



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOSTER YOUTH TO DELIVER FRESH FRUITS & VEGGIES TO COUNTY EMPLOYEES *Youth Learn Agricultural Business; Teach County Employees to Eat Healthy*

With Thanksgiving right around the corner, several San Pasqual Academy foster youth will make their bimonthly delivery today of certified, organic produce to County employees to encourage them to eat healthier for the holidays, which is part of County's year-round plan to Build Better Health.

Today at 2 p.m. at 6950 Levant St. in San Diego, several San Pasqual Academy students will arrive to deliver fresh fruits and vegetables to County employees. Employees who signed up to be part of the subscription program pay only \$20 per box for fresh produce every two weeks. Some employees opted to pay as much as \$250 a month because they enjoy eating healthy, while supporting San Pasqual's foster youth. Currently, the pilot program delivers to two County work sites in Linda Vista and Escondido.

Although, the San Pasqual Academy Agriculture program was established in 2004, the organic produce program began a year ago when students came up with the label name, Dragon Organics. The program has grown roots and students began selling to local vendors such as Whole Foods, Jimbos, Seaside Market and Stone Brewing Company. They have expanded to farmer's markets in Carlsbad on Saturdays from 1-4 p.m. and other markets around the county. The fruits and vegetables include cucumbers, a variety of tomatoes, squash, bell peppers, yellow wax beans, purple dragon beans and melons.

"This program is still in its infancy, but it is important that we have begun to form a partnership between students, County employees, and private business," said County Board of Supervisors Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price, District 3. "A new generation will develop work skills in agriculture that may eventually propel them into entrepreneurial careers in business. In addition, these skills teach them how to prepare healthy meals."

"Our employees have really stepped up to support this program and these youth by eating healthier foods. Our Building Better Health initiative is all about providing our employees and the community healthy food choices so they can make lifestyle changes that will improve their quality of life," said Nick Macchione, Director of the County's Health and Human Services Agency. "Nearly 57 percent of San Diegans die from diseases caused by poor nutrition, lack of physical activity and tobacco use. We are trying to change that."

To learn more about Dragon Organics, visit

<http://www.youtube.com/countysandiego#p/search/0/ONiDcbGy2kY> . ###

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