

Greetings Everyone:

We hope your back to school experience has been good up to this point and that things are running smoothly for all of you. I know there have been a lot of anxious moments with menus and the new USDA regulations, we hope all of you are surviving.

**Synergy School News** will be published four times a year in the following time line and installments:

- August - Back to School Issue
- November - Commodity Issue
- February - Bid Guide Issue
- May - Summer/ANC Issue

This inaugural edition of **Synergy School News** comes to you as the brokerage company is really taking shape. To refresh all of you, Synergy is a Missouri-based food brokerage company with offices in St. Louis and Kansas City. Synergy currently represents 8 manufacturers that process government commodities: Asian Food Solutions, Bongards' Creameries, Echo Lake Foods, Giorgio, Gold Kist Farms, Jennie-O, JTM Food Group, & MCI Los Cabos. Food products represented by Synergy are also available commercially in the states of Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, & Missouri through various distribution networks. Synergy's primary focus is the K-12 school segment.

My partner, John Pickert and I are deeply appreciative of your support and patience as we have come together in our merger. We enjoyed seeing many of you in Denver at ANC and hope that you find the first edition of our newsletter informative and interesting. As always, please contact us to see product samples or if you need nutritional specifications on any of the items contained here within. Thank you!

Tom Hoenig & John Pickert

### In This Issue:

- **New Product Line: Echo Lake Foods**
- **Missouri Commodity News**
- **Synergy Manufacturer's Corner**
  - **Asian Food Solutions-General Tso's Chicken**
  - **Bongards' Cheese-New 200ct Cheese Slice**
  - **Giorgio-Whole Grain Wheat Crusts**
  - **Gold Kist Farms- New Savory Roasted Chicken**
  - **Jennie-O Turkey Store-Thursday Is Turkey Day**
  - **JTM Food Group-Sweet Thai Sauce, New Website!**
  - **MCI-Los Cabos- New Regulations Items**
- **Matthew's Motivational Message**
- **USDA Spotlight**
- **Meet The Director: Ronda McCullick, Park Hill School District**
- **Meet the Synergy Team: John Pickert & Tom Hoenig**
- **Olympics Trivia Contest**

### Upcoming Events & Important Menu Dates:

- **September 3 – Labor Day**
- **September 9 – Grandparent's Day**
- **September 22 – First Day of Fall**
- **September 25 – Yom Kippur**
- **October 8 – Columbus Day**
- **October 17 – Kohl Wholesale Food Show**
- **October 17 – Illinois Commodity Show**
- **October 20 – SNA-KS Show Wichita, Kansas**
- **October 25 – SFNDA St. Louis Meeting**
- **October 23 – National Mole Day**
- **October 31 – Halloween**
- **November 3 – MSNA Show Springfield, Missouri**
- **November 12 – Veterans Day Observed**
- **November 22 – Thanksgiving Day**
- **January 16-18 – 2013 Missouri Commodity Expo Shows**
  - **1/16 – Fort Osage**
  - **1/17 – Waynesville**
  - **1/18 – Francis Howell**

## **NEW SYNERGY MANUFACTURER ANNOUNCEMENT!!!!!!**

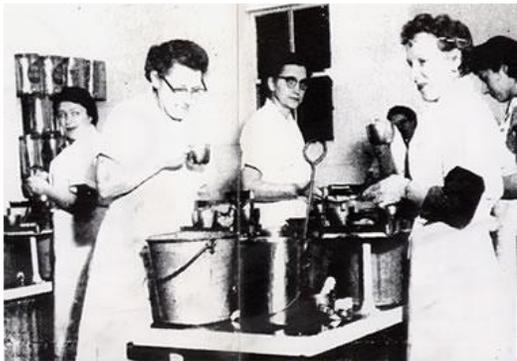


August 1, 2012- Synergy Food Sales is pleased to announce that we have become the broker for Echo Lake Foods. Echo Lake's history started near the end of the Great Depression, when a young man just out of high school bought eggs from local farmers, stacked them in the back seat of a used car and drove them to the homes of relatives and friends for the sole purpose of selling these eggs. The young man's name was Paul Kramer and with this idea, Echo Lake Farm Produce Company was born. Mr. Kramer's business grew quickly as he branched into the Chicago market where Paul and his father traveled there with their eggs which they began selling to factory workers.

