



Contact:

Sydney Siegmeth

206-770-7011

Sydney.Siegmeth@porternovelli.com

THE UNCLE BEN'S® BRAND AWARDS SCHOOL CAFETERIA MAKEOVERS, INSPIRING HEALTHIER BEGINNINGS FOR FAMILIES

Families Rally to Support Their Schools as Part of the Ben's Beginners™ Cooking Contest

RANCHO DOMINGUEZ, Calif. (October 18, 2013) – The [UNCLE BEN'S®](#) Brand, the number-one selling brand of rice in the United States, today announced the school participation winners from the [Ben's Beginners™ Cooking Contest](#). Out of nearly 1,000 video entries, the three schools that generated the greatest number of submissions will each receive a \$30,000 cafeteria makeover and appear on an episode of the “Rachael Ray Show,” which will air on October 28, 2013. The Ben's Beginners™ Cooking Contest is a movement designed to help children learn to make healthier choices, at an early age, by making cooking an enjoyable activity that brings families together.

The three school participation winners that will receive a \$30,000 cafeteria makeover are St. Vincent Ferrer School in Cincinnati, Ohio, Columbus Magnet Elementary School in Norwalk, Conn. and Indian Rocks Christian School in Largo, Fla. To qualify, schools encouraged families with children in grades K-8 to submit videos of them preparing a rice-based dish while discussing their cooking experience as part of the second annual contest. The video submission period closed on October 6, 2013 and videos were tallied to determine the three schools with the most entries in three categories, respectively: small (1-250 students), medium (251-500 students) and large (501+ students).

“Parents are instrumental in encouraging their children to make healthy choices, but we can't forget that a majority of a child's day is spent in school where behaviors are being learned and shaped,” says Tim Snyder, vice president of sales & marketing, Mars Food US, the makers of the UNCLE BEN'S® Brand. “The Ben's Beginners™ Cooking Contest strives to inspire healthier beginnings and improving a school's cafeteria is one way we can help support nutrition and education.”

As part of the next phase of the Ben's Beginners™ Cooking Contest, families are rallying their communities to visit www.unclebens.com to vote for their video through October 27th. A grand prize winner will be selected to win \$15,000 cash, an appearance on the “Rachael Ray Show” and a \$30,000 cafeteria makeover for their child's school. Two finalists will also receive \$5,000 cash, an appearance on the “Rachael Ray Show” and a \$10,000 cafeteria makeover for their schools. More information on the contest, kid-friendly recipe ideas and cooking tips can be found at www.unclebens.com.

The Ben's Beginners™ Cooking Contest was born out of a passion to inspire healthy beginnings in life by encouraging parents and kids to cook together.

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About the UNCLE BEN'S® Brand

The UNCLE BEN'S® Brand, the number one rice brand in America, is proud to offer a wide range of rice dishes with flavors and grains that will help bring more to your meals, both for convenient side dishes and savory main courses. The UNCLE BEN'S® Brand offers a wide variety of white, whole grain brown, and flavored rices in cook times ranging from 90 seconds to 30 minutes, as well as rice for food service operations such as restaurants, schools and hospitals. The first mass-produced parboiled rice, UNCLE BEN'S® Brand is the top-selling branded rice in the United States and products can be found in more than 100 countries worldwide. The UNCLE BEN'S® Brand products are manufactured by Mars Food North America, part of Mars, Incorporated. For more information, visit www.unclebens.com.

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