Welcome to our special edition dedicated to Persimmons! The taste testing we held last month at Parkway was a huge success! Many students were trying them for the first time and 90% of the tasters loved or liked them. See below for more information about this fruit health benefits and different ways of consuming them.

In our effort of gathering student feedback we put suggestion boxes in all secondary schools. We are looking forward to hearing all the great ideas they will have! We are also developing online surveys for students (secondary) and for parents (elementary). Please encourage your students to participate.

We came back from The School Nutrition Association annual conference with a nice list of new products that we will taste-test with the students and include in our menus if they are “approved”. Particularly exciting are amazing plant-based, non GMO products created by renowned Swedish chef Anders Linden. The company is coming to the USA and we hope that these products will be available soon.

Get Familiar with Persimmons

It is worth getting more familiar with persimmons. The Latin word for it means “food of the gods.” A fruit most often grown in warm, dry climates, those found in larger grocery stores are most likely Japanese persimmons. Persimmon is Japan's national fruit and that's where it originated (American persimmons are mostly ornamental).

There are two distinctly different types of persimmon and many varieties of each type. Astringent varieties, like the acorn-shaped Hachiya, must ripen fully before they are eaten; their unripe flesh is tannic and causes an extremely unpleasant sensation in the mouth. These varieties are generally harvested when they are hard and ripened on countertops or windowsills. When they are ready to eat, their thin skin is a translucent orange and their flesh is runny and gelatinous. Astringent varieties are often used in baking or preserving and can be dried to make the Japanese treat, hoshigaki.

Non-astringent varieties of persimmon, like the squat Fuyu, can be eaten (with the skin) when they are still hard. The fruit’s flavor is sweet and mild, and its texture is smooth. These varieties are perfect for eating out of hand, slicing into salads, or drying in thick rounds.

Nutrition Services wishes you wonderful holidays and a very Happy New Year 2018!

Fran Debost, MS, RDN Nutrition Services Director
Persimmons are rich in vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin E and vitamin B6, as well as dietary fiber, manganese, copper, magnesium, potassium, and phosphorous. Health benefits of persimmon are numerous. They aid in digestion, boost immune system, improve blood circulation, support skin and eye health and reduces risk of cancer.

The easiest way to eat a sweet persimmon is to slice it in half and eat it raw. There are a lot of other ways to consume persimmons though; for example, add them to salads, make a sweet salsa or jam, use them in sorbets or in desert recipes in lieu of bananas. Below is a simple recipe you can try. Enjoy!

**Persimmon and Goat Cheese Salad**

**Ingredients:**
- 6 cups green (mixed, any style)
- 1 Fuyu persimmon diced
- 1 small apple diced
- 1/2 cup soft goat cheese, crumbled
- 3 Tbsp sliced almonds, toasted
- 4 Tbsp. tangerine juice
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1/2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 pinch salt
- 2 dashes pepper

**Directions:**
Place the greens in a salad bowl and top with the fruits and goat cheese.

In a small bowl, whisk tangerine juice, mustard, salt and pepper. Whisk in olive oil in a small stream. Adjust to taste. Combine with greens and toss. Sprinkle almonds over all. Serve.

**PART TIME JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

You come to school everyday to pick up your students. Why not come earlier, spend a few hours in the kitchen and get paid?

Nutrition Services has several positions open, daily work or substitute. To find out more please contact Ana Miramon at:

amiramon@ssfusd.org.

**ONLINE MEAL PAYMENTS**

Please take advantage of the option to prepay your student’s meal account. Prepaid meal accounts help the lunch lines go faster. Prepaying also gives you the peace of mind of not having to send cash on a daily basis. It also decreases the chance of lost lunch money.

You can also set an alert on your account to inform you when the balance is running low.

Find this link on our district home-page, www.ssfusd.org:

**FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE MEALS**

Please remember than you can **reapply anytime during the year** for free and reduced-price meals if your income or household size changes.

The online application only takes a few minutes and is the fastest, easiest way to get approved.

Find this link on our district homepage, www.ssfusd.org:

If you do not have access to a computer, you can use one in the Nutrition Services Department and be assisted if necessary (our staff speaks Spanish).