With the expanded business, a 40 by 40 concrete block building was constructed on their farm property overlooking Echo Lake, located in Burlington, Wisconsin. The "door to door" delivery of shell eggs gradually ended as they acquired a Milwaukee based egg processor in 1949. This acquisition launched Echo Lake into the business of breaking eggs and selling them as liquid.

In 1964, egg breaking and pasteurization capabilities were installed, replacing "hand breaking" of eggs. This allowed Echo Lake to offer longer shelf life egg products as well as expand into more markets. With the establishment of USDA inspection for liquid egg processing, Echo Lake emerged as one of the few major processors in the Midwest to meet the highest of standards. In those years, more automation was added, new buildings constructed and a fleet of trucks emerged to transport refrigerated liquid eggs as well as newly developed frozen egg products to customers.

In 1981, Mr. Kramer sold the company to the present owners, the Meinerz Family.



Since then, Echo Lake has adapted in many ways to meet the demand of an ever changing marketplace. Beginning in 1983, the company began production of a frozen line of cooked omelets, egg patties and diced eggs.

In 1996, they expanded into the production of French Toast and Pancakes.

In 2001, they acquired a large production and storage facility in Owensboro, Kentucky. That facility gave Echo Lake new capacities along with additional strengths in serving their national customer base.

In 2004, they changed their name to simply **Echo Lake Foods**, due to the commitment to offer customers far more than just egg products. They continue to create a variety of new concepts, flavor options and entrée styles for breakfast meal menus.

Over the next few months, John and I will be working diligently to prove commodity marketability in Missouri on four items. These items compare very favorably to the Sunny Fresh products that some of you are purchasing currently:

- MF3148 Colby Cheese Omelet
- MF3062 Grilled Egg Patty
- MF3015CN Pre-cooked Scrambled Egg
- MF 8085CN WG Glazed French Toast

Here at Synergy, we are pleased to add Echo Lake Foods to our manufacturer line up!



## MISSOURI COMMODITY NEWS

Synergy Food Sales currently represents seven manufacturers that are available to participating LEA's for the 2012-13 school year.

A few things to consider when you process with a Synergy represented manufacturer:

- Synergy keeps your orders until 6 weeks prior to distribution month. If a product is not working for you or you have too much of an item scheduled let us know as soon as possible and we can make adjustments for you. This is a service that our competitors do not readily provide.
- Synergy's goal is to help improve menu planning, alleviate freezer over-crowding, and increase overall satisfaction with the commodity processing program.

Commodity Expo dates and places are set per Matthew Essner, Assistant Director. Following are the dates for the 2013 Missouri Commodity Expos in case you would like to mark your calendar and join us for the show:

- Wednesday, January 16, 2013 – Fort Osage (KC area)
- Thursday, January 17, 2013 – Waynesville (central MO)
- Friday, January 18, 2013 – Francis Howell (STL area)



## SYNERGY MANUFACTURERS CORNER

This section contains news and information about new items that are available from Synergy's fine manufacturers...



Asian Food Solutions' General Tso's Chicken (72003) is lightly battered boneless chicken, pre-sauced with a sweet and spicy flavor. Unlike the competition, this product requires no mixing, which means a more consistent, easier product to handle for your staff. Request a sample of the General today!

Go to their website, [asianfoodsolutions.com](http://asianfoodsolutions.com) for nutritionals and further information on all their products.



Bongards announces a new, 200 count cheese slice that will help with the new USDA regulations for school lunch. It is a .3 oz slice that is only .25 m/ma. A lot of school districts were excited about it in Denver! Please see the nutritional facts located below.

