



*Fédération européenne de la Restauration Collective Concédée*  
*European Federation of Contract Catering Organisations*

**Baseline overview**  
**of**  
**FERCO Members' Existing Initiatives On Diet,**  
**Physical Activity and Health**

**June 2005**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Contract Catering sector **affects the daily lives of 67 million consumers** across Europe to whom Contract Catering companies and their 600,000 employees consistently serve healthy and balanced meals every day.

### **A commitment to consumers and client organisations**

Today, distances, busy schedules and time pressures often make eating healthily a challenge. For many employees, students and workers, Contract Catering provides the only balanced meal of the day. As stakeholders in the food chain, FERCO and its members are well aware of their responsibilities in terms of food safety and nutrition.

FERCO members are committed to meeting the needs of consumers and their client organisations. They are committed to ensuring that meals continue to offer the safest, healthiest food to Europeans. Contract Catering companies have expert knowledge on the increasingly important subjects of nutrition, food hygiene and safety.

This has resulted in the development of higher food hygiene and safety standards and models of nutritional balance. This is particularly true with regard to more vulnerable groups such as young children, the elderly and hospital patients.

### **Participating in the EU Platform for Action**

FERCO supports the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health and believes that as stakeholders, FERCO and its members add significant value to the ongoing work at European level to encourage healthier lifestyles and fight obesity.

The EU Platform, launched in March 2005, calls on stakeholders - representatives at EU level of the food, retail, catering and advertising industries, the cooperative movement, consumer organisations, health professionals and health NGOs - to take an active role in promoting healthier eating and more physical activity. Members have agreed to devote more resources and effort either to extend existing initiatives or to launch new actions.

As a committed member of the EU Platform, FERCO is developing a two-pronged strategy to help fight obesity:

- In 2005 FERCO developed general principles to be agreed by all its national associations.
- In 2006 **National Associations** will adapt these principles to their national nutritional and eating specificities. **Contract Catering companies** will implement FERCO's principles, taking into consideration their specific marketing and commercial policies, as well as those of their clients.

### **Action on two fronts**

In parallel with its contribution to the EU Platform, FERCO is working with its partner EFFAT - The European Federation of Trade Unions in the Food Agriculture and Tourism Sectors - within the EU Social Dialogue of the Contract Catering sector. With the support of the EU Commission, the two organisations developed a *Guide to the Economically Most Advantageous Offer*, representing the best quality for the best price. The awarding of contracts is generally based solely on price, which induces Contract Catering companies to streamline their costs as much as possible, sometimes to the detriment of the quality of the meals and services provided.

Awarding contracts at the lowest price cannot help promote a healthy diet. This is particularly true in the case of schools, hospitals and retirement homes, where low quality service has a significant impact on people's nutrition, health and education. The Guide is intended to promote the use of quality criteria for the awarding of catering contracts by the clients, whether they are public organisations or private companies.

## **2. EXISTING INITIATIVES BY FERCO MEMBERS TO FIGHT OBESITY**

### ***National Association level***

#### ***1. The Netherlands: VENECA***

##### ***Partnership with public authorities***

VENECA has signed the action plan by the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, designed to restore and preserve the balance between eating and physical activity.

VENECA works together with all stakeholders to draft and present plans to address the issues of overweight and obesity. The commitment on Diet, Physical Activity and Health guarantees that all concerned stakeholders are mobilised and work together on common goals to stop the increase of obesity in society.

VENECA plans to initiate activities concerning:

- *Definition of healthy food patterns*

VENECA is trying to find a clearly defined interaction between healthy food and healthy activities to ensure that the difficult discussion of 'what is healthy' can be communicated. Currently, there is no clear definition of healthy food patterns.

- *Communication/Training*

Communication is necessary to make the public aware of the consequences of being overweight. VENECA will start PR activities to inform its members and Contract Catering clients about healthy food. VENECA believes it is important that Contract Catering clients and companies serving meals be aware of their responsibility as regards their employees' and consumers' health.

To this end, VENECA will investigate if new policies can be an instrument to motivate Contract Catering clients and companies to agree with VENECA's definition of healthy food patterns and actions proposed within the commitment on Diet, Physical Activity and Health. For example, companies could apply for an award or acknowledgement for 'the healthy company'.

##### ***Partnership with social partners***

The fight against obesity has been included as a common priority for both employees and employers in the latest labour agreement signed in March 2005. The aim is to jointly promote a healthier lifestyle through actions undertaken within the EU Social Dialogue, to the benefit of the 19.000 workers in the sector.

## **Overview of VENECA activities**

- VENECA works in collaboration with representatives of the Heart Foundation and the Food centre, both nationwide organisations concerned about healthcare.
- The government guidelines for healthy food and eating have been adapted for the Contract Catering sector and translated by VENECA into a manual, *Lekker en gezond eten in bedrijfsrestaurants* (eating good and healthy in company restaurants). This manual giving clear and concise information on healthy food is intended primarily for all locations that are catered by VENECA members. Topics covered include the Food Indicator, snacks and in-between meals, light products and functional foods, recommended quantities, menu suggestions and best practices. The manual is also used for educational purposes in the sector. It offers many suggestions and practical ideas for people working on location. Because VENECA believes that more education about food, nutrition, vitamins and minerals is necessary, the manual is imbedded in the sector curriculum.

