



SAMPLE FOR SUCCESS

High quality, once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock adds top quality protein, essential vitamins and menu variety to school meals. Fish may not be a staple on home menus, so it's usually more challenging to introduce students to quality fish options on your school menu than it is to introduce chicken or pizza products.

The key to a successful introduction is to get delicious once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock into students' mouths before the entrée hits the serving line. Use a sampling program to share the upcoming menu choice with your students. Following are a "sampling" of ideas that have been successful in school districts across the country to introduce students to new food items like once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock.

Sample Protocol 1—Cafeteria-Based

Choose a spot where you can display one fully prepared entrée item with its condiments and also offer a small taste of the fish portion of that entrée. Good spots include in the cafeteria line near where the daily hot entrée is picked up, or near the cash register, where the cashier can encourage students to try a sample. The display and samples can also be passed on a tray while the students are eating.

- A. Order the once frozen, Genuine Alaska Pollock product of your choice prior to the sample day. Cook a few portions ahead of time to determine the oven temperature and time that achieves optimum product quality.
- B. At least two weeks before the item is on the menu, set up a fully completed entrée serving where students can see it clearly. If condiments will be offered with the entrée, position all choices, in portion cups, close to the entrée. Maximize the visual impact of the display, focusing on



freshness and color. Use signage advertising “Coming Soon: and the name of the entrée.” Set up a new display for each lunch period if necessary to maintain the fresh appearance.

- C. On the day of the sample, prepare enough fish portions so that students can sample a 1-inch to 2-inch piece of fish. Samples may be pre-portioned into 2-ounce portion cups, set on a sheet pan or in a hotel pan and placed in a heated holding cabinet. (Once-frozen Genuine Alaska Pollock products have been successfully held up to two hours in a hot holding cabinet. Check occasionally to see if the product is drying out – if so, cover with foil that has been vented with holes so that product can be kept moist without steaming which makes the breading mushy.)
- D. Place sample fish portions next to the display entrée and signage. Encourage students to take or be given a sample. If possible, offer (and let the students choose) a favorite condiment with the fish portion, such as salsa or ranch dressing.
- E. Obtain feedback from students. Place a flip chart by the cafeteria exit. Attach a felt pen on a string. Draw a line down the center of the paper. On one side draw a smiling face – “I like it.” On the other side draw a frowning face “I don’t like it.” Instruct students to indicate their choice with a check mark or an “X”.

Sample Protocol 2—Student Focus Group

- A. Use a student club, marketing class, leadership class or other existing student group representing a cross section of your school’s student population.
- B. Focus groups may be set up to sample the entire entrée or just the fish with optional condiments, depending upon the size of the group. Be sure to show students a display of the entire entrée if you are just sampling the fish portion and the condiments. Focus groups are most successful when you allow students to choose their own condiments.
- C. Be sure to do a cook test on the product prior to the sampling as in Sample Protocol 1, Letter A above.
- D. Obtain feedback and use it to tailor the entrée and condiments to students’ taste preferences. If the group is small, use individual written feedback. Feedback questions used in previous tests include:
 - Rate the appearance (what does it look like?) on a scale of 1 to 5
 - Rate the texture (what does it feel like in your mouth?) on a scale of 1 to 5
 - Rate the taste on a scale of 1 to 5
 - How could we make this item better?
 - What should we serve with it?
 - Is this something you’d like to see on the lunch menu?
 - If your friends asked you your opinion about this food, what would you say?

*Great Fish
for Great Kids!*