

Rocky River City SD serves up farm-fresh “Bistro Box” lunches and family meal kits with **help from Nutrislice.**

CLIENT

Rocky River City School District

- > Public school
- > **2,500** students
- > Hybrid remote & in-school learning

SNAPSHOT



Increased menu consistency.



Minimized waste.



Easy user adoption.

PRODUCT

* Nutrislice Pro Ordering Empowerment

- > Pickup & delivery
- > Nutritional transparency
- > Meal options & add-ons
- > Marketing tools

Background

The Rocky River City School (RRCS) district, located in Ohio, has long been on the cutting edge when it comes to providing new and innovative nutrition services for students. In 2016, Tina Wasserbauer, a registered dietitian and nutrition services specialist for RRCS pioneered a novel, farm-to-school initiative that brought a wide variety of high-quality, fresh produce to school meals while supporting local farmers and growers.

After the success of the farm-to-school program, Tina and her team turned their attention to introducing digital menu and ordering options in the district. Their goal was to begin by providing visually beautiful and informative online menus and then eventually, mobile pre-ordering capabilities. However, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit in the spring of 2020 and forced school closures, RRCS fast-tracked their digital ordering plans in order to continue providing families with nutritious, delicious meals when they needed it most. By partnering with Nutrislice, the district was able to quickly implement contactless pre-ordering of weekly meal kits and daily “Bistro Box” lunches to keep students fed during uncertain times and beyond.

Showcasing farm-to-school fare with eye-catching online menus.

Rocky River’s innovative farm-to-school program is one to be envied. It began simply, with Tina personally calling local farmers in an effort to source a wider variety of fresh, organic and locally-grown produce to incorporate into school lunches. However, it quickly grew to become a more robust co-op that now coordinates the delivery of fresh and healthy fare from growers throughout the community to schools and local farmers markets.

For their lunch program, Tina and the RRCS Nutrition Services team are able to choose from a list of seasonal produce options, much of which is harvested just hours before the students get to enjoy eating it. “We wanted to really showcase to parents, students and administrators the amazing, high-quality foods we’re using in our kitchens and communicate the benefits of the farm-to-school program,” explained Tina. “One of the ways we did that was with the beautiful, visually rich imagery and ‘farm fresh’ icons on our online menus, thanks to Nutrislice.”

The online menus are also packed with information. Students and parents can click on individual menu items to see their nutritional value and filter for common food allergies or special dietary needs. Each menu item also leverages Nutrislice nutrition calculator features to show how it fits with the USDA’s “my plate” nutrition guide, helping students and their families make healthier choices.

“We’re proud that we’re supporting local farmers and growers with the program, and our students love the food,” said Tina.

Filters and Highlights

Clear all

Allergens
Select items below to identify specific foods.

Milk Egg Wheat Soy Peanuts Tree Nuts
Fish Shellfish Corn Pork Red Dye Sesame Seeds

Farm to School
Click to highlight these foods on the menu!