A short version of the manual has been developed for member locations focusing on eight points: present enough variation, ensure there is a balanced choice, beware of fat, offer enough bread and fibre-rich products, offer plenty of fruit and vegetables, use very small amounts of salt, offer different kinds of drinks and read the ingredients on the package. All points are illustrated by practical examples.

- The curriculum for the association has been adapted to emphasise healthy food and eating. These criteria are part of the 'Certificatieschema Contractcatering' (Certification Schedule Contract Catering) connected to NEN-EN-ISO 9001:2000. VENECA members must be ISO-certified in accordance to the framework. They are audited by certified institutions, such as Lloyd's and GCS, and are obliged to develop and execute a health policy.
- VENECA initiated scientific research conducted by the University of Wageningen, which specialises in food and agricultural issues. The research investigated the quality of hot meals in care institutions. An important issue was the difference in nutriment values in hot meals prepared on location and those prepared in separate production units.
- In the late 1990s, VENECA distributed a report on healthy snacks that gives information on a wide range of well-balanced snack products. The report contributed to better knowledge of food values and food ingredients.

## **Cooperation with other stakeholders**

VENECA participates in regular external and internal meetings concerning obesity.

External:

- Regular meetings with the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports, food companies, retail organisations and consumer organisations.
- Project group with those who signed the commitment on Diet, Physical Activity and Health.

- Obesity working group of VNO-NCW, which is part of the health committee of VNO-NCW, the employers' organisation.
- Project group on defining healthy food patterns, involving regular meetings with several sectors about the definition of healthy food patterns.
- Board meetings of the Food and Safety Authority (VWA), a quarterly top-level meeting involving VENECA and VWA, the Dutch Nutrition Centre.
- A periodic operational meeting on food and safety with VWA.

Internal:

- A VENECA team is responsible for the results of the commitment on Diet, Physical Activity and Health.
- All VENECA members are represented on the Commission on Quality.

There is a specific working group, Commitment Obesity, that includes members from the Commission on Quality. The working group is responsible for the agreed upon programme.

In addition to these official meetings, VENECA meets regularly at top-level with other sectors linked to catering. The issues of healthy food, consumption and obesity are often put on the agenda.

## ***2. GERMANY: VIC***

### ***Partnership with public authorities***

The Multistakeholder Platform on Diet and Physical Activity has been created, which brings together the government, health professionals, industry (including VIC), parents groups, trade unions and the German Sports Confederation. The group is focusing on preventing obesity.

VIC is cooperating with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Ernährung e.V. (DGE, the German association for nutrition) which has adopted 10 recommendations on nutrition. DGE awards a logo for the theoretical and practical implementation of reference values with respect to the supply of nutrients of high quality and light food in staff catering facilities.

## ***3. UK: the BHA Contract Catering Forum***

### ***Partnership with public authorities***

The BHA has actively participated in the UK government's campaign for reducing salt in dishes. The BHA position as defined in a leaflet distributed in 2004 encourages all BHA members to take steps to reduce the use of salt. Almost every operator has revised recipes to reduce the level of salt. To back this up most have undertaken special chef training programmes built around the need for healthy, balanced menu guidelines.

Larger companies have directly negotiated with their suppliers. There has been more selective purchasing such as items without salt or fat, for example buying tuna in spring water rather than oil. Many operators have removed salt from dining tables. Most dishes are now below the Food Standards Agency guidelines. Most operators claim little or no customer feedback to their salt reduction programmes, meaning that the reduction has been so gradual that customers fail to notice the difference.

### ***Overview of BHA activities***

Operators are encouraging sit-down snacking and introducing deli bars, coffee shops and sandwich bars in response to the increasing demand for lighter menus and healthier options in all sectors.

All operators are willing to introduce more healthy option dishes and to promote low fat or low carbohydrate dishes. Some are working with their suppliers to support healthy eating promotional campaigns.

## ***4. SPAIN: FEADRS***

### ***Partnership with public authorities***

FEADRS has signed an agreement with the Agencia Española de Seguridad Alimentaria (AESAs) to support the NAOS (Nutrition and Obesity Prevention) strategy. The NAOS strategy defines obesity as a chronic non-communicable disease with a multi-causal origin. Currently, obesity is one of the major emerging public health issues. Spain is one of the European countries with most overweight people: one in two adults is overweight.

Contract Catering companies are contributing to the public health initiatives to prevent obesity and actively support the Spanish NAOS strategy.

- FEADRS and AESA have signed an agreement that identifies areas in which Contract Catering companies might voluntarily consider to apply NAOS strategy principles. This agreement will serve as an inspiration and a basis for the understanding and cooperation between FEADRS and AESA. The agreement lays out suggested areas for action, including promotion in the school sector of diets for every age group to introduce young children to the taste of food that has formed a part of the traditional Mediterranean diet.

FEADRS and AESA will cooperate with parents to share the responsibility of promoting healthy lifestyles in the family environment by a constant offer of well-balanced breakfasts and snacks. Actually Contract Catering companies, members of FEADRS provide the schools with monthly menus including nutritional information and recommendations to the parents for the dinner. Specialists can give short courses on diet, nutrition and healthy food, for the parents.

