

Watermelon Welcome

KICK OFF THE SCHOOL YEAR WITH A JUICY, JOYFUL BOOST

If you've ever served watermelon in your cafeteria, kids LOVE it! Start the school year with a "Watermelon Welcome" and set a vibrant tone for the year ahead. Watermelon is a colorful, sweet and refreshing food that brings joy to a lunch tray. But here's the best part, watermelon isn't just for summer, and it's not just a snack. It's a secret weapon for creativity, nutrition and excitement in school meals, all year long.



DID YOU KNOW?

- 93% of schools surveyed already serve watermelon
- Almost half serve it year-round
- It's not just wedges: dice it, cube it, puree it, pickle the rind
- Students are huge fans with 90% of nutrition pros saying kids gobble it up
- 85% of school nutrition professionals surveyed understand watermelon credits for school nutrition are based on volume/credits as served, e.g. $\frac{1}{4}$ cup diced watermelon without rind = $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fruit

Watermelon

Nutrition Facts	
1 serving per container	
Serving size	
about 2 cups, diced (280g)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	80
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 21g	8%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 17g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 2g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 20mg	2%
Iron 0.7mg	4%
Potassium 310mg	6%
Vitamin A 80mcg	8%
Vitamin C 23mg	25%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

INGREDIENTS: WATERMELON, RAW

WHY WATERMELON ROCKS

Watermelon is more than tasty:

- It's hydrating at 92% water
- Packed with vitamin C (25% DV)
- Contains higher levels of lycopene than any other fresh fruit or vegetable (12.7 mg per 2-cup serving)

It's a fruit that performs, whether you're trying to:

- Add some visual wow
- Balance menus with refreshing choices
- Sneak in more produce in a way kids will actually eat



watermelon.org





TIPS & TRICKS FROM THE PROS

Make Watermelon Prep Less Intimidating

- Address the “fear factor” by offering short videos and one-pagers with Watermelon Board resources
- Try smaller watermelon for easier handling
- One watermelon = up to 36 servings

Storage & Handling Hacks

- Store watermelon between 50-59°F
- Maintain the cold chain if you receive watermelon refrigerated
- Transfer watermelon to milk crates to save space and to move them more easily
- Prep a day ahead

Budget-Savvy Procurement

- Review region-specific availability information
- Use USDA DoD Fresh
- Buy from local farmers or local produce partners when available



Smart Menu Planning

- Menu watermelon on low-prep days
- Position skilled staff for fruit prep - watermelon can be quicker than canned fruit

REAL-WORLD WATERMELON WINS

Here are just a few fun ways schools could serve up watermelon:

- Red, White & Blue Parfaits
- Sweet Watermelon Pizza
- Greek Pita Flatbreads with Watermelon
- Gingered Watermelon Salad
- Refreshing Watermelon Lemonade

And don’t toss that rind! Schools are finding creative (and tasty) ways to use the whole fruit:

- Pickled Rind
- Roasted Parmesan Rind Chips
- Watermelon Rind Coleslaw

EASY WINS FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

- Use as Harvest of the Month
- Post fun facts to engage students, e.g. “Watermelon is 92% water!”
- Offer taste tests that are fun, e.g. fruit kabobs and flavor pairings



HOST A WATERMELON WELCOME

A “Watermelon Welcome” is an easy, engaging way to energize students, spotlight fresh fruits, and make your cafeteria the place to be. Whether it’s taste tests, fun facts or fruit kabobs—students will eat it up (literally!). Ready to make some juicy magic? Check out recipes, yield guides and other resources from the National Watermelon Promotion Board.

Source: Watermelon Board and Healthy School Recipes 2024 survey of 1,400 school nutrition professionals.