### 4/5# Process American Yellow 200P Slice

Product Number: 10081

**Ingredients:** Cultured Milk and Skim Milk, Cream, Sodium Citrate, Salt, Artificial Color (if colored), Sodium Phosphate, Sorbic Acid (preservative), Enzymes, Soy Lecithin (non-sticking agent)

**Allergens:** Milk, Soy

### Nutritional Information/ Serving Size: 28g

Calories 110	Calories from Fat 80
Total Fat 9 g (14% DV)	
Saturated Fat 5 g (25% DV)	
Trans Fat 0 g	Cholesterol 25 mg (8% DV)
Sodium 400 mg (17% DV)	
Total Carbohydrate 2 g (1% DV)	
Dietary Fiber 0 g (0% DV)	
Sugars 1 g	Protein 5 g
Vitamin A 6%	Calcium 15%
Vitamin C 0%	Iron 0%



## Today's Choice

The healthy pizza kids love

Giorgio's authentic pizzeria style products are rich in protein, whole grains and taste. We offer individual 5" pizzas with hearty whole grain wheat and toppings like turkey pepperoni for reduced levels of fat and sodium. Our pizzas provide kids with a nutritious and delicious alternative to traditional dough.



**NEW!** and available for the 2012-2013 School Year

Pilgrim's has developed a Savory Roasted Chicken product that is just in time for the new serving regulations. This product has only a light dusting of Corn Flour to encapsulate the great chicken flavor. Each CN serving has 2 meat/meat alternative, 1 m/ma on Breakfast Patty, and zero Bread/Grain servings.

Case Code	Description	Case Wt.	Serv. Size	Avg. Serv. /Cs	Cases/ Diverted v 36,000#
61118	Savory Roasted Nuggets w/ISP&DWE	30	2.5 oz	187	1379 cs.
62118	Savory Roasted Tender Strips w/ISP&DWE	30	2.64 oz	181	1379 cs.
63118	Savory Roasted Breakfast Patty w/ISP&DWE	30	1.25 oz	384	1379 cs.
66218	Savory Roasted Patty w/ISP&DWE	30	2.6 oz	184	1379 cs.

---

## JENNIE-O INDUSTRY UPDATE

One thing we heard loud and clear in Denver, and following comments on the Internet, is that school foodservice professionals are working really hard to build menus that meet the new regulations. It's going to be a work in progress for everyone. But getting up to speed is essential to be certified for the additional 6 cents that's necessary to offset the increased costs of the new menus.



Jennie-O Turkey Store is doing its part. In case you missed it at ANC, or it's in the stack of new ideas you brought back from Denver, we've reduced the sodium in many of our school products by an average of 26%. We've also been able to reduce portion costs. And we've provided a lot of ideas, particularly for the incredible, flexible sandwich that will help you.

Of course, a major part of your planning is built around how to use your USDA Foods entitlement dollars to your best advantage. Jennie-O Turkey Store's commodity processing program is a great investment. Not only do we offer literally dozens of healthful items that kids love, but when you do the math, they give you more bang for your buck than many other options, including comparable "brown box" items from USDA.

Next up will be the regulations on competitive foods. These rules, that have been due for several months, will only be proposed, and open to your comments. Be assured, as a good partner in the school segment, Jennie-O Turkey Store will take a hard look at the proposals and work together with you to ensure that the final rules support you, your programs, and the children we serve.

## THURSDAY IS TURKEY DAY

The Thursday is Turkey Day movement is a nationwide initiative aimed toward serving more nutritious meals for kids, starting one day at a time - Thursday. When you put Jennie-O Turkey Store turkey on the menu on Thursdays, you can build participation and serve lean, high protein products in a variety of better-for-you meals within your budget. The movement is catching on, as more and more school districts sign up. In fact, the Los Angeles Unified School District has made Thursdays "Turkey Day" as part of their "I'M IN" campaign to raise awareness about the district's healthy meals. When Thursday is Turkey Day, there's simply no limit to your menu possibilities. It's a great way to create a fun, flavorful day that students look forward to and enjoy-while connecting great-tasting food with good nutrition. For more information on Thursday is Turkey Day, and to join the movement, visit [jennieofoodservice.com/schools](http://jennieofoodservice.com/schools).

