

Back-to-School Fun with **REAL CALIFORNIA DAIRY**



Going back to school often means hitting the books for ideas to create healthy lunchbox and after-school treats that kids will love. The food fun experts at Real California Milk have developed a host of easy tweaks and creative twists that will keep you thinking outside the traditional lunchbox all year long.

Milk it: Don't forget the milk money. Studies have indicated that more than half of children aged 2 to 8, and three-quarters of children age 9 to 19, do not consume the recommended daily servings of milk and other dairy products. Replacing soda and juice with low-fat or skim milk is an easy way to eliminate empty calories and enhance the nutritional value of kids' diets.

Go global: Encourage your children to experience the foods of the world. Lettuce wraps are a great place to start. Pack a stack of iceberg lettuce leaves, grilled chicken strips, shredded cheese and a yogurt-spice dressing (cumin, mint and dill all work well). For younger kids, send veggie sticks with homemade dip made with California buttermilk, yogurt or sour cream.



Make food fun: Lunch time is a break from the day's learning – why not make it even more fun with food? Instead of traditional cheese slices, try cubes and/or a variety of shapes. Cookie cutters work wonders on cheese and come in every shape imaginable.

And when kids are eating at home, try some fun new takes on traditional meals:

- Kids love the idea of having breakfast for lunch or dinner. For a truly surprising option, try a scoop of cottage cheese (or frozen yogurt) topped with an apricot or peach to look like a fried egg, complete with strips of fruit leather “bacon” and pound cake “toast” on the side. This makes a great after-school snack as well.
- Or, transform the beloved grilled cheese sandwich into look-alike French fries by cutting the sandwich into strips and serving in a paper boat or fry bag with ketchup or fry sauce on the side.

Say “yes” to sweet treats: Sweets aren't all bad. Why not let your child indulge in a cottage cheese “sundae” starting with healthy low-fat cottage cheese topped with strawberry preserves and sprinkled with chocolate chips, toasted coconut or granola. Fruit slices dipped in yogurt and rolled in granola also make a yummy, healthy lunchroom or after-school bite.



Look For The Seal

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