

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

IDEA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER / JANUARY 2026

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

As the year 2025 is near to close, our Child Nutrition Program continues to nourish students with healthy, delicious meals made with care.

November brings gratitude, we're thankful for all of our dedicated IDEA CNP team and the nutritious meals that fuel student success.

December is a time for celebration, we're proud to serve food that brings comfort and joy during the holiday season.

January marks a fresh start where together, we'll continue inspiring healthy habits and bright beginnings for our students.

Thank you for supporting our mission to make every meal count!

Looking for menus?

Visit our website for the monthly menu
www.ideapublicschools.org/parents/cnp





FACT 1:
The word "pumpkin" comes from the Greek pepon, meaning "large melon."



FACT 2:
Pumpkins are actually fruits, and are part of the squash family.



FACT 3:
Long ago, Native Americans grew pumpkins and shared their secret with the Pilgrims!



FACT 4:
It is versatile and used in many dishes, from soups and stews to desserts.



FACT 5:
Food is medicine! Roasted pumpkin seeds are tasty and packed with nutrients that help keep you healthy.



FACT 6:
They are packed with vitamin A, like carrots, which helps you see in the dark.



FACT 7:
Helps reduce inflammation in the body, calming swelling so you feel better and move more easily!



FACT 8:
They're full of potassium, a heart-helper that helps keep blood pressure steady!



FACT 9:
Pumpkins grow on vines in fields called pumpkin patches.



FACT 10:
People carve pumpkins into jack-o'-lanterns for Halloween.



Pumpkin NUTRITION FACTS



Recipe Corner
Warm Cinnamon Apple W/Pumpkin Muffin Top
Part of our Fall/Winter Menu as one of our Seasonal Muffin Tops



THIS INSTITUTION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER.



Nutrition Spotlight: Pumpkin



Pumpkin spice and everything nice, plus nutrients too! Pumpkin isn't just for pies it is rich in fiber and vitamin A, helping keep you full and your immune system strong all season long. Enjoy it roasted, in soups, or blended into smoothies this fall.



HEALTHY HOLIDAY EATING FOR FAMILIES

SIMPLE TIPS TO ENJOY FESTIVE MEALS WHILE KEEPING NUTRITION IN MIND

The holidays are full of fun, family, and food — but it can also be easy to overdo it! Help your child (and yourself) feel your best by keeping a few simple tips in mind.

1 Snack Smart

Don't let yourself or your kids get too hungry before a big meal; offer a light, healthy snack earlier in the day so no one feels like they need to overeat later.

2 Plate Wisely

When it's time to fill your plate, focus on vegetables and protein first, like roasted veggies, salads, turkey, or beans. Enjoy starchy and sugary foods afterward — they'll taste just as good!

3 Hydrate

Encourage your family to drink water or low-fat milk instead of sugary drinks, so you're eating your calories instead of drinking them.

4 Listen To Your Body

Remind kids (and adults!) that it's okay to say "no thank you" when they've had enough. Listening to our bodies and practicing mindful eating can help everyone stay healthy and happy throughout the holiday season!

5 Leftovers are Okay

Remember, you don't have to eat everything at once — leftovers make great next-day meals.

Find us on  

Search "IDEA CNP"
to Like, Share & Follow our page!



HOW TO

Eat Healthier During the Holidays

Take a 10 minutes break before you go and get seconds. Your brain might need to catch up, you might want less food.

Take 10 before a 2nd serving



When filling up your plate don't skip out on the vegetables, even if they are just side dishes!

Make room for veggies



You can still eat your favorite holiday foods! Just eat smaller portions and savor it.

Fit in your favorites



Start with a small plate of the foods you like best. Start with vegetables. Eat slowly. Avoid or limit alcohol.

Be mindful at the buffet



Source: Student Health and Counseling - The University of New Mexico



Students
eat FREE at IDEA!

All IDEA Students are eligible to receive one FREE Breakfast and one FREE Lunch every school day!

Every school day, students can look forward to wholesome and flavourful meals that feature:



Protein



Assorted Milk



Fresh Fruit & Vegetables



Whole Grains

Farm to School Program



Our students have been busy exploring where their food comes from and learning about the wonders of plants!

Elsa 9th graders helped start marigold seeds, getting hands-on experience with planting and caring for flowers.



Over at Monterrey Park, our pomegranate flowers started growing in September — a beautiful sign of seasonal growth!



Elsa 2nd graders learned about plant parts in September, discovering how roots, stems, leaves, and flowers all work together.