Looking for fun ways to help make Thursday is Turkey Day come alive in your cafeteria? Be sure to check out all of the great Jennie-O Turkey Store products that will earn you Cool School Cafe® points. Your points can be used to get exciting Thursday is Turkey Day promotional materials, like banners, water bottles or even chef coats for your staff! Check out the delicious turkey products listed below for a sneak peak, then be sure to visit [CoolSchoolCafe.com](http://CoolSchoolCafe.com) for the complete list of qualifying products.

- NATURAL CHOICE® Tender Browned Turkey Breast, #8469-02
- Perfect L'attitudes™ New World Slow Roasted Turkey, #2156-34
- Pre-Cooked Turkey & Gravy - All White, #2862-28
- Pre-Cooked Chunked Turkey - All White, #6448-20
- Pre-Sliced Turkey Breast Steak, 1.55 oz., #2307-24
- Sliced Canadian Style Bacon Turkey Ham, .76 oz., #2031
- Pre-Cooked Turkey & Gravy W/D, #2847-28
- Pre-Cooked Turkey Patty, #6134
- Pre-Cooked Turkey Spaghetti Meat Sauce, #2853-28
- Sliced Italian Turkey Combo Pack, .5 oz., #2096-12
- Reduced Sodium Sliced Turkey Breast, #8312-12
- VIP Roasted Turkey Breast, #8784-03

## PRODUCT FOCUS - TURKEY & GRAVY

At Jennie-O Turkey Store, we wrote the book on turkey and gravy. Check out our new edition! It's been one of our best sellers for more than 10 years, and now, with 23% less sodium, our Turkey & Gravy is better than ever. What hasn't changed is the unsurpassed quality and lovable homestyle flavor. The fully cooked, boil-in-bag convenience. The amazing versatility that lets you serve it as is or in a host of speed scratch creations such as pot pie, soups, and more. But why would you expect anything less from the number-one turkey company in school foodservice?

To get cooking with JENNIE-O TURKEY STORE® Turkey & Gravy today, just choose which variety works best for your operation, Pre-Cooked Turkey & Gravy W/D (2847-28) or Pre-Cooked Turkey & Gravy - All White (2862-28), and let the culinary creativity begin!



## **JTM Food Group Launches New Web site to Capitalize on Expanding Markets, Drive More Sales Growth**

*(New site includes recipes, videos, nutritional data and more)*

**HARRISON, OH – June 13, 2012** – JTM Food Group, a Harrison, Ohio-based company specializing in menu solutions for the food service industry, has launched a new Web site at [www.JTMFoodGroup.com](http://www.JTMFoodGroup.com). The site is designed to capitalize on record sales growth in JTM's four key business sectors – Restaurants, Schools, Military, and Healthcare – with specialized content for each niche market.

“What’s unique about JTM is that we truly seek to be a ‘one-stop shop’ for our customers and take all the guess work out of food preparation,” says Brad Nelson, Director of Marketing for JTM Food Group. “Our revamped site is a great resource to help our customers prepare better-tasting, healthier, fully cooked meals and gives them access to all the resources they need to create great dishes and improve their menus.”

Coming off a record year in sales, JTM has successfully diversified its business across a wide variety of food service markets, serving national restaurant chains, contract management companies, c-stores, delis, healthcare, military operations and to more than half of all the school districts in the country. The new site provides resources for food service directors and chefs in each of those expanding markets, including hundreds of recipes, product descriptions and nutritional information, and food preparation videos from JTM's in-house executive chefs with easy ‘quick-scratch’ ideas to make delicious meals.

The site also has a new graphical look and feel and incorporates JTM's new branding: “Let’s Create Great Dishes Together” which celebrates the company’s comprehensive capabilities and collaborative approach to working with customers.

