

# GONZALES GOES GAGA FOR CAULIFLOWER CILANTRO RICE

## ABOUT THE DISTRICT

Gonzales Unified School District (GUSD) is located in the Central Coast of California, in Monterey County, the heart of the county's agricultural industry. The district has one elementary, one middle, and one high school serving a combined 2,110 students, of which 88.4 percent were eligible for free and reduced-price meals during the 2022–2023 school year.

## ACTIVITIES

- Procured local cauliflower from Fanoë Family Farms for use in a new standardized school lunch recipe
- Conducted recipe taste-testing events with students
- Provided nutrition education to students that focused on food sustainability
- Participated in professional development activities including training and the California Department of Education's Standardized Recipe Workshop series

## LOCAL INGREDIENT

California is a major supplier of the nation's cauliflower; roughly half of the acres of cauliflower in California are located in Monterey County. To “caul” attention to the great flavors of cauliflower, GUSD selected a Cauliflower Cilantro Rice recipe for their recipe standardization project. They sourced local cauliflower through a partnership with Fanoë Family Farms. The district and the farms had worked together previously to identify available land to+ support the establishment of an elementary school. With the development of this recipe, the district began sourcing cauliflower from them.

## RECIPE DEVELOPMENT

GUSD chose this recipe for a number of reasons. First, the flavor profile was familiar to their Latino community. Second, the former nutrition services director, wanted to offer more playful options for students. Finally, the district was interested in expanding the number of scratch-cooked plant-based dishes on the menu.

GUSD hosted a taste-test of the Cauliflower Cilantro Rice recipe with students at GUSD High School, achieving an 85 percent acceptability rating. The event was a huge success among the students and staff of GUSD. In fact, many staff members liked the recipe so much that they decided to make it for themselves and their families at home.

## NUTRITION EDUCATION

GUSD provided nutrition education to students focused on local food, food systems, and sustainability. The information provided used materials from the Harvest of the Month program and featured nutrition and agriculture facts about cauliflower.



*Tasty Cauliflower Cilantro Rice with lime wedge and cilantro garnish*



*The cauliflower rice being mixed before cooking in the oven*



*Staff at the start of a taste-testing event*

**Gonzales Unified School District**

[www.gonzalesusd.net](http://www.gonzalesusd.net)

[www.facebook.com/GonzalesUSD](https://www.facebook.com/GonzalesUSD)

*Recipe: Cilantro Cauliflower Rice*



This publication was created with funding from a 2021 U.S. Department of Agriculture Team Nutrition Grant awarded to the Nutrition Services Division (NSD) of the California Department of Education (CDE). The CDE awarded subgrants to school districts to develop standardized recipes and share their success stories. The CDE is an equal opportunity employer.