They will promote educational measures to be defined within the framework of a health promotion programme on nutrition, diet and healthy lifestyles. For example, children are encouraged to cut and peel the food themselves. Other activities are encouraged such as sport activities, games, sings, small theatres, kitchen works, nutrition works, competitions, etc.

- Contract Catering companies will cooperate with parents associations and public administrations promoting measures for healthy lifestyles to prevent obesity in Spanish society.
- FEADRS shall recommend that its members use healthier oils instead of saturated fatty acids oils or trans-fatty acids and when possible to use iodised salt in school menus in areas where there are iodine deficiency disorders.
- AESA and FEADRS will participate in working groups within the NAOS strategy to design measures to promote nutrition, diet and healthy lifestyles.

### **Overview of FEADRS activities**

A Quality Commission has been set up to develop a Nutritional Protocol (food frequency a week), a Food Tracking Practical Guide, activities to promote a healthy diet and good eating habits such as 'The food week at school', and a FEADRS website to give information on healthy eating.

The Nutritional Protocol aims at promoting the Mediterranean Diet whilst respecting the gastronomy and culinary diversity of various communities. It recommend to increase the consumption of fruits, vegetables, legumes and fish, and to limit energy intake from total fats and to shift fat consumption away from saturated fats to unsaturated fats and to eliminate eventually *trans*-fatty acids. The Protocol includes:

- Table of food frequency by week (1 meal a day during 5 days a week)
- Recommendations on caloric intakes by age
- Table of weights by ages
- Main culinary techniques to be used in the elaboration of school meals.
- Examples of Menus.
- Recommendations for special diets (i.e.: diets for people with allergies)

The Practical guide of Traceability for the Contract Catering Sector includes:

- A system of backward traceability (Process of suppliers' homologation)
- A system of internal traceability
- A system of forward traceability (only in central kitchen)

"The week of nutrition in the School": a book for each day of the week has been developed. One chapter is intended for children from 6 to 9 and the other chapter for children from 9 to 12.

## **5 France: SNRC**

### **Partnership with public authorities**

SNRC is member of the Advisory Board to the French National Nutrition and Health Programme, Le Programme National Nutrition-Santé (PNNS) that aims to improve the health of the whole population by improving nutrition. PNNS sets specific targets on dietary intake, lifestyle and physical activity. SNRC is also a member of the writing committee of GPEM/DA, a permanent group studying public tenders/Foodstuffs.

In partnership with the Ministry of Finance, SNRC has been participating in drafting a guide on that will serve as the basis for public tenders on catering and food services. The final document was published in 2005. This guide refers to nutrition recommendations already adopted by GPEM/DA and recommends that some nutritional information be given to consumers.

SNRC is member of the Conseil National de l'Alimentation, which has an advisory role to public authorities for all matters related to food, nutrition and nutritional behaviour. Official advice has recently been published on the following issues:

- Identification and specific assistance in catering services to customers suffering from food allergies.
- Objectives for catering and food service at schools for children.
- Obesity.

### ***Overview of SNRC activities***

SNRC initiated actions with major food manufacturers to improve the level of information and traceability provided to caterers, so that they are in a position to provide more detailed information to their customers. For example, SNRC established charters concerning transparency (Chartes de Transparence) with meat and fish suppliers. SNRC's commitment charters are regularly audited by an external and independent company.

SNRC is about signing a charter with PEEP a Federation of Parents for Public Schools. This charter emphasises well-balanced menus.

## **6 Finland: FHR**

### ***Partnership with public authorities***

In Finland, public authorities have a strong impact on health and nutrition matters. They have established the National Nutrition Council, which involves agriculture, food industry, consumers, healthcare, education and research organisations. Every year, the Council publishes recommendations defining appropriate nutrient intakes for population groups and targets for improving public health. The recommendations are widely used when serving food and give guidance on the basic composition of diet, nutrient intake and food choice.

Since the latest publications of the National Nutrition Council recommendations, considerable new research information has been presented on Finnish food consumption, nutrient intake and the relationship between diet and health. International scientific organisations and expert groups such as FAO/WHO, the U.S. Academy of Sciences, the Scientific Committee for Food of the European Commission, Nordic experts, and others have conducted comprehensive assessments of nutrient requirements, diet composition and nutrition recommendations.

As a result, the Finnish National Nutrition Council has recently published new recommendations. The publication includes recommendations for the basic composition of diet, nutrient intake and advice on food choice. The recommendations are complemented by special guidelines issued by authorities, such as those for meals in schools, day care facilities and institutions.

The recommendations form the basis for food and nutrition policy. They can be used for planning mass catering, as basic material for nutrition education and training, as reference values when estimating food consumption and nutrient intake for research purposes, mass catering, or other uses relating to groups.

## **7 Sweden: SHR**

### ***Partnership with public authorities***

The government commissioned the National Food Administration (NFA) and the National Institute of Public Health (IPH), after consultation with specified actors, to produce a proposal for an action plan for healthy eating habits and increased physical activity for the Swedish population. The plan was released in April 2005.

There have been a couple of platforms, both for the food sector only and over the years, a few broader platforms involving food associations, government and the national food administration. The main activities to date include information meetings, discussions and some seminars.

## **Company level**

### **1. Compass Group**

Compass Group has developed a programme that puts nutrition and wellness at the heart of its menus. Designed by dietitians, nutritionists and communications experts, Balanced Choices enables its customers to choose from a range of wholesome and healthy dishes to suit dietary and lifestyle choices. The flexibility of the programme means it can be adapted to each sector.

Balanced Choices incorporates training for catering teams to help them create healthier, more balanced menus and advise their customers and staff on their food choices. Key staff, including all catering managers and head chefs, are receiving specialist training which culminates in an NCFE Intermediate Certification in Nutrition.

The programme comes with a common set of support materials with flexibility built into each component. A system of **coloured icons** helps staff and customers identify healthy and lifestyle choices such as 'low fat', 'vegetarian', 'diary-free' and 'sustainable fish stocks', while a range of **point of purchase prompt cards** provides key nutritional information for consumers. Each unit displays a '**campaign board**' containing leaflets, recipe packs and newsletters, highlighting the programme's values and initiatives.

Using bespoke software to support the delivery and evolution of the programme, catering staff can access frequently updated recipes evaluated for their nutritional content that generate counter top information on site.

Compass group is committed to working with all elements of the food chain and is collaborating with its suppliers and manufacturers to ensure that all current and proposed ingredients meet the strict Balanced Choices criteria. Compass Group is always looking at new ways to work with its clients, suppliers and the Government to promote the benefits of healthy eating and an active lifestyle.

The Balanced Choices programme will evolve and develop over time, as Compass Group monitor emerging nutrition research, legislation and trends to ensure the programme incorporates the very latest thinking.

**Compass International Vending companies** are developing innovative, industry-leading solutions to emphasise healthier products. A range of nutritional products low in carbohydrates, sugar free, low fat, or caffeine free is replacing existing branded machines with glass-fronted vending machines offering a range of juices, waters and healthy snacks.

#### *Education initiatives*

In the education sector, Compass tailored its offers to meet the needs of diverse national markets (Spain is not the UK or France) by adapting its communication campaign to the age of the children. For example, characters have been developed in

the UK and France to help children in elementary school understand the importance of eating a well-balanced meal and to teach them good eating behaviour.

A programme has been designed to make healthy eating the 'cool' thing to do by promoting nutritious options in a way that makes them exciting and relevant to secondary and high school pupils.

In colleges and universities Compass looks to encourage students to eat a healthy and balanced diet by making the dining environment a hub of social interaction. In the UK, Compass has reduced the salt content of meals in primary schools by 38% since 2002 and in secondary schools has removed all salt from the cooking process, leading to a reduction of 10,000 kilograms in salt purchases. It also encourages the baking or grilling of products as opposed to frying.

### **COMPASS UK**

'The Healthy Way' based on the UK Food Standards Agency's balance of good health guidelines is being introduced as the basis for menu planning at workplaces.

'Food Talk', with a core range of healthy options including salads, fresh vegetable dips and fruit salads has also been introduced.

'Balanced Choices' is Compass' approach to wellness and nutrition, which incorporates a set of guiding principles that allows operating companies to respond flexibly to the differing needs of their clients and customers. 'Balanced Choices' features menu items to meet customers' lifestyles.

Compass is working with its suppliers and manufacturers to improve the nutritional content of products. For example, working with Baxter's soups Compass achieved a 25% to 50% reduction in the salt content of the standard range of soups. Compass worked with another supplier producing a baked bean that meets the specification of a 25% reduction in the salt and sugar content.

### **EUREST GERMANY**

EUREST Germany has developed a nutritional strategy based upon the 10 recommendations of the German association for nutrition (DGE), applying them to menu planning, from breakfast and snack catering through to lunch, shift catering, vending, conference service, outlets, mobile trolleys and special action weeks if they take place in the staff restaurant. EUREST Germany has been awarded the DGE logo for the supply of high quality nutrients and light food in staff catering facilities.

### **EUREST SWEDEN**

EUREST Sweden has developed the concept of 'Fitness Food', based on less fat, less salt and plenty of vitamins and fibres. 'Fitness Food' complies with the National Food Administration (NFA) guidelines on nutrition recommendations.

## **2. Avenance Group**

### **ELIOR UK**

ELIOR UK has adopted a nutritional strategy named "Balance" which currently applies in sites in Avenance UK and the Education Division. This strategy intends to help consumers to make healthy eating choices through education and information.

The Balance programme was designed with the following objectives:

- reducing the national levels of obesity and cardio vascular disease
- preventing other chronic obesity-related diseases
- encouraging chefs to adopt healthier methods of food preparation
- making healthier foods available to customers, including healthier products from suppliers
- educating customers with regards to healthy eating and healthy lifestyle habits and the benefits associated with these positive behaviours
- stimulating curiosity and active interaction with food within different customer groups and ages
- positively linking health and pleasure

The strategy aims to encourage customers to make healthy eating choices through informed decisions. The concept is primarily aimed at the whole range of staff restaurants and schools for older children (over 12 years old). Future implementation includes schools for younger children and public-facing contracts. The programme can be adapted by each site, depending on the types of customers and whether the clients have a corporate health programme in situ.

Chefs and managers receive full training that includes theory as well as practical application of the concepts involved to ensure consistent application on a daily basis and that qualitative information to customers is correct. Each chef/catering manager works with their client and Occupational Health department to modify the program in the most appropriate way for them and their customers.

Ongoing support of the programme is provided via the Elior UK intranet which allows access to dietary and allergy advice to all chefs and managers. The Elior UK nutritionist is also available at all times to provide advice and guidance. The programme is accompanied by a suite of supporting marketing and educational materials.

### **ELIOR NEDERLAND**

Elior Nederland, part of Avenance, developed five key values that will form the basis of its new strategy. One is 'taking our responsibility in catering'.

"Avenance Nederland" new nutritional strategy consists in:

- The creation of a Dutch Health Platform to incorporate those key values
- Products and dishes are prepared according to approved recipes and menu planning that guarantees a healthy and balanced menu cycle.
- Guidelines for healthy nutrition are outlined in a manual and staffs are trained on nutrition guidelines.

- Elior offers a basic range and an additional range that complies with the Guidelines for healthy nutrition.
- Elior develops promotional activities on health topics that are supported by posters, leaflets and further information campaigns on the subject.
- Elior Nederland participates in the international health platform of the Elior group.
- Elior is developing a concept where healthy and nutritious food is labelled with a special health sticker.
- "Avenance Nederland" has introduced in the Education Sector the new "Balanced food" concept which has been rolled out to all locations in the High Schools segment. All products have been categorised by the Dutch Nutrition Centre and are labelled with a special sticker explaining the 3 categories of food (healthy=GREEN, once in a while= ORANGE, unhealthy=RED). 75% of the products sold have to be green/orange. At the moment 8 sites and appr. 15.000 students are using the Balanced Food concept and there are plans for another 30 sites.
- Together with the Olympic Champion Leontine van Moorsel, Avenance Nederland is informing its clients on sites about the necessity of combining healthy food with regular exercise. Special "Leontine van Moorsel" lunch tips do take place in the restaurants and promote all kinds of sporting activities.

An independent bureau (FMO) is checking the concept Balance Food in order to strengthen the values of the concept and to keep the approval of the Nutrition Centre.

The taskforce of Avenance Nederland "responsibility in catering" is working out the instructions for a staff guideline of menus, products and tips on healthy food.

## **AVENANCE FRANCE**

AVENANCE France has developed **various activities** on the topic of nutrition (thematic lunches, posters, documents) specifically designed for the **educational sector**:

"**Lulu fights the food monsters**" for nursery (from 3 to 6 years) and elementary school children (from 6 to 10 years) and "**Change your ways**" for teenagers who attend sports courses. The aim is to create occasions for good eating and awareness activities on the issue of nutrition, during the "week of the taste" taking place each year in October and also during 5 others events in the course of the school year. Posters encourage the practice of sport throughout the year: "Earn your treats", "More ice cream in summer equals more exercise", etc.

"**Lulu globe-trotter setting of to explore the world**" for children from 3 to 10 and "**clean with the earth**" for teenagers from 10 to 18, encourage school-children to appreciate seasonal fruits and vegetables and to be aware of Environmental protection issues when shopping.

"**Restaurant for tots**" allows children from 3 to 6 years to familiarize themselves in a poly-sensorial way with food.

**“Self-service restaurant to help you grow”** encourages children from 6 to 10 to make the right choices as far as well balanced nutrition is concerned.

**“Open Café”** encourages teenagers to move to a more healthy diet and raises their awareness of the links between food and health.

AVENANCE ENSEIGNEMENT FRANCE has developed an **EDUCATION CHARTER**. This Charter describes the main points of the nutritional policy of “Avenance Enseignement” which are:

- Be involved in public health efforts (to relay officials instructions)
- Promote healthy eating by children and young people (through concepts)
- Always associate pleasure with health (raw materials, cooking methods and recipe)
- Give priority to quality and time to eat calmly
- Prevent obesity and cardiovascular diseases (reduction and selection of lipids)
- Make meals more nutritious (valorisation of fruits and vegetables)
- Make more provision for physiological and social characteristics (allergy, physical activities)

AVENANCE communicates on this charter in its internal documents but also in magazines read by decision-makers. More over, reference menus are elaborated in accordance with these commitments

AVENANCE FRANCE has also developed specific **nutrition information for parents and partners**. 6 nutrition information booklets have been distributed to private and state school clients, partners, parents, and Avenance managers and staff (5000) spreading in accordance with events and customers requests. These booklets are considering issues such as “Changing your habits” (teenagers and adults), “Breakfast” (all groups) “Food for children” (parents of nursery and elementary school children), “Food for sport” ( all groups), “Fruit and vegetables” (all groups) and “Get active with your diet” ( all groups).

In order to gain better understanding of the links between diet and health, AVENANCE FRANCE is involved in the **longitudinal prospective study on diet and health**, ELPAS (Etude Longitudinale Prospective Alimentation et Santé). The aim of this scientific study is to examine the influence of the main dietary and environmental factors on weight gain. This study is supported by the French Ministry of Research and Ministry of Agriculture, and the city council and education authority of Paris.

For Avenance, making a contribution towards the improvement of scientific knowledge about nutrition, acting as an intermediary for its clients by providing information on the progress of the study, and communicating internally and externally with partners is of utmost importance. The results of this study will be decisive in terms of adaptation of the public health policy to control obesity.

**Avenance Enterprises France** has adopted a **nutritional strategy, named “Equilibre”** which intends to help consumers making healthy eating choices. It is an informative concept behind healthy-eating actions being implemented in Staff restaurants. Announced in of early October 2005, the program will be adopted site-by-site over the coming months. Chefs are being informed with the concept with special supports. At the end of 2006, all Staff restaurants should have adopted the concept, i.e. 40% of the 350 000 consumers reached every day.

Avenance Enterprises already provided answers by offering patrons daily suggestions and concepts such as: Salad bars, "The Vegetable Bar", "Soups & Co.", "Piatto Del Gusto" (a concept of Italian-style baked pasta), "Steam" kiosks, etc. The "Equilibre" approach demonstrates a real desire to spread the word and provide people with bearings to discover or rediscover the path to well-being without necessarily sacrificing pleasure. Far from forcing this approach on its patrons, Avenance Enterprises wants to raise their awareness of the importance of a varied diet without radically changing their eating habits.

The Avenance nutritional strategy, "Equilibre" goals are to:

- implement PNNS recommendations. In 2001, the French Ministry of Health and Social Protection set up the National Health Nutrition Programme (PNNS) with the general objective of improving the health of the French population through the decisive factor of nutrition. The programme includes actions and concrete measures to reduce the risk of disease and promote a healthier lifestyle: 9 nutritional factors have therefore been established to help people to adopt better nutritional habits, regardless of age, sex or lifestyle. Avenance Enterprises applies the main PNNS principles by suggesting straightforward and self-evident actions such as providing special bread in addition to white bread, a tasty house vinaigrette with omega 3 or take-away fruit for a vitamin break
- contribute to the patrons' well-being
- give an enhanced and quality image of its services.

Meanwhile, nutritionists from Avenance Enterprises, inform and push consumers towards accepting basic principles of balanced nutrition. Highlights on the major role of breakfast, advantages of the Mediterranean diet, or how to keep in good shape are among the subjects of these different awareness campaigns.

For all customers concerned with better nutrition, Elixir France has created the **Cocoon concept** to help its customers "manage" in a fun and easy way their nutrition on the long term without cutting back on taste. Cocoon was developed by ELIOR's chefs in close collaboration with a team of nutritionists to help each guest put together a healthy, tasty meal easily. The Cocoon selection guarantees controlled calorie content and nutritional balance with a broad choice that lets customers personalise their meals. Particular emphasis was placed on making products flavourful and appetising for maximum enjoyment. Cocoon gives customers a step by step approach to the simple principles behind a balanced meal, such as the importance of choosing complementary foods, the vital nature of fruits and vegetables, and how to choose seasonings and cooking methods. This will bring consumers to recognise that nutritional balance doesn't mean a lack of flavour. Cocoon also aims to provide a whole package of services: personalised nutritional evaluation and advice, tips for everyday cooking, and more.

Since June 2005, the Cocoon concept has been rolled out in contract catering sites in the greater Paris region (approximately 800 meals per day) since June 2005. Other projects are currently under consideration.

## **AVENANCE ITALY**

Avenance Italy has developed several activities in the Educational sector:

### ***FRUIT DAY***

The activity called "Fruit Day" promotes the consumption of fruits according to the recommendation of the National Health Care Plan 2003-2005. As a matter of fact, the National plan invites to promote a healthy way of life, Prevention, Public healthy communication to reduce risk factors. With particular reference to children, the National Plan mentions the problem of childhood obesity and identifies the following possible solutions:

- reduce sedentary way of living and promote physical activity,
- promote of a balanced nutrition,
- give suggestions and examples to parents of well balanced nutrition and the repartition of calories intakes during the day

The FRUIT DAY is the concrete answer of Avenance Italy to point 2: "promotion of a balanced nutrition". It is intended for students of primary and secondary schools (average 800/1000 students each day). Avenance proposed the FRUIT DAY in 5 towns of the Lombardy Region (3000 students involved in total).

### ***GRAINE DE CHEF***

Avenance Italy promotes and encourages the consumption of vegetables among pupils through an exciting cookery competition that take place each year in all schools all over Italy's clients of Avenance.

The first edition was launched in 2000. The cookery competition is a strong educational instrument to promote a balanced diet among pupils between 9 and 10,, teachers and parents. It promotes the consumption of fruits and vegetables with particular reference to the general indication of "consumption of at least 5 portions of vegetables and fruits a day". The competition arise interest and passion in cookery, make pupils aware of the process of cooking, and develop an active attitude and a team spirit.

Avenance defines the rules of the competition with Public Instruction Department and prepares all informative material to be distributed in schools. Pupils have to invent a recipe with vegetables. After a first selection, finalists are invited to cook their recipes with an Avenance chef who provides help for the most difficult operations such as cutting or the use of boiled water. They have to prepare and present the recipe in one hour and a half. At the end their recipes are tasted and voted by a jury made of chefs, journalists, doctors and nutritionists.

It should be highlighted that in all the schools who participated to the competition, pupils are now eating more vegetable and in several case help their mother in cooking at home.

### ***SPORT on MENU***

Avenance Italy has defined an educational instrument to make students of primary and secondary schools aware of the importance of sport, according to the recommendation of the National Health Care Plan 2003-2005. The leaflet "SPORT on MENU" contains images of fresh fruits combined with sport activities and a explains the importance of an active lifestyle. The leaflet can be used by teachers for a lesson in class and students can bring it at home to discuss the subject with their parents. Avenance is planning a survey on sport and physical activity practices of children in 2007. Results could be the subject for a public congress in Rome, with the

collaboration of the Italian Association of Paediatric, the Italian Association of Dieticians and national sporting associations.

### **"CARD OF THE BALANCE NUTRITION"**

Avenance Italy has defined an educational instrument to make parents aware of the importance of a well balanced nutrition according to the recommendation of the National Health Care Plan 2003-2005. The Dietician Service of Avenance drafted a brochure entitled "Invitation to dinner- Suggestion for a balanced Nutrition". The brochure tackles three very important issues, namely, why it is important to vary a diet, how to vary a diet and the right food day.

Finally, at the beginning of each school year, Avenance realises a personalised brochure for each Municipal Administration that is distributed to children at school.

## **3. Sodexo Alliance**

Sodexo devotes attention to healthy eating on many fronts, such as in the quality system, in training courses and at location level. Sodexo has created visuals, signage, imagery and support material to assist customers in choosing appropriate menu items and healthier food.

Sodexo lead an international study in 2003 for a better understanding of obesity issues and expectations of main stakeholders including parents, educators and teachers, public authorities, as well as doctors and specialists.

### **SODEXHO UK**

Sodexo UK has published its 2005 survey on school meals and lifestyle. This eighth version of the survey provides Sodexo with up to date critical evidence to ensure that the menu items are tackling the needs of young people adequately. Sodexo is pushing a 'whole school' approach to ensure that all parties are working towards the nutritional education of young people. For this reason, Sodexo decided to sponsor a seminar on Nutrition and School-Age Children, to examine the policy implications arising from new evidence on eating habits of school-age children that emerged from the biannual survey.

### **SODEXHO BELGIUM**

Sodexo Belgium has been developing a quality system to tackle clients' requests regarding better nutrition and nutritional value. It is based on the well-grounded value adopted by the National Institute for nutrition.

### **SODEXHO NETHERLANDS**

Sodexo Netherlands' quality system (ISO 9001 certified) includes requirements for healthy eating.

**Nutritional requirements:** every Sodexo location works with a four weeks cyclic menu drawn up under the supervision of Sodexo dieticians, paying attention to

variety, nutritional values and other aspects of healthy eating. Each Sodexo restaurant has at least a choice of healthy, prepared on the premises products (low-fat hot snacks and cold snacks). And always a choice of: brown bread and brown rolls, at least one low-fat margarine, low and medium-fat sandwich meats, low-fat cheese, skimmed milk, low-fat desserts, fresh fruit, salads, low-sugar drinks and mineral water.

**Training:** All newly employed Sodexo Netherlands' staff take a course on contract catering, covering amongst other things healthy food within corporate catering activities. Employees learn the rules of good nutrition and how they can apply them in practice. For those who have already completed this course, an advanced course has been developed, which can be provided on site by the District Manager and/or Catering Manager.

**Food Manual:** Via intranet, every location can consult a Food Manual containing information on topics such as healthy food and diet ethics.

**Branding:**

Sodexo has developed three different food brands. One of them, 'Sodexo Vital', has been specifically geared to healthy nutrition. A well-balanced and tailor made offer can be composed from these three food brands, based on the type of consumers for each individual site. Depending on the results of a unique and internationally based survey, Sodexo can determine the various types of consumers on site and provide a suitable solution, with a healthy food offer.

**Healthy eating campaign:** Each year, Sodexo organizes a healthy eating campaign in all 1.350 staff restaurants. The healthy eating campaign aims to achieve the following objectives: show people that healthy food tastes good, make lunch guests aware of their present eating habits, and try to change unhealthy eating behaviour, so that an altered eating pattern can help alleviate health problems, encourage the consumption of products that are low in saturated fat, fruits and vegetables and fish. Sodexo cooperates with its main suppliers to develop and encourage the consumption of (new) healthy products.

The healthy eating campaign has been officially awarded by The Netherlands Nutrition Centre.

Communication about the importance of **daily exercise** with simple examples: Sodexo starts a new programme for all its 1.350 staff restaurants: "Exercise and food in balance". With this program Sodexo aims to demonstrate the importance of physical exercise to all consumers.

## **SODEXHO FRANCE**

Sodexo France was sponsor and member of the SUVIMAX study, lead by Serge Hercberg involving a group of 13,000 people who were followed weekly over eight years (1993 to 2001). The results showed, among other things, that vegetable consumption reduced the incidence of cancer in men by more than 30%.

*Overview of Sodexo France activities*

- SODEXHO established a website (ADALTA.com) to inform its customers on site. The website features access to the daily menu and when the client sign on, there is a direct link to a nutritional website (Nutriguide.com) that provides a way to follow up an individual's nutritional balance.
- SODEXHO created a call centre (3223 – SODEXHO) that welcomes all questions, which are answered by nutritionists and dieticians.
- SODEXHO created the FETAVI educational programme that has been recognised and awarded by the PNNS. FETAVI is receiving public funding for the first implementation in Brest, France.
- SODEXHO lead the SANTAL programme with PSA in the CITROEN factory in Rennes. The action is mainly based on communication. The measured results are quite significant - 81% of overweight people lost weight by using the modified offer with a special focus on vegetables, fish and salads.
- SODEXHO promoted a physical activity campaign in the restaurants it manages. The campaign, organised by PNNS, advised people to 'avoid the lift, use the stairs', among other things.

## **SODEXHO GERMANY**

With respect to healthy food, Sodexho Germany forms part of the Sodexho Alliance Group and acts completely in line with the rules and recommendations of Sodexho Alliance.

Sodexho Germany assumes the mission to contribute to the well-being of its customers as well as to contribute to nutritional education and information for customers and guests. Sodexho Germany understands its role to "make things happen" like:

- To offer always a green vegetables alternative where pasta, rice or potatoes are served
- To offer healthy food and look carefully if quick service meal solutions are required
- To avoid complex recipes
- To serve fish dishes with low fat cooking methods especially in the education sector as part of the weekly menu plan
- To promote low fat cooking methods in general
- To be very transparent concerning hidden ingredients, salt and sugar
- To offer a tool for personal nutritional follow-up.

## **SODEXHO ITALY**

Sodexho Italia is conducting several initiatives to promote wellbeing and to reduce obesity such as the promotion of the Mediterranean diet, specific action focused on the education sector.

### ***Sodexho Food Consumption Observatory:***

In May 2004 Sodexho has realized the first analysis on raw materials used to prepare meals during the previous month (february 2004). The results of the research have been compared to the food pyramid, which enables to assess an ideal nutritional intake of all different aliment groups (Fruits and Legumes; Cereals and Starchy food, Meat, Fish and Eggs – Milk and its by products) in order to keep an optimum nutritional balance. A second research has been carried out in May 2005.

**The Mediterranean diet**, the basis on which Italian menus are elaborated, is fully respected on Sodexho sites in every market segment: high offer of cereals, legumes and seasonal fresh fruits, diversified offer of protein source food, use of vegetables oils, "single seed", and olive oil, use of boiling, baking or grill cooking methods.

**Food information in the education segment:**

4 booklets on How to eat, How much, When to eat and a Food Dictionary, provide simple and clear information about healthy diet. Booklets are distributed to teachers after an organized meeting with Sodexho's staff.

A brochure "**A tavola insieme con Gusto**" (Going to eat together with Taste) is helping parents to understand the menu delivered at school. It contains also suggestions in order to balance the other meals during the day (school menus are detailed inside the web site Sodexhoeducation.com as well). Animations days are organised to give pupils the opportunity to see, touch and taste aliments they have never known or they have a poor awareness about or they don't like.

**Il pesometro** (the weight meter) is an educational gadget that can be used at home or at school and allows parents and pupils to follow the growth comparing it to age, sex, weight and food requirements.

#### **4. Albron (the Netherlands)**

Albron has been very serious about social responsibility ever since its foundation in 1900. The company is genuinely convinced that a two-way communication with all stakeholders is the best guarantee for successful and sustainable business. Albron has a leading role in taking its social responsibility in the discussion on obesity. Since the main reason for the growth of obesity is an energy imbalance, Albron supports all kinds of sports events. The sponsoring of the annual walking tour Nijmeegse Vierdaagse with its 45.000 participants, the organisation of the tennis tournament Siemens Open and the support of the horse-ride event Breda Hippique are just a few examples of the way in which Albron shows its involvement.

In more than 1100 restaurants, healthy food campaigns such as 'Fit & Food' take place in which the caterer stimulates people to have healthy snacks and drinks, by giving information on the caloric value of products, by stimulating regular exercise and by issuing a favourable price policy for fruits and salads.

In carrying out the company philosophy 'Good food, happy people', Albron develops an HR strategy called 'Health Policy' actively supporting all employees in finding a healthy lifestyle. As an example, Albron set up a project called the "Albron Challenge" involving six employees, defining individual health goals. Experts in the field of physical activity and nutrition supported them by giving practical advice. This program is now extended to all 4000 employees, based on the company's vision: seek a varied nutritional pattern, eat regularly (3x a day, start with a good

breakfast), have at least thirty minutes of physical exercise a day and – most importantly- have fun in your healthy lifestyle: Good food, happy people!

## **5. FAZER AMICA (Sweden)**

In 2004, Fazer Amica introduced a new concept for healthier food. The concept has been implemented in 28 restaurants that are working to be certified as healthy lunch restaurants. The concept is based on less fat, and more vegetables and fibres. Servings are based on the 'plate model', which is commonly used in Sweden.

Fazer Amica labels the unhealthier components of the meal. For example, a red symbol means 'tasty, but not lean'.

The objectives are to have 50 restaurants using the concept by the end of 2005 and that all restaurants should be eventually certificated as healthy.

## **6. Aramark UK**

A competition for children at primary school has been organised by Aramark and Aegon, UK. The pupils were asked to design a healthy, nutritionally balanced sandwich. The winning sandwich was then prepared by Aramark's head chef at Aegon and was promoted and sold by Aegon UK to its staff members. This objective was to educate children about healthy eating.