“The JTM team takes pride in the innovation, creativity and knowledge we bring to every customer experience,” added Nelson. “We’re constantly working to make sure our web presence, social media and other brand assets reflect that commitment and that our customers always have access to our best people and our best thinking. Our new Web site is just one more great way we can make that happen, and we can create great dishes together.”



### **Soar into the school year with JTM’s NEW Sweet Thai Chili Sauce!**



Kick up your menu with the newest addition to our Soaring Dragon line of sauces. JTM's Sweet Thai Chili sauce features just the right amount of heat and sweetness. It is excellent with chicken, beef, pork, veggies or as a dipping sauce for your favorite finger foods.

MCI Los Cabos Mexican Foods has announced a new product rollout of many items that stress whole grains, reduced sodium levels and a reduction in breads to meet new USDA meal guidelines. Many of these products will be available for commodity distribution in Missouri in November and are currently available now commercially.

Please contact us for a complete list and nutritional!

**Los Cabos Mexican Foods**

## Healthy Solution for New USDA Regs

Whole Grain • Low Sodium Meeting Menu Needs

Trying to decide how to offer more whole grains, fruits and vegetables, lower your entrée sodium, and still keep your student customers interested? Los Cabos has the product solutions to meet your needs.

- Reduced Grain Equivalents
- 51% Whole Grain Products Available
- Lower Fats
- Lower Sodium Offerings
- Commodity Processing Available

Product types shown: BURRITO, TACO SNACK, Ultra Bean & Cheese Burrito, Bean & Cheese Burrito, Fiesta Bean & Cheese Burrito.

Logos: MyPlate, SNA PATRON, K FOODSERVICE.com, ACDA American Cereals Distributive Association, WHEAT GRAIN 25 grams.

**NEW!** Side dishes and Entrées from **Los Cabos Mexican Foods**

STOCK CODE 73335  
Los Cabos Zesty Beans with Meat/Alternate  
1/2 Cup Legume and 1 MMA  
(Available in 1/4 Cup Legume and .50 MMA code 73336)

STOCK CODE 73332  
Fiesta Cheese Enchilada  
Los Cabos Zesty Beans: Refried Pinto Beans, Cheddar Cheese, WG Corn Tortilla smothered in our own Enchilada sauce  
1/2 Cup Legume, 2 oz, MMA and 2 oz EQV Grains  
(Available in different needs)

STOCK CODE 81220  
Upside Down Burrito  
Zesty Pinto Beans, Cheddar Cheese, WG Corn Tortilla  
1/2 Cup Legume, 2 oz MMA and 2 oz EQV Grains  
(Available in different needs)

STOCK CODE 73331  
Los Cabos Zesty Beans  
1/2 Cup Legume  
(Available in 1/4 Cup serving Code 73333)

**M.C.I. Foods, Inc.**  
13013 Modelle St, Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670-5521  
Telephone (800) 704-4661 • Fax (562) 977-4099  
www.mcifoods.com

## MATTHEW'S MOTIVATIONAL MESSAGE

This section contains a motivational message taken from Matthew E. Essner's weekly, motivational email blasts called *The Monday Morning Ignition*. Matthew is a motivational speaker that is available for events. His company, Ignite-the-Passion, custom creates presentations to fit the requests of individual groups. Please visit [ignite-the-passion.com](http://ignite-the-passion.com) for more information.



**"Sow an action and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny." - William James, psychologist/philosopher.**

The characteristics of successful people are not big secrets. Read about anyone who has achieved great success and throughout their story you will likely find out they visualized a goal, took action towards achieving their goal, made a habit of sacrificing immediate pleasure and persisted when the road got tough.

As William James stated, "sow an action and you reap a habit". Creating habits is not difficult....unfortunately it's the bad habits that are the easiest to create. Good habits of exercise, reading, sacrificing and keeping a positive attitude are much more difficult than eating fast food, watching T.V., indulging, or chiming in on gossip. But if it is your actions which create your habits, your characters, and ultimately how you reap your destiny, don't you think you should try a little harder to take the appropriate actions which will lead to your happiness?

