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## Impact of Grapes on Plate Waste Study Summary

### Background

Researchers at Texas A&M University conducted a plate waste study in elementary and middle schools to determine the effects on plate waste of school lunches when fresh grapes were offered compared to when they were not offered.<sup>1</sup>

The study was conducted in two elementary schools and two middle schools from one school district in Texas. Grapes were made available on “grape days” as an offered fruit choice. Non-grape days were defined as days when grapes were not offered.

### Results and Key Takeaways

The presence of grapes had a positive impact on the school lunch eating behaviors of children. The results show that when the school meals included grapes, consumption of healthier menu items increased, suggesting that grapes can serve as a “gateway” fruit to healthier eating.

Study results included:

- When offered as a fruit choice, grapes were minimally wasted.
- On grape days, lost dollars attributed to vegetable plate waste was significantly less than on non-grape days.
- Intakes of effective calories, fat, sodium, protein, and fiber per serving of entrees, vegetables and fruits on grape days were higher than on non-grape days.
- On grape days, the children consumed more of the school lunch, which is an overall goal of school lunch.

### Conclusion

The presence of grapes had a positive impact on the school lunch eating behaviors of school children.

The study is available now online and is pending print publication in the *Journal of Nutritional Health and Food Science*.

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<sup>1</sup> Murano PS, Capps O (2018) Grapes in School Meals: Impact of Plate Waste on Costs and Consumption. *J Nutrition Health Food Sci* 6(1):1-9 DOI:10.15226/jnhfs.2018.001119.