

Professional Cooking

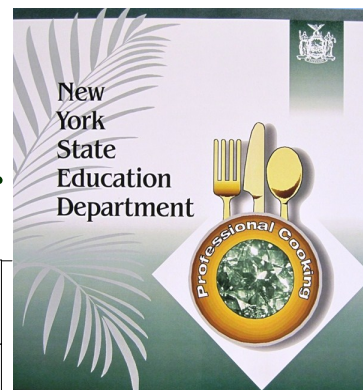
Take that Professional Cooking Manual off the shelf

Everyone has been through a year of great changes with the new meal pattern and new regulations. The Child Nutrition office has had a very busy year assisting schools with meeting the new requirements and completing the 6 Cents Certification process. That is part of the reason the Professional Cooking Newsletter went on a one year hiatus. But we are back! The goals are challenging, and many schools were successful in meeting those challenges. Last year, Professional Cooking 2012 helped to prepare many school cooks for the new requirements by introducing recipes using whole grains and varieties of vegetables. The storing, preparing and cooking techniques that these items require were new to many who attended primarily because their schools had not yet started the move in that direction. These are the same basic skills that have always been taught throughout the thirteen years of the program, so anyone who has attended in the past has already learned these skills. Time to take that Professional Cooking manual off the shelf!

Professional Cooking 2013 has come to a close, and it was another full house each of the four weeks. Again, the focus was on cooking techniques, and incorporating the use of whole grains and some of the vegetable subgroups. This year, a renewed emphasis was on using standardized recipes, and keeping accurate and complete production records which has always been a part of the workshops. These two areas seem to be requested in the evaluations for more in-depth explanation. To practice reading and using a standardized recipe, the groups were given a mystery recipe to prepare. In another session, the instructors reviewed how to develop a standardized recipe so that the results of the food item would always be consistent.

In the Production Record workshop session, details of the required items were reviewed (also part of past Professional Cooking workshops). With the new meal pattern, accurate production records will be essential in evaluating menus for meeting the daily and weekly requirements. Food service staff completing these records should be aware of the importance of this aspect of their job responsibilities. Examples of correctly completed production records were provided in the session, as well as blank prototype production record sheets for use in their schools.

As we navigate through the 2013-2014 school year, this newsletter will be published with current information and helpful hints for school food service staff. I hope to share the success stories of the schools in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program here.



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"I can't do it" never yet accomplished anything; "I will try" has performed wonders.

George P. Burnham

An email from "A Happy Food Service Director":



Hello Barbara!

I wanted to personally thank you & MO BOCES & all the Instructors for a once in a lifetime experience. I have always' wanted to find a place, where I could give my heart and soul, but still have somewhat of a normal life and I have found it working in a school.

Everyone should go to the professional Cooking School. It was amazing! The Instructors, helpers, NYSED and all the workers were all wonderful, courteous, nice, funny and are just fantastic. I thought I knew everything, and walked out of there saying, "wow that was a chance of a lifetime". For anyone who doubts going.....GO!!!! A huge Thank You to all of you for doing this for us. You all taught us so much. I can't thank you enough for sharing your skills, professionalism, knowledge and making us feel like family. We worked hard, and smiled and laughed through it all. I wish we could go every year. I am just so grateful I had the opportunity to be part of Professional Cooking School. I have attached a photo showing the smile you made on my face. Thank You again.

A Happy Food Service Director :)

Rebecca Baldwin

Food Service Director

Albany Community Charter School