This week think about what your actions are saying. (Remember actions speak louder than words.) Are your actions showing discipline and a willingness to win at all costs or could it be you are taking the easy road and finding you're not quite happy with where the path has been leading you? Visualizing, taking action, sacrificing and persisting may not be the easy route, but if you are willing to take these actions, you will find the happiness you achieve from attaining your destiny much more rewarding in the end because it will be **your** actions which created **your** good habits, which brought about **your** successful characteristics. And once you've figured it out once, it's very easy to press the "repeat" button and start the cycle over again!

## NSLP Meal Pattern (Lunch)

### Food Group New Requirements & How USDA Foods Supports New Requirements

#### Fruits ½ -1 cup of fruit per day

1. Students are allowed to select ½ cup fruit or vegetable under OVS
2. Fruits (and vegetables) that are prepared without added solid fats, sugars, refined starches, and sodium are nutrient rich foods.

USDA offers a wide variety of canned, frozen, fresh and dried fruits, which are low in sugar or have no added sugars.

- Canned fruits in extra light syrup. Applesauce is unsweetened.
- Frozen fruits - unsweetened blueberries, whole strawberries, and apple slices without added sugar. In SY 13-14, all frozen fruits will be offered with no added sugar.
- Fresh sliced apples, whole apples for direct delivery or processing, fresh pears, fresh oranges
- Dried fruits include raisins, cherries, (dried plums apricots, and fig pieces in fruit-nut mix)

#### Vegetables ¾ - 1 cup of vegetable per day

Weekly requirement for: dark green, red/orange, beans/peas (legumes), starchy other (as defined in 2010 Dietary Guidelines)

USDA offers a wide variety of low sodium canned, frozen and fresh vegetables and tomato products.

- Red/ Orange- Fresh Baby carrots, frozen carrots, sweet potatoes(canned, fresh, frozen, bulk), tomato products
- Dark green - Exploring frozen broccoli, and blends with broccoli/carrots/cauliflower.
- Beans- canned and dry, including garbanzos; bulk pinto beans for processing
- Starchy vegetables- No salt added canned and frozen corn, fat free potato wedges, low sodium canned and no salt added frozen peas.
- Other – green beans (canned, frozen)

#### Meat/Meat Alternate

Daily minimum and weekly ranges:

- K-5: 1 oz eq. min. daily (8-10 oz. weekly)
- 6-8 : 1 oz eq. min. daily (9-10 oz. weekly)
- 9-12 : 2 oz eq. min. daily (10-12 oz. weekly)

USDA offers a wide variety of nutrient dense meat/meat alternate products which are reduced or low sodium and lower in fat.

- Egg products- 5 lb or 30 lb cartons of liquid eggs, bulk eggs;
- Reduced Fat Shredded Cheddar, reduced sodium/reduced fat American Cheese
- Shredded Mozzarella; light or part skim
- Lean meat, pork, poultry and fish products
- Piloting lower sodium Pork Ham
- Turkey Ham, lower sodium; deli breast
- Chicken Fajita -lower sodium & Turkey Taco filling – lower sodium

#### Grains

Daily minimum and weekly ranges:

- Grades K-5: 1 oz eq. min. daily (8-9 oz. weekly)
- Grades 6-8 : 1 oz eq. min. daily (8-10 oz. weekly)
- Grades 9-12 : 2 oz eq. min. daily (10-12 oz. weekly)
- Whole grain tortillas, pancakes, flour & pasta's
- Rolled oats & regular and quick cooking brown rice
- Whole Kernel corn for further processing
- Exploring whole white wheat specification

#### Whole Grains

At least half of the grains must be whole-grain rich beginning July 1, 2012. Beginning July 1, 2014, all grains must be whole grain rich.

USDA Foods offers whole-grain products which meet the whole grain rich requirement of >50%.

