



THE CHALLENGE: BRINGING LOCAL PRODUCTS TO SCHOOLS

There are numerous benefits to purchasing locally beyond stimulation of local economy and support of family farms. Local partnerships can provide fresh fruits and vegetables, while teaching children the importance of supporting their community and being environmentally responsible.

WHAT WHITSONS BRINGS TO THE TABLE

Whitsons is committed to bringing local products to programs through:

- **Quality Ingredients.** We work closely with our clients and local vendors to promote a variety of local ingredients, while removing ingredients such as trans fats, high fructose corn syrup and artificial colors and flavors from the foods we serve.
- **Farm-to-School Program.** Local produce and freshly prepared meals are the key ingredients to success with our “Guest Chef Going Local” events. Farm-to-School programs are also featured through out Harvest of the Month.
- **Vertical Gardens.** As part of our Elmer’s Organic Garden and overall nutrition education awareness program, Whitsons provides one vertical organic garden unit to every school district we serve.
- **On-site Gardens.** We also work with our clients to introduce on-site gardens to their school communities. From an educational perspective, a project like this can teach children the importance of where foods came from, and impress upon them the need to conserve precious resources for future generations.
- **On-site Greenhouses.** On-site greenhouses are another great way for districts to provide organic produce to be worked into our menus, and also create an additional classroom environment. We can support these efforts.

“It has become clear that today’s children have less of an understanding of the food they eat than ever. With a greenhouse, children can live the food experience from plant to plate. I can’t tell you how many kids are amazed when we grow a bean plant; they look at a can of beans and finally learn how many plants it takes just to fill the can from the supermarket! It’s that knowledge, and the hope that when they grow up, they can make the right decisions about food, that makes all the difference.”

OUR SUCCESS STORIES

By working with local farms and vendors, it's a great way to get the community involved with your school. Here are some local programs in action at a few of our clients:

CLIENT 1. Our team promoted Whitsons' Greenleaf Cuisine concept by partnering with local farmers and businesses to source local and organic ingredients and offer them in our menu specials of the day...receiving rave reviews from the students, client and local press!

CLIENT 2. The Garden to Table Club at CLIENT held a cookoff for their year end celebration featuring vegetables from their school garden. This was a great opportunity to create menus around what the school grows onsite, as well as provides a learning experience for children.

CLIENT 3. The high school salad bar offers organic options daily as part of our Farm to Fork partnership with local farms and vendors. We also offer farm stand promotions to showcase local seasonal produce at the elementary schools.

CLIENT 4. For National Apple Month, students were treated to a delicious array of locally-purchased, apple-inspired meals to encourage children to choose healthier options for breakfast and lunch. Our team spoke to the students about the wide variety of delicious apples. The promotion was such a hit that the breakfast average increased by 40 meals!

CLIENT 5. Receiving a Farm-to-School grant from the State of Pennsylvania, the CLIENT district and food service team is able to offer samplings of locally grown produce to its students, accompanied by farm and nutritional information for each. Our team also includes local produce in school lunches on a regular basis.

CLIENT 6. Students at CLIENT have been hard at work cultivating their green thumbs—growing fresh vegetables and herbs on school property and having them served in cafeteria meals.



"I know I speak for lots of staff members in saying thanks to the cafeteria folks for putting on such a great lunch yesterday: the food and preparation were amazing, not to mention there probably aren't too many high schools out there bringing in chefs to serve organic and locally harvested offerings."

"We are very proud to be serving these fresh foods to the students and I hope we can continue to grow the initiative more and more each year. My goal is to provide fresher, healthier fruits and veggies, while teaching the children the importance of supporting their local community and being environmentally responsible."





THE CHALLENGE: A SMOOTH TRANSITION

The decision of contracting with a food service company for the first time or switching contractors can be difficult. However, with the right company, a transition can be seamless and rewarding.

WHAT WHITSONS BRINGS TO THE TABLE

The unique structure of our family business places a strong emphasis on teamwork and entrepreneurial spirit, which lives in our company's culture. We treat everyone like family: we see all of our team members as part of Whitsons' extended family, and we are committed to supporting their growth both personally and professionally.

- **Welcoming the Existing Team to the Family.** We are sensitive to the apprehension that exists with any change. That is why our first priority is to meet with the existing team to welcome them to our family and build a team environment from the start.
- **Traditions Orientation.** We hold an orientation session to introduce team members to our organization, culture and expectations. We also provide training, answer any questions they may have to alleviate their concerns, and discuss their ideas on how to make improvements to the current program.
- **Working Together as a Team.** To ensure a smooth transition, we work with your existing staff to make your program a success. We want them to be proud of the important work they are doing—nourishing growing minds.
- **Comprehensive Training Program.** Our seasoned culinary professionals work side by side with team members to introduce new concepts and expanded offerings gradually, so as not to overwhelm the staff. We provide them with the tools and opportunities to get involved in the school lunch program, and make a difference in the lives of the students they serve.



“We chose Whitsons for its family ownership, the way they planned for our employee transition and their dedication to working with the district to guarantee a smooth transition for students, parents and the community. The food service has flowed better than I could have ever imagined. And [the lunch lines] have gotten faster each day. Thanks for all your efforts to make this transition as easy as possible.”

“What convinced me to join Whitsons some 10 years ago was the strong family ties and the fact that the Whitcomb family was dedicated and still found balance between work and their family lives. I remember thinking this is where I want to work. I really was impressed.”



"I am extremely pleased with the changeover and how smoothly the transition went. I've heard nothing but positive reviews of the new service. There's a wide variety of selections now...the food is so healthy and fresh...wow, what a difference. Thank you for making this so seamless."

"Whitsons has been town-friendly, community-friendly and congenial with which to do business. They presented an extremely smooth transition, did their very best to welcome the same employees into the Whitsons' "family," making it a wholesome work environment...and they did this while entirely running in the black."