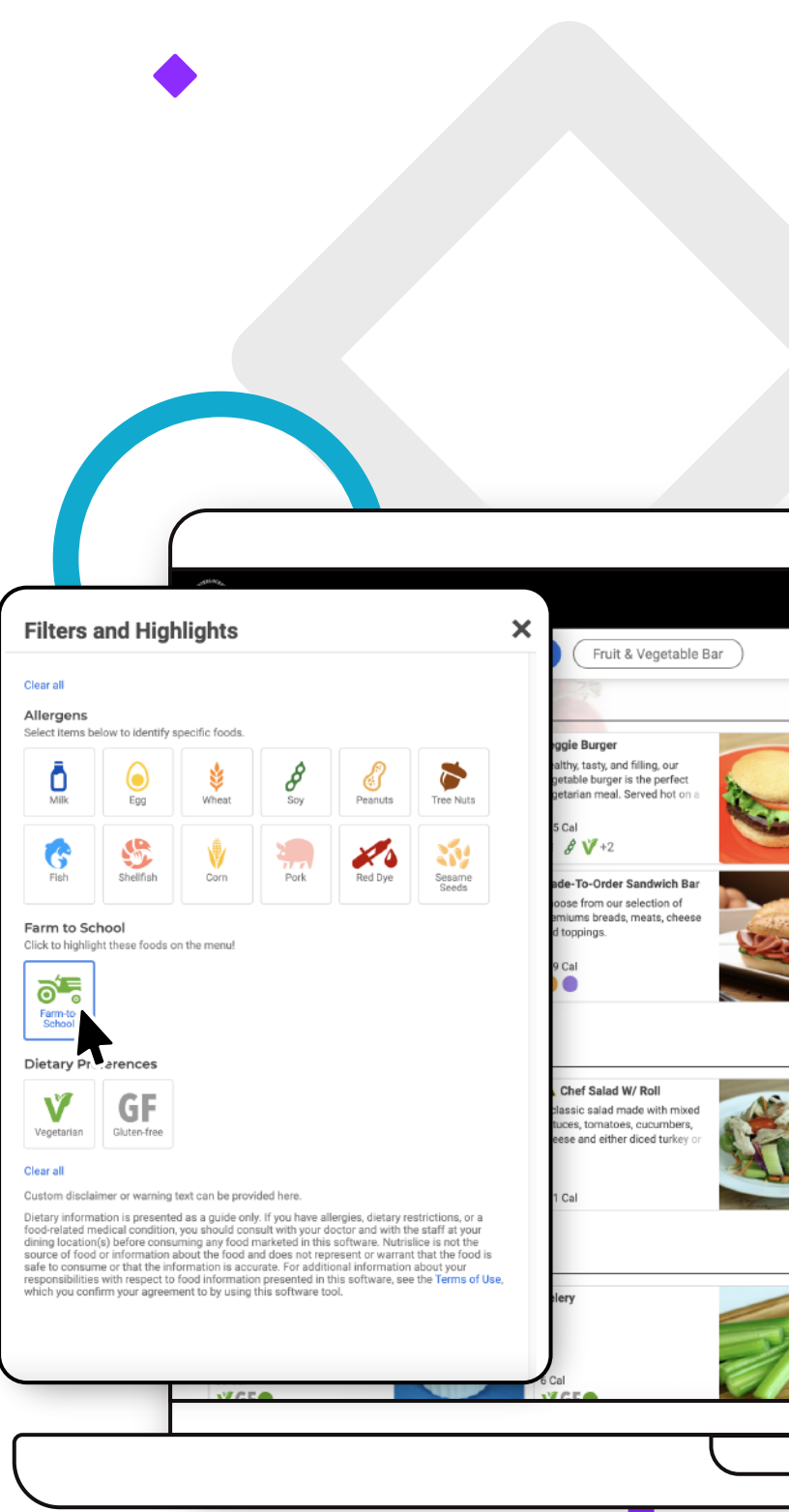
Farm to School

Dietary Preferences
Vegetarian Gluten-free

Clear all

Custom disclaimer or warning text can be provided here.

Dietary information is presented as a guide only. If you have allergies, dietary restrictions, or a food-related medical condition, you should consult with your doctor and with the staff at your dining location(s) before consuming any food marketed in this software. Nutrislice is not the source of food or information about the food and does not represent or warrant that the food is safe to consume or that the information is accurate. For additional information about your responsibilities with respect to food information presented in this software, see the [Terms of Use](#), which you confirm your agreement to by using this software tool.



“Students, parents and staff have all picked up the mobile ordering process easily.

The app is very intuitive and people are already familiar with ordering food this way through apps like DoorDash.”

