

## Market Day Back-to-School Survey Finds Packing School Lunches Usually Takes Under Five Minutes

### Healthier Family Meals Still Compete with Fast Food Visits

(Itasca, IL, July 14, 2009) -- In Market Day's second annual Back-to-School survey of more than 600 moms with school-age kids, 46 percent believe it should take less than five minutes to pack a school lunch, supporting the 53 percent of moms who indicate that they currently spend three-to-five minutes on each school lunch. A surprise is that among today's time-pressured moms, 33 percent don't even think about the time issue, while 17 percent can zip through school lunch packing in just one-to-two minutes.

How do moms cut down on lunch packing time? Forty-two percent plan school lunches the night before and 44 percent think that pre-packaged single-serve food choices reduces lunch packing time. The top three most popular food items packed in school lunches are: chips (59 percent); whole fruit such as apples/pears (56 percent) and fruit cups (52 percent).

The biggest discrepancy in this year's study over last year's was the time required for certain lunch packing tasks. Forty-seven percent of last year's moms indicated that assembling the lunch bag was the most time-intensive, while this year's respondents indicated that it was the least time intensive, with only 19 percent finding the task the most time-intensive. The most time-intensive task in this year's study was deciding what to pack (75 percent); followed by looking for healthier choices, making sandwiches, and having good choices on hand (63 percent). Forty-three percent were plagued by interruptions that lengthened the assembly process.

An irony of the study is that while 73 percent of moms think it is very important to pack healthier school lunches, 64 percent choose fast food drive-thru as a family dining option at least 1-3 times per week. This is in stark contrast to last year's study when only 36 percent of moms said they opted for fast food one-to-three times per week. Only three percent of this year's respondents rely on fast food three-to-five times during the week, about the same number as last year.

Of particular interest is that 78 percent would reduce fast food visits if they could prepare healthier meals at home in under 15 minutes, and 81 percent would be willing to spend slightly more for lunch items if they were healthier – an improvement over last year's study when only 73 percent were willing to spend more for healthier foods.

Reflecting the challenging economy, 84 percent of respondents to the Market Day study think it is important to get a good value for their food dollar.

#### **About Market Day**

Market Day, the Original Fundraising Food Cooperative, is the nation's largest food fundraising company. In addition to its flagship monthly food program, Market Day offers a variety of other fundraising options including a gift brochure, restaurant-quality desserts and cookie dough, and a gourmet food catalog. Market Day provides high quality items at a value. Market Day's consultative approach provides custom fundraising solutions for organizations across the country.