



2007-08 Fall Conference Conference Highlights

by Linda Binder, Conference Chair

Wisconsin Dells on November 1st and 2nd was the place to be this year. Chula Vista Resort provided a beautiful setting for our annual Fall Conference. The conference began Thursday evening with a 2-part panel discussion on "Direct Diversion." The first panel was made up of Broker, Distributor and Manufacturer Representatives. These panel members described how each of these various industry segments are involved in Direct Diversion and how they are interlinked to help us get the products we divert our commodities to. The second panel was formed from Food Service Directors involved in Direct Diversion this school year. Their discussion included what steps you need to take to make decisions about diversion, how it is working for them, and the benefits of diversion.

A big thank you goes out to all the panel participants for their time taken to help others better understand "Direct Diversion," and to help participants lose some of the anxiety over diversion. The evening commenced with over 40 vendors participating in a "Industry Table Top Informational Session." Conference attendees were able to obtain information and sample various products, the majority of which were items that schools will be able to divert commodities to next school year. The "Industry Table Top Informational Session" is a great opportunity to see products, get new ideas and get questions answered! I encourage members to always take advantage of this "Industry Table Top Informational Session", and to thank vendors for their participation!

Friday's Conference began with Council/WI Milk Marketing Board in Chicago. The session included student decisions. The session helped for successful promotions.

The day continued with "Interior" were able to see how to make actually want to come for lunch

The last session of the day, presented literally hot off the press: "The National level regarding changes/updates to the nutrition standards for the school lunch program, and for foods and beverages outside of lunch. You will be hearing LOTS more on this subject but we were privileged to be one of the first to hear things "in the making"...thanks Katie!

Friday's Conference began with "Get the Skinny on Marketing to Kids." Thanks go out to the WI Dairy Council/WI Milk Marketing Board for sponsoring Sharon Olson, Founding Partner of Y-Pulse LLC in Chicago. The session included research from attendees on marketing to students, and the factors that shape student decisions. The session helped us "see" as our students do. Sharon also provided us with a blueprint for successful promotions.

The conference always provides members with great networking opportunities as well as useful information and this year was no different. Special thanks to all who helped make this conference possible. Remember to mark your calendars for the Spring Conference on March 27th and 28th in Neenah, WI. See you there!