



Madera Unified School District.

Farm to fork cuisine.



Reinventing lunch at school.

“I welcome staff and directors to our kitchens to watch what we do and how we do it and let the RATIONAL speak for itself.”

Brian Chiarito, Director of Child Nutrition,
Madera Unified School District



Students in the Madera Unified School District enjoy fresh farm to fork breakfasts and lunches made with local ingredients prepared daily in kitchens equipped with RATIONAL combi ovens.

Located close to the Sierra Nevada mountains and Yosemite National Park in central California, Madera has ready access to fresh-farmed ingredients from the nearby San Joaquin Valley and beyond. On a typical day, the school district prepares and serves between 23,000 and 24,000 student meals; enrollment is approximately 20,000 across 28 schools. Every school makes breakfast and lunch available daily to all enrolled students at no cost via the federal Community Eligibility Provision program.

Brian Chiarito, Director of Child Nutrition for the Madera Unified School District, takes an innovative, non-traditional approach that tries to change the reputation of the school lunch. “We want to be different,” he said. “We have to change the mindset and perception. We provide lunch at school, not school lunch.”

He’s created a restaurant-style burrito bar that emulates what students see in restaurants. “Kids are much smarter, their palates bigger, so the district tries to market it that way,” he said. His menus include entrees like roast, fresh grilled quarter chickens, pizza made just-in-time, and fresh, not frozen, 100 percent beef patties.



Industry:
Unified school district

Core business:
School catering

Location:
Madera, CA



Fresh, healthy meals for students.

The Madera Unified School District's Child Nutrition Department program has a motto: Go Fresh! As Chiarito worked to bring fresher, healthier meals to students, he began installing the RATIONAL equipment in school kitchens three years ago. Today, there are 15 RATIONAL combi ovens and one iVario in seven kitchens (food is prepared in a central kitchen for the elementary schools, and each middle and high school has its own kitchen).

"The quality of food that we can produce is far better," Chiarito says. "The RATIONAL gives us a lot of opportunity to use different products, fresh products, and elevate the quality of our food."

"The time savings when it comes to cooking and cleaning gives us more time for creativity when it comes to the menu," he added. "We can focus on better products for the kids, as opposed to cleaning ovens."

The kids are enjoying what they're eating. "It's a product that they trust and know will be good for them," he said.



The challenge:

- › Bringing fresher, healthier breakfasts and lunches to the school district's 20,000 students faster.

The solution:

- › 6× SelfCookingCenter® 62
- › 6× SelfCookingCenter® 202
- › 3× iCombi Pro 20-full size
- › 1× iVario Pro L

Customer benefit:

- › The unified school district is able to offer students better meals that are served fresh daily.
- › iCookingControl: Prepares food exactly the way you want it, every time, by detecting product status, size, and load quantity.
- › iLevelControl: Intelligent mixed loading lets you prepare different foods at the same time.
- › Efficient CareControl: Automatic cleaning and descaling overnight saves time and leaves your unit well maintained.



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