OUR SUCCESS STORIES

We have been successful at developing a rapport with the existing dining staff and welcoming them into Whitsons' family. For example:

CLIENT 1. Understanding the importance of a solid, cohesive team behind the service line, Whitsons met and trained team members to implement a new menu with our concepts, understand HHFKA regulations, and become oriented with the Whitsons culture. As a result of working side by side with CLIENT, we developed a close relationship with the onsite food service team and together, we transitioned into the new program smoothly, enabling us to introduce a number of service enhancements.

CLIENT 2. After twelve years of working with another vendor, the CLIENT team members were cautious about accepting Whitsons into their close knit family. Our transition team met numerous times, trained the existing team members, and worked closely with the Board of Education and Administration to make sure all their needs were met. In a very short time, Whitsons earned the trust of the team members; the caution once felt by the onsite team has been replaced with perseverance.

CLIENT 3. CLIENT's number one concern in changing providers was the transition process. They witnessed similar districts experience challenges with a new service provider, and were hesitant to take the risk. To alleviate their apprehension, we listened carefully to the district's objectives and developed a program that reflected a variety of high quality, branded concepts and nutritious meals, while developing a strong relationship with the existing team each step of the way. We built a solid camaraderie with the food service team from the beginning, working hand in hand with them to deliver on our promise of a smooth changeover.

CLIENT 4. Opening mid-year, Whitsons was hired by the district at a time when the food operation was struggling in terms of management, food quality and financial sustainability. The Assistant Superintendent quoted us as "coming on board with a can do attitude and whatever it takes commitment to work with [district] employees to successfully improve all aspects of the school lunch program. Within months, [Whitsons] improved the menus, quality of food, staff training, purchasing and inventory control—they are committed, and I would strongly recommend them without hesitation."





Financial Stability

WHITSONS
School Nutrition



THE CHALLENGE: STAYING IN THE BLACK

School lunch programs across the country are facing the same challenge: maintaining financial stability while adhering to Healthy Hunger Kids Free Act (HHFKA) standards. Nutrition programs everywhere are feeling the impact on participation and sales—but with education and awareness, the industry can once again reclaim student and parent acceptance and participation.

WHAT WHITSONS BRINGS TO THE TABLE

How can Whitsons help your district comply with HHFKA requirements AND increase program participation and profitability? We have a history of improving financial performance in our client accounts through:

- **Wholesome Foods.** Long before the HHFKA standards were in place, Whitsons was offering wholesome, all natural ingredients of the highest quality.
- **Menu Variety.** Our menus are customized to your community's preferences. Participation is increased by creating a menu that's both health-focused and student-driven.
- **Promotional Campaigns.** Innovative promotions such as our "What's Your Fooditude" campaign, Harvest of the Month promotions and FLAVES monthly specials introduce new menu items and create excitement while engaging students in the feedback process.
- **Purchasing Power.** Our proprietary business enterprise system is designed to support a purchasing process that capitalizes on the cost savings of high volume purchasing. This, in turn, allows us to pass on the savings to our clients.
- **Transparent Accounting.** We are fiscally responsible. From the start, we ensure that our projections accurately reflect your expectations. Our approach ensures there are no surprises after the ink on the contract is dry.

"Not only did Whitsons meet the financial targets for our program; they in fact exceeded them by 25% with respect to net profit. Additionally, I have seen firsthand the improvement in the quality of our offerings in presentation, taste and nutritional content."

"I wanted to thank you for being a company that provides an excellent meal program geared toward school lunch but with all the fine touches. You make the food services for our district of 11 separate accounts an economically good choice that works along with our bottom line."

OUR SUCCESS STORIES

We have been successful in bringing school nutrition programs from red to black, and building upon profitable programs—but don't just take our word for it. Here are just a few examples:

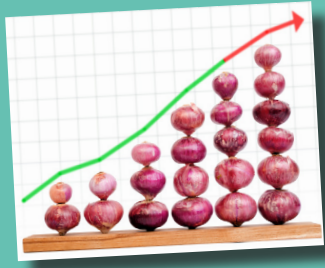
CLIENT 1. Student participation and sales have increased each year since Whitsons began serving CLIENT. We partnered with the district to implement a classroom breakfast program at all 10 elementary schools, increasing breakfast meals by 160% and breakfast participation by 48% over an 8 year period.

CLIENT 2. Originally a self-operated program struggling financially, CLIENT selected Whitsons to manage its nutrition program. With a late award and short period for transition, we quickly made quality changes in the program, trained and built a relationship with the existing staff and implemented an improvement program that has yielded a 23% increase in meals served, turning a deficit operation into a profitable one.

CLIENT 3. Prior to Whitsons, the district struggled with capturing student participation and sales. By bringing in a seasoned Food Service Director, enhancing labor productivity, working closely with the existing team to welcome them as part of the Whitsons family, and making menu enhancements such as authentic Mexican cuisine to accommodate student population preferences, Whitsons has successfully improved sales over the previous vendor.

CLIENT 4. At CLIENT, we have successfully increased the bottom line return over the prior year's service under another vendor. We enhanced the menu to now offer students a varied selection of 4 to 6

choices each day (originally only 1-2 options), plus added colorful signage to the create a more attractive and easy-to-navigate serving area.



“Since Whitsons has managed and operated [our district], the level of services and quality has been outstanding. They have continued to keep the cost of school lunches down while providing nutritional and tasty meals.”

“Before Whitsons came on board, we were headed in the wrong direction. With Whitsons, we have moved to all whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables daily and daily vegetarian choices. Whitsons made changes before it was necessary, and while it probably cut into your profit, it shows that you want to do what is right.”



WHITSONS[®]
School Nutrition