk
 - **2/29/2012:** Geoffrey Zakarian, New York at The Lamb's Club
 - **2/29/2012:** Stephan Pyles, Dallas at Stephan Pyles
 - **2/29/2012:** Ford Fry, Atlanta at JCT. Kitchen
 - **2/29/2012:** Brenda Langton, Minneapolis at Spoonriver
 - **3/1/2012:** Russell Jackson, San Francisco at Lafitte
 - **3/2/2012:** Ericka Burke, Seattle at Volunteer Park Cafe
- Worked with chefs to create designated Lunch Break for School menu items and recipes, which we would then use in media relations.
- Created a chef toolkit online for chefs across the country to download program materials and promotional assets to promote in the program in their restaurants and create their own fundraisers in their markets.

Partnering with the American Culinary Federation

- Recruited 70 ACF members to host Lunch Break for Schools fundraisers in their communities.
- Cross-promoted the campaign with the ACF, granting \$150,000 to support the execution of the fundraiser and the creation of education tools for the chefs participating in Chefs Move to Schools.

EVALUATION

Increasing vegetable consumption

- Children's usage of ranch with veggies has increased six points since the launch of Hidden Valley's nutrition education campaign in 2006
- The percentage of Americans who ate fresh fruit and vegetables frequently in January 2012 (55.7%), February (57.4%), and March (57.4%) 2012 were higher than in the same months in 2011.[4](#)

Create consumer awareness through 150 million media impressions

- Program resulted in more than 186 million media impressions and an internal marketing analysis found that the PR campaign was the most efficient element of the brand's entire marketing plan, delivering \$1.21 in return for every dollar spent.
- The program was covered by top media outlets including Good Morning America, The Nate Berkus Show, Los Angeles Times online, New York Times online and Good Housekeeping online.

Highlight the opportunity for companies, municipalities, schools, chefs, NGOs and parents to come together to better childhood nutrition

- 100% of broadcast coverage included discussion of how everyone can help in the effort.
- Coverage in top mom-targeted outlets such as Babble, iVillage and Daily Candy told moms "How you can buy lunch and help childhood nutrition."

[1.](#) 2006 study of two Northern California elementary schools conducted by the University of California Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program and the Butte County Cooperative Extension.

[2.](#) "Carotenoid bioavailability is higher from salads ingested with full-fat than with fat-reduced salad dressings as measured with electrochemical detection." The American Journal of Clinical

Nutrition (2004): 396-403.

3. "High 5 for Kids: The impact of a home visiting program on fruit and vegetable intake of parents and their preschool children." Preventive Medicine 9 Apr. 2008.

4. "Fewer Americans Report Healthy Eating Habits in 2011"
<http://www.gallup.com/poll/153842/fewer-americans-report-healthy-eating-habits-2011.aspx>, 11 Apr. 2012

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