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American Frozen Food Institute Commends Congress for Balanced Approach on School Meal Standards

McLean, VA – [American Frozen Food Institute](http://www.affi.org) (AFFI) President and CEO Kraig R. Naasz today issued the following statement in support of an agreement reached by a House-Senate agriculture appropriations conference committee that provides a balanced approach for federal school meal nutrition standards required by the *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2011*.

The agreement reached by House and Senate appropriations conferees charged with reconciling competing versions of fiscal year 2013 agriculture spending bills, requires that new school meal nutrition standards comply with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

"AFFI commends Congress for its balanced approach to implementing new school meal standards. This agreement improves childhood nutrition by providing school nutritionists with the ability to serve healthy foods kids enjoy while avoiding burdening schools with massive new costs.

"Of particular interest to frozen food producers, this agreement ensures that nutrient-rich vegetables such as potatoes, corn and peas will remain part of a balanced, healthy diet in federally-funded school meals. Also, this agreement recognizes the significant amounts of potassium, fiber and vitamins A and C provided by tomato paste and ensures students may continue to enjoy healthy meals such as pizza and pasta.

"AFFI looks forward to final congressional approval of this conference agreement and its presentation to President Obama for his signature."

The 2012 agricultural appropriations conference agreement (House Report 112-284) directs the U.S. Department of Agriculture not to limit servings of potatoes, corn, peas and lima beans in school meals and to retain the current nutrient density classification for tomato paste. Absent congressional oversight, USDA's currently proposed school meal standards would limit servings of "starchy vegetables" to one cup per student per week and restrict schools' utilization of tomato paste.

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The American Frozen Food Institute is the national trade association promoting and representing the interests of all segments of the frozen food industry. AFFI works to foster industry development and growth, and advocates before legislative and regulatory entities on the industry's behalf. More information can be found at www.affi.org.