

Bedford County Public Schools

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Bedford County Public Schools Collaborates with Homestead Creamery to Enhance Student Nutrition

(Bedford, VA): With National Lunch Week being October 9-13, 2023, Bedford County Public Schools is excited to announce a fantastic partnership with Homestead Creamery, a local dairy farm known for its high quality dairy products. Through this collaboration, BCPS aims to provide fresh and nutritious milk to students during school hours while promoting health and well-being. BCPS is proud of this innovative partnership, being the first school division in the region to transition all of its schools over to this style of service. By sourcing milk locally from Homestead Creamery, BCPS not only supports the local economy but also ensures that students have access to wholesome, farm-fresh milk every day.

Suzanne Quesenberry, School Nutrition Supervisor, observed how many milk cartons were being thrown away every day at breakfast and lunch, so she began to look for creative ways to curb this problem. "Phasing out the use of milk cartons became a priority for our nutrition program at the end of the last school year, given the amount of milk and cardboard containers that were being wasted. Students now grab a reusable plastic glass, fill it with as much chocolate, strawberry or unflavored milk as they'd like, and drop it off with their lunch trays before leaving." She stated that BCPS could not have done this on their own though. "The National Dairy Alliance assisted the school division through grants to begin the implementation of the switch over to the dispensers. We are seeing that more students are choosing to drink milk with their meal and a large reduction in the overall waste as well."

Homestead Creamery Sales Manager Erin Saacke stated, "We're excited to partner with BCPS and commend Suzanne on the hard work she has put in to help bring local milk to Bedford County students. While other school divisions have milk dispensers in a few of their schools, BCPS is the only one we've seen move to this system for all of their schools. With over 30 dispensers across the school division, students are now enjoying an average of 1,000 gallons of fresh Homestead Creamery milk every week. While our milk sales have grown to span 15 states across the East Coast, we love that this partnership allows us to deliver milk right in our backyard and support the local community."

On Tuesday, October 10, 2023, as part of National Lunch Week, BCPS schools will be celebrating this collaboration with a "MOO'ving through the Week", a dairy themed day to spotlight the importance of dairy in students' diets. Students will have the opportunity to choose the "Cow Combo" of a mini banana chunky monkey parfait.

The collaboration between Bedford County Public Schools and Homestead Creamery represents a mutual commitment to promoting health, supporting local agriculture, and fostering positive community relationships. This partnership exemplifies the positive impact that can be achieved through collaboration between local businesses and educational institutions.

If you'd like to come celebrate National School Lunch Week, please email kristen.borak@bedford.k12.va.us for more information.

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