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By: Vanessa Rogers, Staff Member

Childhood obesity is a major problem in the United States.[1] It has more than tripled in the past 30 years.[2] Today nearly one in three teens qualifies as obese.[3] To help combat this problem, Michelle Obama promoted the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act which was signed into law in 2010. [4] Three months ago, the Act went into effect.[5] The guideline requires that milk be nonfat or low-fat; that one cup of fruit and one cup of vegetable be served per meal each day; that 2 ounces of

protein and 2 ounces of grains be served per meal each day.[6] In addition, the Act sets forth a minimum/maximum number of calories that is tied to the age of students. [7] Districts who do not comply with the guidelines can not apply for federal reimbursements which cover a part of the cost of providing school lunch.[8]

What does all this mean for the agriculture industry? As a result of the obesity epidemic and the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, the agricultural industry will likely need to produce more fruits and vegetables. The Act eliminated the long standing pizza, fries and brownie line, and pushed the fruits and veggies; thus the agricultural industry will have to account for such demand.[9] However, it is also possible that there will be no effect on the agricultural industry at all since there has been an increase in the number of students bringing their lunches (although no official numbers have been reported).[10] However, the idea that the agricultural industry will not be impacted will likely prove to be untrue because in many schools students cannot bring fast food for lunch; thus opting to bring lunch from home will not likely be much more advantageous than eating healthy school lunches conveniently already prepared at school. Thus the agriculture industry should be prepared to plant more fruit and vegetable crops.

[1] Center for Disease Control and Prevention, *Childhood Obesity Facts*, CDC.GOV, <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/obesity/facts.htm>

(<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/obesity/facts.htm>), (last visited Oct. 1, 2012).

[2] *Id.*

[3] Health on Today, "We are Hungry": Kids Lament New Lunch Guidelines in Video, TODAY.COM, http://todayhealth.today.com/_news/2012/09/26/14114174-we-are-hungry-kids-lament-new-lunch-guidelines-in-video?

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[4] Becky Schilling, *Legislating Health*, FOODSERVICE DIRECTOR.COM, <http://www.foodservicedirector.com/trends/health-and-wellness/articles/legislating-health>

(<http://www.foodservicedirector.com/trends/health-and-wellness/articles/legislating-health>) (last visited Oct. 1, 2012); Jim McLaughlin, School Lunches: Students Protest Less

Portions, Rising Nutrition, The Christian Science Monitor, <http://www.csmonitor.com/The-Culture/Family/2012/0921/School-lunches-Students-protest-less-portions-rising-nutrition>

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[5] WSAZ News Channel, School Lunches Still Seeing Challenges, WSAZ.COM (Sept. 10, 2012) available at <http://www.wsaz.com/news/headlines/New-Federal-Mandate-Puts-School-Lunches-Under-Attack-166176356.html> .

(<http://www.wsaz.com/news/headlines/New-Federal-Mandate-Puts-School-Lunches-Under-Attack-166176356.html>) .

[6] *Id.*

[7] *Id.*

[8] Bill Landauer, *Federal mandate: Eat your fruits and veggies — or pay more*, THE MORNING CALL, available at http://articles.mcall.com/2012-09-18/news/mc-new-lunch-rules-fruits-vegetables-20120912_1_school-lunches-fruits-hunger-free-kids-act

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[9] WSAZ News Channel, School Lunches Still Seeing Challenges, WSAZ.COM (Sept. 10, 2012) available at <http://www.wsaz.com/news/headlines/New-Federal-Mandate-Puts-School-Lunches-Under-Attack-166176356.html> .

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[10] *Id.*

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 **Sally Campbell** 6 years ago · 0 Likes

There should be some amount of law that applies to schools that cannot control the bullying of obese students. Many teenagers opted to stop school because of bullying secondary to their being obese. Back home, many obese teenagers are considering liposculpture in perth just to do away with the fat and consequently, the bullying.

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