



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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SCHOOL LUNCH USE OF FISH INCREASED BY DEMONSTRATIONS

Following the demonstrations on the use of fish in school lunches, an increase of more than 100 percent has been noted in the frequency and amount of fish that is included in the hot lunch programs of those public schools where the demonstrations were made, Albert M. Day, director of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, reports.

In Virginia, during 1949, 28 demonstrations were conducted by the Service. In a study of menus of 41 schools which took part in the demonstrations, it was found that the average number of times fish were served had increased 137 percent in November of 1949 as compared with November of 1947. It was also noted that the average number of pounds of fish used in these schools increased 116 percent.

That these increases were the result of work done in schools by the Service is shown by a study of menus of 8 schools selected at random for comparative purposes. These schools had not participated in the demonstration program. From these it was found that fish was used an average of 2.2 times in November 1947 and 1.9 times in November 1949, or a decrease of 14 percent. The poundage of fish used, however, showed an increase of 2 percent.

Similar results have been experienced in Georgia and other states where school demonstrations have been held. In addition to Virginia, there were 16 demonstrations given in Massachusetts, 15 in California (principally in the Los Angeles and San Francisco regions), 10 in North Carolina, and 29 in Georgia. Other states where occasional demonstrations were conducted during 1949 were Maryland, Florida, Tennessee, Mississippi and Washington.

The value of this school lunch educational program, lies particularly in the assistance rendered by the marketing specialists in alleviating supply problems, and in acquainting school lunch personnel and purchasing officers with new and different varieties, cuts, and packs of fishery products. Many school lunch operators commented on the ease of preparation and increased acceptability of fish prepared by the new and different FWS recipes.

In many cases, schools found, that operating costs have been reduced through suggestions by the Service to blend more expensive varieties of fish, such as salmon and tuna, with less expensive varieties. An interesting fact was revealed when it was shown that country school children were more receptive to fish than city children — which indicated that rural areas hold good possibilities for fish consumption.

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