#### Milk 1 cup

Must be fat-free(unflavored/flavored) or 1% low fat (unflavored)

## NSBP Meal Pattern (Breakfast)

### Food Group New Requirements & How USDA Foods Supports New Requirements

#### Fruit 1 cup per day (vegetable substitution allowed)

Note: Quantity required SY 2014-15.

Students are allowed to select ½ cup of fruit under OVS.

USDA offers a wide variety of canned, frozen, fresh and dried fruits, which are low in sugar or have no sugar added.

- Canned fruits in extra light syrup. Applesauce is unsweetened.
- Frozen fruits - unsweetened blueberries, whole strawberries, and apple slices without added sugar.
- In SY 13-14, all frozen fruits will be offered with no added sugar.
- Fresh sliced apples, whole apples for direct delivery or processing, fresh pears, fresh oranges
- Dried fruits include raisins, cherries (dried plums apricots, and fig pieces in fruit-nut mix)

#### Grains

Daily min. and weekly ranges for grains (meat/meat alternate substitution allowed after the daily grains minimum met):

- Grades K-5: 1 oz eq. min. daily (7-10 oz weekly)
- Grades 6-8 : 1 oz eq. min. daily (8-10 oz weekly)
- Grades 9-12 : 1 oz eq. min. daily (9-10 oz weekly)

Note: Quantity required SY 2013-14.

USDA offers many whole grain products to help school meet the new requirements while meeting new nutrient targets:

- Whole grain tortillas
- Whole grain pancakes
- Whole wheat flour
- Rolled oats
- Regular and quick cooking brown rice
- Whole Kernel corn for further processing

#### Meat/Meat Alternate

USDA offers a wide variety of nutrient dense meat/meat alternate products which are reduced or low sodium and lower in fat.

- Egg products; 5 lb or 30 lb cartons of liquid eggs
- Reduced Fat shredded cheddar cheese
- Reduced sodium and reduced fat American cheese
- Shredded Mozzarella; light or part skim
- Lean meats, poultry and fish products
- Turkey ham, turkey deli breast
- Chicken Fajita- lower sodium
- Turkey taco filling – lower sodium

#### Whole Grains

At least half of the grains must be whole grain-rich beginning July 1, 2013. Beginning July 1, 2014, all grains must be whole grain rich.

USDA whole-grain products are whole grain rich and contain at least 50% whole grain.

#### Milk 1 cup

Must be fat-free (unflavored/flavored) or 1% low fat (unflavored)

---

## MEET THE DIRECTOR

**Name:** Ronda McCullick

**School District:** Park Hill School District

**Food Service Director Since:** 2005 at Park Hill. Prior to that I worked for the Archdiocese of Chicago as their Director for Onsite Food Service Management providing contract management services for schools in the Chicago area.

**Family:** Married last November to my husband Kevin Greischar. I have stepchildren Kylie and Dustin

**High School:** Minneapolis High School (Kansas – I know you’ve never heard of Minneapolis Kansas ☺)

**Favorite Famous Person:** Doris Day – She was ahead of her time portraying women in professional roles before it was the norm. She was strong and confident but also injected grace and humor into her roles.

**If you were in an eating competition what could you eat the most of:** Sushi

**Hobby or Activity you are most passionate about:** I love to scuba dive, but since you can’t do that easily in Missouri, I would say my next love is “digging in the dirt” in my garden.

**When/How did you get started in the food service business:** I was a senior at Kansas State in fashion marketing (2 weeks into the semester) and felt like I had made a mistake in my career path but was afraid it was too late. I had always been interested in nutrition and was looking for a more meaningful occupation. I happened to meet a girl by the name of Cindy Olberding (Hormel) who became a good friend. As she described her curriculum in dietetics, I realized that was the career path I had been looking for. I changed my major and became a registered dietitian.

My career began in nursing homes, hospitals, and sub-acute rehabilitation facilities. While I enjoyed working with those patients, their nutritional choices and disease complication limited what I could do to help them. When I had an opportunity to move into school nutrition I didn’t think twice. I now have the opportunity to impact our students’ nutrition choices and promote healthy eating habits that will hopefully follow them into adulthood.

