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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

What's on the 'California Thursdays' Menu for Six NorCal School Districts? Grass-Fed Beef!

BERKELEY, CALIF., October 22, 2015 ... Students in six diverse Northern California school districts – **La Honda-Pescadero Unified, Millbrae Unified, Monterey Peninsula Unified, Oakland Unified, Pittsburg Unified and Sonoma Valley Unified** – have something delicious in common this [California Thursday](#): school meals made with grass-fed beef donated by TomKat Ranch Educational Foundation.

“Our goal is to provide healthy food on working lands in a way that sustains the planet and inspires others to action,” says **Kat Taylor, rancher and philanthropist**. “Pasture-raised beef has a third less fat per serving, and the fat it does contain has heart- and brain-protecting Omega-3 fatty acids. In addition to being better for our children’s health, grass-fed beef also has great benefits for the environment. Our cows eat grass and forage without chemical fertilizers, and the rangelands they roam retain more water in the soil, increase perennial grasses and help sequester carbon.”

The donation is part of a statewide effort to help more schools source pasture and humanely raised beef that is antibiotic and hormone free. The districts will serve the beef in a variety of kid-approved favorites, including Taco Bars, Beef and Bean Chili, Sloppy Joes, Rotini with Bolognese Sauce, Tostada Bowls and Albondigas Soup. This is the first time that two of the districts – Millbrae and Pittsburg – will have the chance to serve grass-fed beef in their school meals.

The combined donation of grass-fed beef totals 4,150 pounds – more than two tons of ground beef. The six districts, members of the California Thursdays Network, collectively represent 141 schools and over 26,000 students, and prepare more than 11.9 million meals a year.

“Building on today’s donation, TomKat Ranch Educational Foundation will continue to encourage and support the many farms and ranches, including Mindful Meats, SunFed and Tassahara Natural Meats, who currently supply pasture-raised, grass-fed beef to California schools,” says **Wendy Millet, director of TomKat Ranch Educational Foundation**.

[California Thursdays](#)[®] is a collaboration between the Center for Ecoliteracy and school districts to serve healthy, freshly prepared meals made with California-grown food.

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About the TomKat Ranch Educational Foundation

TomKat Ranch Educational Foundation serves as a learning laboratory for animal agriculture focused on climate stability, nature's benefits, healthy food, biodiversity and a vibrant community. The TomKat Ranch is located in Pescadero, California. www.tomkatranch.org

About the Center for Ecoliteracy

The Center for Ecoliteracy is a nonprofit that promotes ecological education and recognizes that students need to experience and understand how nature sustains life and how to live accordingly. It encourages schools to teach and model sustainable practices. The Center leads systems-change initiatives, publishes original books and resources, facilitates conferences and professional development, and provides strategic consulting. It works at multiple levels of scale with local, regional, state and national programs. www.ecoliteracy.org

Editor's Note: Images and a press kit covering the California Thursdays program are available at www.californiathursdayspr.org