



Kids First Wellness Advocates Series
Whole Grain Education
Spring 2010
by Kelly Swanson, Kids First Communications

Foster Gloucester - Carolyn Vallese, the Family and Consumer Science teacher at Ponaganset Middle School, conducted a Ponaganset Middle School WHOLE GRAINS recipe contest because she knows that whole grains are an essential part of a wholesome, healthy diet and she wanted to give her students the opportunity to design a whole grain recipe for fun and prizes!

To kickoff her Whole Grain Education program, Vallese, with cooperation from Sodexo food service director Rich Leso, set up a "Guess the Mystery Grain" tasting for all three lunch periods. Kids First chefs whipped up some Breakfast Couscous and encouraged the students to come up to the tasting table for a sample and to guess what grain was used.



The Whole Grain Education program culminated in a schoolwide whole grain recipe contest. There were two categories – Whole Grain Trail Mix and Whole Grain Salad – and 50 students were up to the challenge, submitting recipes to be tasted and judged by a distinguished panel. Prizes were awarded for the top 3 recipes in each category, along with a few honorable mentions.



Thanks to a grant from the New England Institute of Food Technologies, and help from Sodexo, Kids First and Whole Foods, Carolyn Vallese imparted a world of whole grain wisdom to her students, with fun and prizes along the way. Hopefully, as a result, those students will use what they've learned to be healthy, whole grain eaters for life!