

## Local and Healthy Big in 2012

A survey of nearly 1,800 professional U.S. chefs, members of the American Culinary Federation, by the National Restaurant Association, indicates in addition to healthy selections for children the hottest trends for 2012 are: locally sourced meats, seafood and produce; sustainability as a culinary theme; gluten-free/food allergy-conscious items; locally produced wine and beer; and sustainable seafood.



"The top menu trends we're seeing in our 'What's Hot in 2012' survey reflect the macro trends we have seen grow over the last several years. Nutrition - especially when it comes to children - is becoming a major focus for the nation's nearly 1 million restaurants, in tune with consumers' increasing interest in healthful eating," said Joy Dubost, director of nutrition & healthy living for the restaurant trade group.

"Local sourcing of everything - from meat and fish, to produce, to alcoholic beverages - is another big trend for 2012. Local farms and food producers have become an important source of ingredients for chefs and restaurateurs wishing to support the members of their business community and highlight seasonal ingredients on menus," Dubost added.

When asked how to best follow the USDA's recent dietary guidelines of increasing fruits and vegetables in Americans' diet, 55% of the chefs said offering a wider variety of vegetable/fruit side dishes on menus, 19% said using more produce in existing recipes, and 16% said following MyPlate's visual guideline of making fruits and vegetables half the plate.

Source: Prepared Foods' Daily News