- Tina Wasserbauer,

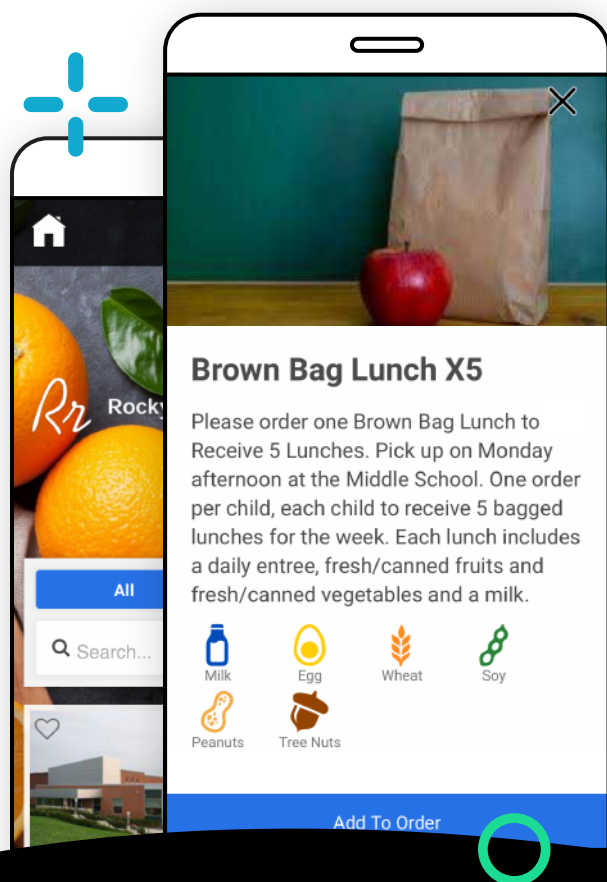
Registered Dietitian, Nutrition Services
Specialist, RRCS

Fast-tracking to digital ordering.

With the success of the farm-to-school program and the adoption of online menus, the RRCS Nutrition Services team wanted to eventually grow to incorporate mobile ordering options. However, Tina thought it was a long-term goal they would tackle further down the road. That all changed with the COVID-19 pandemic. On a Friday, RRCS staff were notified that schools in their district would not reopen on Monday and the Nutrition Services team knew they needed to jump into action.

“It was like we flipped a switch and within a matter of hours we arranged a plan for how we could continue to provide meals to students who needed them by the following Monday. I was immediately on the phone with suppliers, canceling orders of perishable foods like lettuce and instead ordering pallets of paper grocery bags that we could use for providing weekly meal kits,” recalled Tina.

To meet the immediate need, RRCS Nutrition Services initially used online spreadsheets for families to pre-order weekly meal kits, but it quickly became clear that they needed a better, more efficient system. Again, RRCS turned to Nutrislice and was able to rapidly implement the contactless, mobile pre-ordering solution. More than 2500 students and their families now have the option to easily use the Nutrislice mobile app to order a meal kit that provides healthy meals for the entire week, whether there is need for the kids to learn remotely or in-school. In addition, when RRCS transitioned to a hybrid learning model, the Nutrition Services team expanded their role to begin offering daily, made-to-order Bistro Boxes. Students, parents and staff can conveniently pre-order the boxed lunches through the Nutrislice app and pick them up for a healthy meal to go. The Bistro Boxes have been so popular that orders have tripled since they first started being offered, and RRCS has begun offering à la carte options like apples, chips and cookies as add-ons to help increase revenue.



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By providing intuitive and convenient online menus and the ability to pre-order weekly meal kits and daily boxed lunches, the Rocky River City School district has been a lifeline to families during the pandemic.

“I’ve had parents of kids who are on the free or reduced-price lunch program call me, literally crying and thanking us for providing these services,” said Tina. “Mobile ordering has facilitated consistency with our menus and helped with the efficient utilization of our inventory with minimal waste, all of which have helped save the district money which is crucial during such uncertain times!”

What's next?

RRCS Nutrition Services plans to continue its weekly meal kit and daily Bistro Box programs for as long as needed, and likely long after the pandemic is over. Families and staff love the convenience of the online menus and digital ordering options, and the expanded services provide families with access to nutritious meals both in and out of school.

"We expect our sales to continue to increase post pandemic, when the students return to a traditional school day model," Tine shared. "We are thrilled to have a platform like Nutrislice, at our disposal, that can evolve and meet our changing needs in the future and beyond!"