**If you were not a foodservice director, what do you wish you would have been:** an architect



---

## MEET THE SYNERGY SALES TEAM

**Name:** John Pickert

**Company:**

Synergy Food Sales

**Broker Rep Since:**

March, 1993

**Family:** Wife –

Michelle, Son – Joe 16,

Daughter – Molly 14,

Beagle – Harley 6

**High School:**

Shawnee Mission West, Class of 1983, Overland Park, KS

**Favorite Famous Person:** Johnny Carson

**If you were in an eating competition what could you eat the most of:** Bacon

**Hobby or Activity you are most passionate about:** What I can afford is working in my yard. What I would like to afford would be Classic Cars from the 1960’s.

**When/How did you get started in the food business:**

My first food service job was as a dishwasher at age 14. I was eventually promoted to cutting whole chickens into 8 pieces for frying and then promoted to fry cook. The food service industry sticks with some people their whole lives and I am one of them. I eventually got a BS in Hotel and Restaurant Management and then moved in to sales.

**If you were not a broker representative, what do you wish you would have been:** I think I would have enjoyed a career in horticulture, maybe own or work in a nursery. I would like to better understand plant life – why some things grow well and why others do not.



**Name:** Tom Hoenig

**Company:**

Synergy Food Sales

**Broker Rep Since:**

August, 1993

**Family:** Wife - Caryn,

Son - Quin 8,

Son - Braden 5,

Daughter - Phoebe 3

**High School:**

Parkway West, Class of 1985, Ballwin, MO

**Favorite Famous Person:** Jesus Christ

**If you were in an eating competition what could you eat the most of:** Taco Bell's Beef Soft Tacos

**Hobby or Activity you are most passionate about:** Sports mostly – St. Louis Blues hockey and Missouri athletics specifically.

**When/How did you get started in the food business:** I basically have been a food service lifer that started at age 15 with a job at the Great American Cookie Company at Chesterfield Mall (baker and customer service). I then worked at Mr. Dunderbaks Deli (busboy and waiter), Schnucks Supermarkets (stock clerk), Carlos Garcia's Mexican Restaurant (waiter and bartender) and Casa Gallardo (busboy, dishwasher, waiter, bartender, manager) all before entering the food brokerage business.

**If you were not a broker representative, what do you wish you would have been:** A professional hockey player or musician.



---

## SYNERGY TRIVIA CONTEST



### 2012 Summer Olympics Trivia

The first person from School Food Service to respond with the correct answers to all of the questions below gets a \$50 gift card to Target, courtesy of Synergy Food Sales! You can use it as a giveaway for your school contests, give it as a gift, or keep it for yourself! Winner & correct answers will be announced in the next issue of our next newsletter.

- 1) *What US Women's Gymnast won overall gold in this year's Olympic games?*
- 2) *What highly touted US Women's hurdler finished fourth and out of medal contention in the 100m Hurdles Final?*
- 3) *Which country's team did the USA Mens Basketball Team defeat in the gold medal game this year?*
- 4) *Which Mens Olympic sprinter took gold in both the 100m and 200m races this year, making him the first man in history to win such titles at two consecutive Olympic Games?*
- 5) *Which Olympic athlete was the first double amputee to compete in the Track & Field competition at the Olympics this year?*

---

### Be Cool To Your School!

If you wish not to receive future copies of the *Synergy School News* newsletter, please let us know and we will remove you from our distribution list.

#### Synergy Food Sales - West

**John Pickert**

222 NE Tudor Road  
Lee's Summit, MO 64086  
(816) 525-7800 Office  
(816) 525-2209 Fax



#### Synergy Food Sales - East

**Tom Hoenig**

122 Wimbledon Court  
O'Fallon, MO 63368  
(636) 329-0700 Office  
(636) 329-0701 Fax

Proudly Representing the following manufacturing lines:

