

USDA Launches Apps for Healthy Kids Competition as Part of Let's Move! Campaign

March 10, 2010, USDA Office of Communications

The U.S. Department of Agriculture joined first lady Michelle Obama today in announcing the innovative Apps for Healthy Kids competition to Americans as part of the Let's Move! initiative. Apps for Healthy Kids challenges software developers, game designers, students, and other innovators to develop innovative, fun, and engaging tools and games that help kids and their parents to eat better and be more physically active.

"First Lady Michelle Obama has challenged America to tackle the issues of child nutrition and obesity and she knows that the Federal Government cannot do it alone - which is why we are launching this challenge, to tap America's ingenuity by enlisting the most creative, talented, and kid-savvy innovators across the nation to put their skills to the cause of empowering parents and inspiring kids to get active and eat healthy," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack.

Apps for Healthy Kids competition entries will leverage the recently-released MyPyramid 1,000 food database to create web or mobile-based apps in two categories. The first set of prizes will be awarded to digital games that best engage and motivate kids to eat healthy and be physically active. The second set of prizes will be awarded to the most creative tools for parents striving to make the right choices for their kids. So when they are planning meals, at the grocery store, or picking up dinner on the way home from work, parents can instantly access easy-to-understand nutritional information they can trust.

Contestants will compete for \$40,000 in cash prizes and the chance to shine before USDA's all-star panel of judges, including Steve Wozniak, co-founder of Apple, Inc.; Mark Pincus, CEO of Zynga Game Network, Inc.; Michael Levine, Executive Director of the Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop; Mike Gallagher, President and CEO of the Entertainment Software Association; Aneesh Chopra, U.S. Chief Technology Officer, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy; and David Lazarus, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Agriculture.

In addition to medal winners, the judges will announce a Popular Choice Award, which will go to the contestant with the most public votes. Members of the public can register and vote at www.AppsforHealthyKids.com, between noon on July 14 to noon on August 14.

All winners will be honored at a White House event in Washington, DC. Importantly, Apps for Healthy Kids gives game developers and other innovators the chance to help give kids the healthy lives they deserve.

Entries must be submitted between March 10 and June 30, 2010. Official rules may be found at www.AppsForHealthyKids.com.

The U.S Department of Agriculture is an active member of the Let's Move! team, alongside the Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. For more information on the first lady's Let's Move! initiative visit www.LetsMove.gov. The Apps for Healthy Kids competition is a collaborative initiative of the White House Office of the first lady, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service and the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion.