

Mystery Box
Lombardy-Europe : teens in the kitchen
Announcement of competition for schools of all levels

Foreword

Regione Lombardia – DG Agriculture – aims to promote initiatives to make Lombard agricultural and food products known in Italy and abroad, by mixing educational and advertising aspects in a project that is likely to involve Lombard and European Product Associations. The idea originated from the interest displayed by some Swedish schools in working in cooperation with some Italian school on a project dealing with issues related to food and nutrition education.

The aim is to implement an interdisciplinary project which will bring together teachers and students from culinary laboratories, food education and other activities, who will film their experiences in the spirit of interrelation and cultural exchange among the countries of the European Union.

Invitation to Submit Proposals

With this Announcement, intended for schools of all levels and for students aged 6 to 18, Regione Lombardia – DG Agriculture – invites all classes that are **able to organize culinary / taste laboratories at school and to produce an English version of the project in collaboration with a film crew capable of shooting a video of the endeavour, to conduct a culinary laboratory project according to the following guidelines:**

- 1) The Lombard class will receive a box containing some selected products of its area/ town/ region, which can be used to prepare a recipe, advertising material, recipe books and brochures in Italian and English, dealing with the typical products of Lombardy. At least one product must be one of the “core” ingredients of the recipe, but others – selected at the discretion of the school - may also be included.
- 2) By involving educators and students of other classes who teach/are taught image education, the class will produce a video (Video1) in English or without dialogue (but featuring sounds, music, signs) in which they introduce themselves and explain to students from other countries how that particular food is prepared and consumed, by using that / those typical product / products.
- 3) After having accomplished what indicated at paragraph 2 above, the class will send ERSAF (Via Copernico 28 – Milano – Kind attention Elena CHIURLO – fax N. 0039.2. 67404299):
 - the list of all the ingredients necessary to cook (or prepare cold) the selected recipe;
 - the list of materials prepared by Regione Lombardia and considered useful to provide information about typical food products (i.e. brochures in English, pictures, excerpts from cookery books or any other item the class might consider useful) and, if necessary, any other material produced by the class;
 - the video produced (CD, DVD or VHS), which will be duplicated by ERSAF; a copy will be sent to the twin-class, while the other will be kept for the final selection;
- 4) Following the guidelines, ERSAF will prepare the “mystery box”, which will then be sent to a foreign twin – class as assigned by irrevocable decision of the Regional School Office of Lombardy, taking into consideration the age of students interested in the competition. Each school will then be notified of its twin.
- 5) Upon receipt of the mystery box, the twin European class will:
 - a) cook (and, of course, taste!!!) the recipe as shown in the video;
 - b) prepare a new recipe with the ingredients contained in the box (by adding other products of their own territory). The recipe should interpret local tastes and traditions (for example, in Sweden rice with herring and bresaola *, etc).;
 - c) produce a video, a CD or any other material containing remarks, feelings, interviews about the experience (Video2). The class could also prepare footage similar to cooking programs/ cartoons/ etc. as broadcast on TV, limited only by the creativity of students and teachers. Videos should be a sort of backstage view of the

experience (from the receipt of the box and the preparation of the workshop with teachers, to the cooking of the recipe, etc...)

Regione Lombardia undertakes to send to the Lombard schools interested in the competition:

- a box containing some typical Lombard products as well as advertising material and recipe books, brochures in Italian and English, dealing with the typical products of Lombardy, as described at paragraph 1 above;
- a link to foreign schools interested in the project;
- hints about where to find useful information to carry out research on typical local products.

Shipping charges will be borne by Regione Lombardia. Schools will be notified of relevant arrangements at a later stage.

For any further recommendation and information about the operating procedures, please contact Struttura Promozione Prodotti Regione Lombardia (dott.ssa Maria Teresa Besana phone 0039.2. 6765.8021 promozione_prodotti@regione.lombardia.it) and ERSAF (dott.ssa Elena Chiurlo, phone 0039.2. 67404236). The box will be prepared and shipped by ERSAF on behalf of the schools.

Application procedure

Schools interested in participating should fill out the form that can be downloaded from: www.Buonalombardia.it → educazione alimentare → Programma Lombardia → 2005/2006 and e-mail it to the following address: promozione_prodotti@regione.lombardia.it, maria_teresa_besana@regione.lombardia.it, by June 30th, 2005, at the latest.

Regione Lombardia and the Regional School Office will select a maximum of 20 schools to participate in the competition; priority will be given according to the best representation of the different school levels, date of application and involvement of teachers and students.

Schools will receive notification that their application has been accepted, together with the project organizational information, by September 20, 2005.

Schools must complete the project no later than March 31, 2006 and send their results to Regione Lombardia no later than April 20, 2006.

Awards

A jury consisting of representatives of Regione Lombardia and the Regional School Office will evaluate the footage shot by the twin classes (Video 1 and Video 2) and will award prizes to the top five twin classes, according to the following procedure:

- 1st Prize: a video-camera and a DVD player to the best project in terms of recipe creativity, ingredient mix, video presentation and ability of the class to communicate to foreign schoolmates the particular features of their local products, with an emphasis on taste and appeal to the other senses.
- 2nd Prize: a video-camera and a digital camera to the project showing the best informative and journalistic skills of the participating class.
- 3rd Prize: a video-camera for the best interdisciplinary educational approach used by the students, as evidenced by the final product.
- 4th and 5th Prize: a digital camera to the wittiest productions, that have managed to illustrate in a funny way how students have lived the laboratory, cultural and tasting experience.

Operating recommendations

It is advisable to put non-perishable foods (i.e. pasta, rice, polenta*) in each box, together with other typical food products.

Obviously, it is important to pay careful attention to problems connected with exports of products to the different countries, and use products that do not cause any particular problem.

Regione Lombardia and the Regional School Office reserve the right to increase the number of eligible schools - above the indicated 20 - as well as the number of schools that could be awarded a prize, should one or more sponsors ready to support the initiative be found.