



# Slow Food® USA

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **It's Time for Lunch: Slow Food USA Pushes to Get Real Food into Schools**

*National Campaign Plans More than 100 Community  
Eat-Ins for National Day of Action on Labor Day*

BROOKLYN, New York – June 23, 2009 – Slow Food USA ([www.slowfoodusa.org](http://www.slowfoodusa.org)) today launched *Time for Lunch* ([www.slowfoodusa.org/timeforlunch](http://www.slowfoodusa.org/timeforlunch)), a national campaign to tell Congress to provide America's children with real food at school. One of the major milestones for the campaign will be orchestrating more than 100 Eat-Ins in communities across the country on Labor Day, Sept. 7, 2009. The Eat-Ins will draw attention to the need for real, healthy food for the more than 30 million children who participate in the National School Lunch Program. The program is part of the Child Nutrition Act that Congress will reauthorize later this year.

“The way we feed our kids is a reflection of our values. We cannot, in good conscience, continue to make our kids sick by feeding them cheap byproducts of an industrial food system,” stated Josh Viertel, president, Slow Food USA. “It is time to give kids real food: food that tastes good, is good for them, is good for the people who grow and prepare it, and is good for the planet.”

With nearly 32 percent of children ages 2 to 19 considered obese or overweight, and one-in-three born since 2000 in jeopardy of developing diabetes in his/her life time, providing schools with real food is a national priority.<sup>1,2</sup>

The *Time for Lunch* campaign is asking people everywhere to contact their legislators and tell them to invest in the health of our children by allocating \$1 more per day per child for lunch. The USDA currently reimburses schools \$2.57 for each meal served to a student who qualified for free lunch – most of this covers labor, equipment and overhead costs – but less than \$1 goes toward actual ingredients.



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### **It's "Time for Lunch," Page 2.**

The campaign also seeks to protect against foods that put children at risk by establishing strong standards for all food sold at school, including food from vending machines and school fast food. Right now, children can buy overly processed "fast" foods from vending machines and on-campus stores that sneak under the radar of federal nutrition standards.

Lastly, the campaign is pushing for the government to provide mandatory funding to teach children healthy eating habits through innovative farm-to-school programs and school gardens.

To show your support, sign-on to our petition, read our platform for updating the National School Lunch Program, or for details on how to organize your own Eat-In on Labor Day, visit our web site at <http://www.slowfoodusa.org/timeforlunch>.

### **About Slow Food USA**

Slow Food USA is a non-profit organization working to create a just and sustainable food system. Slow Food USA has 200 chapters, with more than 50,000 members and supporters in the United States, and is part of a larger 130-country international network. The organization creates youth programs to bring the values of eating local, sustainable and just food to schools and campuses, preserves and promotes vanishing foods and food traditions, and advocates for a national food policy in which all people can eat food that is good for them, good for the people who grow it and good for the planet.

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<sup>1</sup> C. L. Ogden, M. D. Carroll, and K. M. Flegal, "High Body Mass Index for Age Among US Children and Adolescents, 2003-2006," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 299, no. 20 (2008):2401-2405.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, "Resident Population Projections by Sex and Age 2005 to 2050," *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 2006. Table 12; Ogden, et al., "High Body Mass Index for Age."