

Bend-La Pine Schools Eliminate Trans-Fats from Baked Goods

by Bend Weekly News Sources

Thanks to some ingenious bakers, Bend-La Pine Schools are making mealtime healthier for its more than 15,000 students with the elimination of trans-fats from all on-site baked goods. "We have reformulated our recipe for our bread products to use at least 50% whole wheat flour. We've eliminated hydrogenated shortening and replaced it with more natural ingredients like butter and vegetable oil," says Supervisor of Nutrition Services, Terry Cashman. Cashman says the result is tasty, nutritionally sound pizza crusts, sandwich breads, bagels, muffins, and breadsticks. "I asked the district bakers to look for opportunities to eliminate shortening and trans-fats from all baked goods," said Cashman. "They rose to the occasion and now the products coming out of the Nutrition Services bakery are trans-fat free." "It is important to know about trans-fats because there is a direct, proven relationship between diets high in trans-fat content and LDL (bad) cholesterol levels and, therefore, an increased risk of coronary heart disease," says Cashman. Trans-fatty acids (or "trans fat") are fats found in foods such as vegetable shortening, some margarines, crackers, candies, baked goods, cookies, snack foods, fried foods, salad dressings and many processed foods. Trans-fat is formed when liquid vegetable oils go through a chemical process called hydrogenation, in which hydrogen is added to make the oils more solid. Hydrogenated vegetable fats are used by food processors because they allow a longer shelf-life and give food desirable taste, shape and texture.

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