In October, our 9th grade farm students assisted with Quest's first zucchini harvest, experiencing the joy of harvesting fresh produce.



Be sure to
"Like, Follow & Share"

"IDEA CNP" on Facebook & Instagram for more info about our amazing famers!



Celebrate Fresh!

Celebrate delicious, nutritious foods with these National Food Holidays:



- November**
National Pomegranate Month
- Contains fiber to promote healthy digestion.
 - Pomegranates symbolize good luck and prosperity in many cultures, perfect for the holiday season!
 - Each fruit holds hundreds of edible seeds, called arils, that are juicy and sweet-tart.



- December**
National Pear Month
- Provides vitamin C and potassium to help boost immunity and energy.
 - Pears continue to ripen after being picked, store them at room temperature until soft.
 - There are over 3,000 varieties of pears grown around the world!



- January**
National Orange Month
- High in vitamin C, which supports immune health and skin health.
 - There are many varieties, including navel, blood, and mandarin oranges, each with a unique flavor and color.
 - Provides potassium to support heart health.

HOM Recipes & Resources

Visit our website to explore Harvest of the Month resources and get inspired to celebrate fresh at home!

www.idealpublicschools.org/parents/cnp

HARVEST OF THE MONTH // COSECHA DEL MES

[AUGUST 2025](#)
[AGOSTO 2025](#)

[SEPTEMBER 2025](#)
[SEPTIEMBRE 2025](#)

[OCTOBER 2025](#)
[OCTUBRE 2025](#)

► [Previous Harvests of the Month // Cosecha Anterior Del Mes](#)

POZOLE ROJO DE PUERCO (Holiday Recipe)

INGREDIENTS

- 3 lbs pulled pork, thawed (smoked or roasted, no sauce)
- ½ cup tomato paste
- 2 quarts (8 cups) chicken broth
- 1 large can (29 oz) white hominy, do not drain
- ½ cup dehydrated onions (or 1 large fresh onion, diced)
- 3 Tbsp Mexican or Pozole Seasoning Mix
- 1 Tbsp oregano leaves
- 1 tsp salt (adjust to taste)

Servings: ~ 8-10



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat a large pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat.
2. Add the pork, tomato paste, and seasonings (Mexican seasoning, oregano, salt, and onions).
3. Stir and break up the pork into small chunks using a wooden spoon.
4. Cook 10–15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the tomato paste darkens slightly and the pork releases its oils.
5. Add the chicken broth and hominy (with its liquid). Stir gently to combine.
6. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat to medium.
7. Cover and simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
8. Optional (for more accurate texture or portioning): Use a slotted spoon to separate the meat and hominy from the broth before serving.
9. Keep warm until ready to serve.

POZOLE SPICE MIX: INGREDIENTS

¼ cup chili powder

3 Tbsp paprika

3 Tbsp granulated garlic

1 Tbsp cumin

This recipe makes ~1 cup of spice mix

1 cup Pozole Spice mix = 1 cup Mexican Spice



Want more cookbook recipes?
Scan the QR code or visit
<https://ideapublicschools.org/parents/cnp>

SAFE AND INCLUSIVE HOLIDAY MEALS

HOW TO SAFELY SHARE HOLIDAY MEALS WHEN FOOD ALLERGIES ARE PRESENT

When gathering for the holidays, it's important to make sure everyone feels included, especially those with food allergies. Here are three ways you can help everyone feel welcome at the table during the holidays.

1 Ask Ahead

When inviting friends and family, ask if anyone has food allergies and discuss some examples of safe food options you could include.



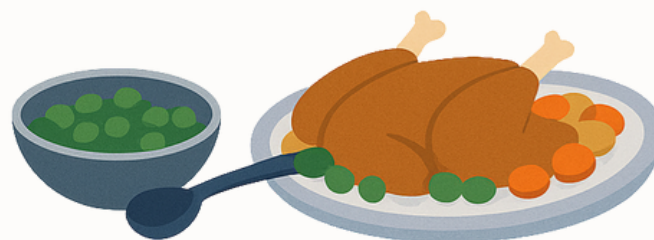
2 Prep with Care

Prepare allergen friendly food on a clean countertop and use separate cooking tools to prevent transferring allergens. Make sure to wash hands, counters and surfaces carefully before and during preparation.



3 Serve Safely

When serving, keep allergen friendly food separate and use designated serving utensils for those dishes.



A few small steps and a quick conversation can help everyone feel included and enjoy the meal safely.



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To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

email:

Program.Intake@usda.gov

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