

Introducing American-Grown and Locally-Grown School Menu Boards Following USDA's New Harvest to Hallways Initiative

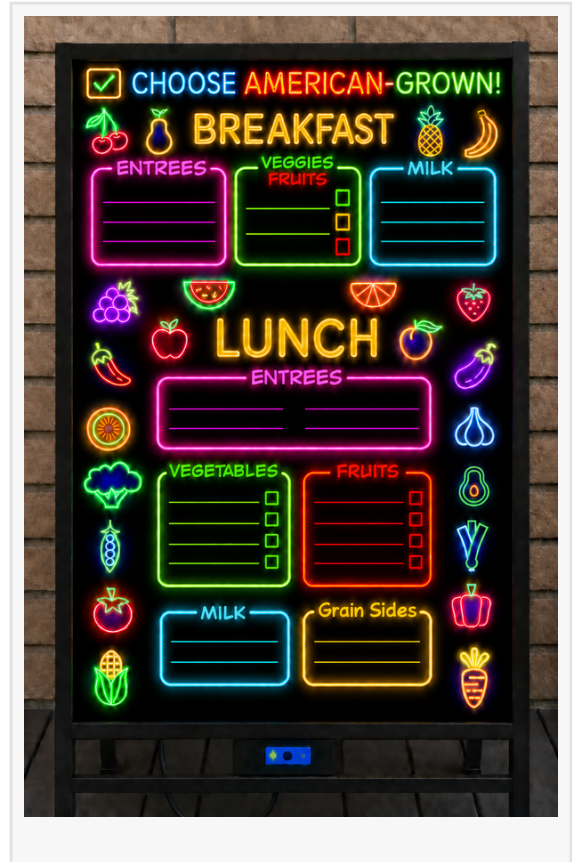
New school menu board line helps schools turn USDA's healthier meals and American agriculture goals into clear daily guidance at the point of student selection.

WOODLAND HILLS, CA, UNITED STATES, September 15, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Green Edge Systems today introduced American-Grown and Locally-Grown School Menu Boards, built to support the goals of [USDA's Harvest to Hallways initiative](#) by highlighting [American-grown and locally grown foods](#) when students select meals.

The menu boards feature a compact, lasting message and simple check boxes that school nutrition staff can use to identify verified American-grown or locally grown foods already being served.

View the new product line, formats and sample designs at:

<https://www.greenedgesystems.com/american-grown-local-school-menu-boardsamerican-grown-local-schools-menu-boards.html>



The product line follows USDA's August 24, 2026 press release, "USDA Announces Harvest to Hallways Initiative to Invest in Child Nutrition Programs." The announcement by Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins and Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. outlined the next phase of the Trump Administration's work to Make America Healthy Again. It emphasized healthier, more nutrient-dense school meals, support for American farmers, local procurement and school nutrition investments.

["Every school meal should make a child healthier,"](#) Secretary Kennedy stated in the USDA announcement.

Green Edge Systems developed the line around the next practical question: After schools provide

healthier foods, how can they help students recognize and select them?

School food service teams determine which nutritious options are available, but students decide which items go on their trays. Clear school menu boards located where selections occur can provide daily guidance at the point of decision.

The new boards offer two standard messages:

CHECK FOR THE ☐
CHOOSE AMERICAN-GROWN!

or

CHECK FOR THE ☐
CHOOSE LOCALLY-GROWN!

*** Turning a National Goal into Daily Action

“Our objective is to help schools turn a national nutrition and agriculture priority into a simple action students can see each time they select a meal,” said Tommy Orpaz, President of Green Edge Systems. “School food service teams provide nutritious choices, but students decide what goes on their trays. A well-placed menu board brings guidance directly to the point where those decisions are made.”

“

What could be more American than supporting American farmers? We want to help schools advance USDA’s goal of connecting students, school meals and American-grown and locally grown foods.”

*Tommy Orpaz, President,
Green Edge Systems*

“What could be more American than supporting American farmers?” Orpaz continued. “We want students to develop the lasting habit of noticing where their food comes from and recognizing American-grown and locally grown choices.”

Schools can use this approach even without a formal Farm to School program. They can identify qualifying foods already served and make those choices more visible to students. The message can remain part of the menu throughout the year instead of appearing only during a temporary campaign.

