

Proponents of potatoes in school lunches make a stand

By Phil Galewitz, NPR

When the potato lobby speaks, it always puts its best spuds forward. Tuesday at a National Press Club lunchtime briefing to promote the nutritional value of the vegetable, that meant a full bar of baked potatoes, french fries (baked, not fried), sour cream, cheddar cheese, chopped tomatoes, spinach and broccoli. Yes, according to sources close to the food, it was scrumptious.



The group, which has been fighting the U.S. Department of Agriculture's proposed school nutrition guidelines to limit white potatoes and other starchy vegetables to 1 cup a week, rolled out some big guns today, in the form of lunch ladies, to butter up the press.

The National Potato Council released a survey of 245 school food service directors showing how most think the new rules would lead to higher costs, more wasted food, and lower participation in the school lunch program.

Schools are looking for healthier ways to prepare food. "Today's school lunch is not your school lunch you remember," Dayle Hayes, a registered dietician, said at the briefing.

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