

# PRESS RELEASE

## Sodexo's Focused Approach to Local Sourcing for School Dining Programs Expands to Two New States for the 2016-2017 School Year

*Think [CA] delivers high year-one satisfaction scores from consumers while also driving record-level client retention in California, where Sodexo first launched the local sourcing effort*

GAITHERSBURG, Md. August 18, 2016 — [Sodexo](#), world leader in Quality of Life Services, announced today that it will expand its Think [CA] approach to local sourcing for school dining programs following a successful first-year. It will now roll out Think [AZ] and Think [TX] to Sodexo-served schools in Arizona and Texas for the 2016-2017 school year.

Designed to support local growers while also empowering students to make nutritionally sound choices, Think [CA] introduced a fresh philosophy to student cafeteria dining last year in the state of California. Sodexo launched the effort last August in 41 school districts. The state-specific program emphasizes the selection of fresh healthy options for students with an emphasis on California-sourced products and ingredients.

"Our parents appreciate the clean menu options, locally sourced whenever possible," said Caralyn Mendoza, director of fiscal services, Newman-Crows Landing School District. "Because of our location, it's great that we are able to highlight local items when available. Further minimizing our carbon footprint is important to us as a district, and has heightened environmental awareness across all grade levels."

To bring the effort to life, Sodexo leveraged the scale of its operations and the scope of its supplier network in order to provide customers with the freshest products. California farmers and milk processors provided 100 percent of fresh dairy, 100 percent of fresh bakery items were made and delivered by California companies and 80 percent of all fresh produce was sourced from California growers.

"There is no question that this is a win all around," said Jude Medeiros, Sodexo regional vice president. "I credit the approach with one of our best years to date for client retention – 100 percent; and our client satisfaction scores rose by 5% as well."

When Think [CA] launched last year, a host of brand-new menu additions developed by local Sodexo chefs was introduced in response to changing palettes and student requests for more vegetarian and ethnic cuisine options. The main focus was on locally-grown and sourced ingredients, healthier options and made-from-scratch cooking. New menu items in California this year will include homemade Overnight Oats and sandwich wraps featuring all natural meats and cheeses with locally produced wraps.

This is a strategic approach to local that will be replicated in the roll out to Arizona and Texas, where “clean label items” are also being made a priority. Medeiros adds, “Sodexo is committed to transparency in its food preparation in terms of wholesomeness of ingredients, and we work diligently to offer foods with a short ingredient list and/or no artificial additives.”

Sodexo delivers more than 100 services across North America that enhance organizational performance, contribute to local communities and improve quality of life. The Fortune Global 500 company is a leader in delivering sustainable, integrated facilities management and foodservice operations.

Learn more about Sodexo at its corporate blog, [Sodexo Insights](#).

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