*** One Simple Checkmark

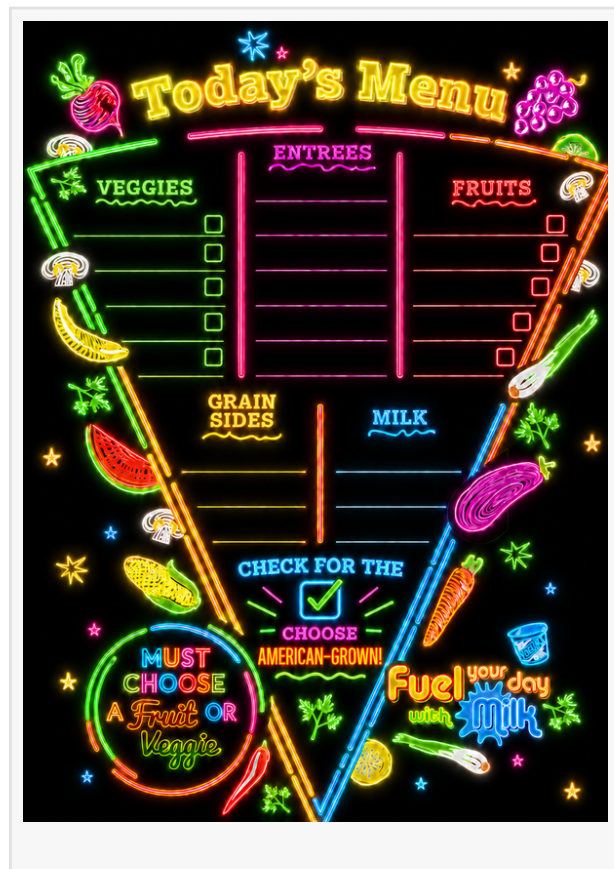
Sample boards display check boxes beside fruits and vegetables because school food service



teams can often confirm their origins through supplier, distributor and purchasing information. Staff can add a checkmark when a verified item is offered and erase or move it when the menu or product source changes.

Schools are not limited to fruits and vegetables. Green Edge Systems can add printed boxes or icons to entrées, proteins, grain sides, milk or any other food group. Staff can also draw and erase their own boxes and checkmarks whenever appropriate. Schools should verify product origin through reliable supplier or purchasing records before marking an item.

Digital menu boards may be updated centrally by computer across multiple schools, making frequent item-level checkmark changes impractical. Green Edge Systems recommends supplementing them with a handwritten board at the cafeteria entrance or beginning of the serving line. Staff can update it locally, and when properly worded and positioned, it can also support applicable USDA reimbursable-meal signage requirements.



Schools may select the American-Grown or Locally-Grown header or submit their own suggested wording. Free customization can adapt food groups, check boxes, icons, colors and menu organization to district needs.

*** Formats and Placement Options

The line is available as LED Flashing, LED Backlit Write-On and Dry Erase menu boards. Options include wall mounting, freestanding or rolling floor stands and counter displays.

*** Fresher Choices, Stronger Farms, Proudly American

American-grown and locally grown purchasing can create markets for farmers and strengthen connections between schools and their communities. Locally sourced produce may travel through shorter supply chains. Depending on the crop, harvesting, handling and storage, reduced transportation and storage time can support freshness, flavor, texture and retention of certain sensitive nutrients.

Origin alone does not determine nutritional quality. The boards communicate verified food origin and encourage awareness. They do not claim every domestic or local product is healthier than every imported product.

*** USDA Investments and Possible Grant Use

USDA stated that Harvest to Hallways includes up to \$70 million in school cafeteria infrastructure investments, efforts to expand local procurement and up to \$25 million in additional FY 2026 Farm to School Grants. The announcement also addressed the Local Option School Procurement Program, healthier-meal practices and nutrition research.

Schools considering grant funding may ask whether menu boards qualify as an educational, promotional or food-origin communication component of an eligible project. Green Edge Systems can provide product information, customization assistance, pricing and quotations. Eligibility is not guaranteed. Schools should obtain confirmation from the applicable agency or grant administrator before including boards in a grant budget.

*** About Green Edge Systems

Green Edge Systems develops menu boards, cafeteria signs and meal-selection displays for K-12 school nutrition programs. Its products are used in thousands of schools nationwide and provide visible, flexible communication without menu-management software, network connections, subscriptions or continuing IT support.

Green Edge Systems' American-Grown and Locally-Grown School Menu Boards are independently developed commercial products. They are not endorsed, approved or sponsored by USDA, HHS or the federal government.

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