

Helping Children Make Healthy Food Choices

Joyce Bupp
 York Co. Correspondent
 BALTIMORE (Maryland) —
 What's your favorite snack food?
 Potato chips go to the top of the
 snack food list for the largest per-
 centage of American adults; cook-
 ies and similar sweets rank sec-
 ond, while fruits and other nutri-
 tional choices come in a much
 lower third, according to one
 recent food survey.

And that, says a National Dairy
 Council vice-president, is why the
 nutrition organization is mounting
 a major effort aimed at teaching

better food habits to kids of
 elementary school age.

Trevor Steinbach, Ph.D., the
 Dairy Council's head of nutrition
 education, shared new nutrition
 teaching methods with nearly 100
 Baltimore-area health and dietary
 professionals attending the Upper
 Chesapeake Bay, Dairy Food and
 Nutrition Council of the South-
 east's (DFNCS) annual meeting,
 held February 8 at the Airport
 Marriott hotel.

"Children are making their own
 nutritional choices," emphasized
 Dr. Steinbach, relating the social

changes that have left millions of
 the nation's children in charge of
 getting their own, and often
 siblings', meals. He reported that
 kids are buying \$6.8 billion in
 snack foods annually, as well as
 influencing some \$82 billion
 (worth) of food choices for family
 consumption.

A new Dairy Council "Snack
 Stars" series of nutrition materials
 focuses on the five food groups
 and is a tool for educators to teach
 good snacking habits. New nutri-
 tion education materials are also
 designed for use far beyond the



Jesse Burall, left, Maryland dairy producer and president of the board of the Upper Chesapeake Bay Dairy Council, welcomed National Dairy Council vice-president Trevor Steinbach to the Baltimore-area group's annual meeting.

traditional health class.

"Nutritional materials must be
 made available for use in art, mus-
 ic, social studies, math, and lan-
 guage classes," emphasized the
 Dairy Council vice-president.
 Newly-developed lessons include
 exercises designed for use by clus-
 ter groups of children, who learn
 by teaching and helping each
 other, and materials aimed at the
 growing numbers of diverse cul-
 tural and ethnic groups in the
 nation.

"Schools are becoming child-
 ren's social service agency," Dr.
 Steinbach noted, citing the steady
 growth of the school breakfast
 program. "School meals make a
 significant contribution to their
 daily dietary intake."

Some 5.3 million children now
 eat breakfast at school, compared
 with 23.7 million participating in
 the traditional school lunch pro-
 gram served by 90 percent of the
 nation's schools.

Projecting ahead, Dr. Steinbach
 predicted that medical strides in
 genetic research will replace
 across-the-board health recom-
 mendations with individual diet
 and exercise programs, based on
 each person's own genetic
 strengths and weaknesses.

"Look for Dairy Council to take
 a lead in helping to develop indi-
 vidual diet materials in the future,"
 he predicted.

The Baltimore division of the
 DFNCS is funded by dairy
 farmer-members of the Middle
 Atlantic Division of Dairymen,
 Inc., through the Southeast United
 Dairy Industry Association
 (SUDIA).

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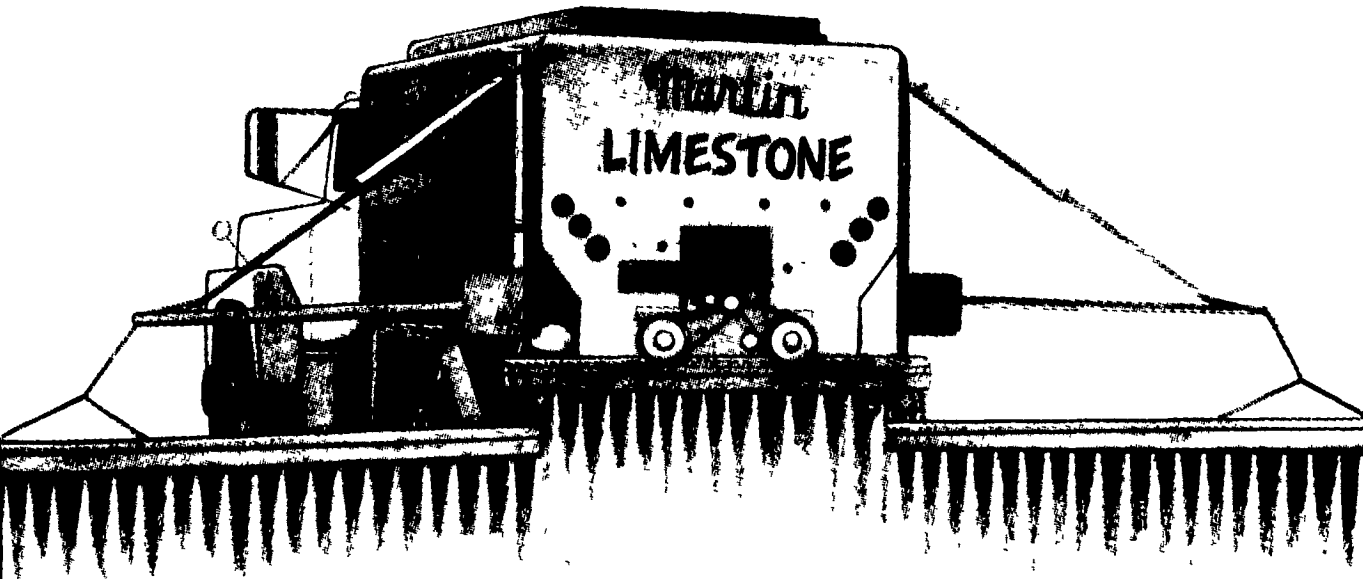
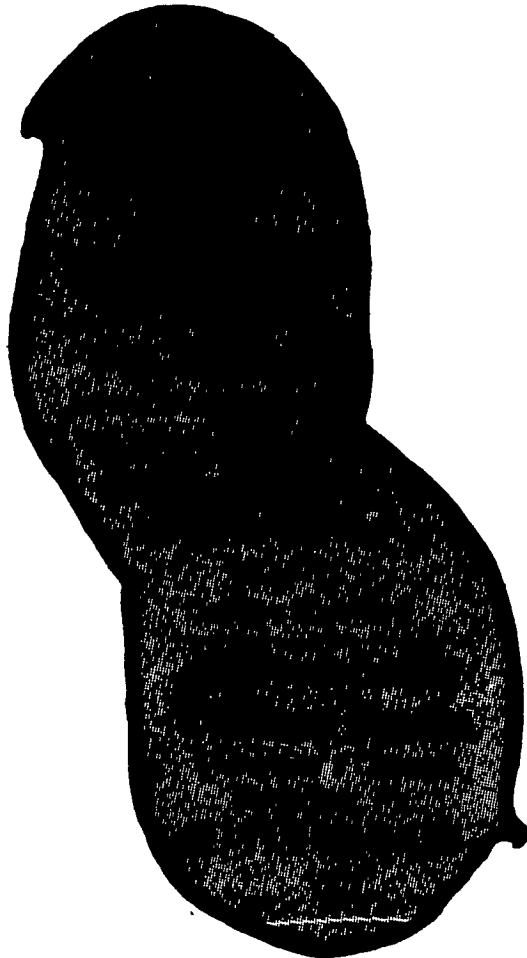
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