



# NEWS RELEASE

**Food and Nutrition Service  
Mountain Plains Regional Office  
1244 Speer Boulevard, Suite 903  
Denver, Colorado 80204-3585**

**Contact: Craig Forman  
303/844-0312**

**Release No. 14-03**

## **TWO UTAH DISTRICTS NAMED USDA REGIONAL BEST PRACTICES AWARD WINNERS**

DENVER, June 18, 2003—Two Utah School districts, Salt Lake City and Nebo District in Spanish Fork, have been selected as 2003 Regional Best Practices Award winners by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service. The Salt Lake City District is being honored for its highly successful efforts to expand its Summer Food Service Program and Nebo District is being recognized for increasing vegetable and fruit consumption in its school lunch program.

Salt Lake District's food service director Kelly Orton was credited with developing a successful plan to expand the Summer Program. District staff used demographic maps to identify populated areas that would support large summer feeding sites. Then they forged partnerships with nearby districts, city parks and community centers to establish feeding sites in needy neighborhoods. The district was also credited with serving attractive, nutritionally balanced meals and keeping salads and vegetables crisp while transporting meals to individual sites. Salt Lake's outreach program resulted in nearly a 57 percent increase in participation in 2000, 34 percent in 2001, and an additional 33.3 percent in 2002. The Salt Lake City District now serves over 300,000 meals each summer as a result of expansion efforts.

Nebo School District's food service supervisor Bill Vest was recognized for increasing fruit and vegetable consumption in his school district. The district's nutrition coordinator introduced students to salad shakers via posters and announcements over the school

-more-

intercom. The salad shakers contain diced turkey or ham, a variety of vegetables, shredded cheese, cherry tomatoes and a packet of ranch dressing. The move was so popular among students that staff came up with a marketing strategy to increase the consumption of fruit. Working with a major supplier, they offered miniature bananas to students over a two-month span. Other fruits are being added to the menu this year. The fruit and vegetable campaign resulted in a one percent increase in participation, dropped food costs by .2 percent, saved \$3400 over the school year and served 21,000 more meals to students. The school hopes to achieve the same gains in student participation this year.

FNS Regional Special Nutrition Programs Director Darlene Sanchez will present the awards at 10 a.m. on June 18 to Salt Lake City and Nebo District officials at the Utah State Food Service and Utah State Office of Education Summer Conference. The conference is being held at the Sorensen Student Center at Utah Valley State College in Orem. The college can be reached via Interstate 15, exit 272.

#