

CONTACT:

Kirsten Stahlberg

312-233-1324

Kirsten.Stahlberg@edelman.com

MUSHROOMS MAKE THE GRADE: PURDUE UNIVERSITY SETS THE CURVE FOR CAMPUS CUISINE
Boilermakers Win Big Ten Mushroom Recipe Contest

SAN JOSE, Calif. (March 8, 2010) — Purdue University's dining services team may change the way students feel about college cuisine with their award-winning recipes, Vegetarian Mushroom Stir Fry and Roasted Portabella Pizza. The Boilermaker culinary team nearly swept the Mushroom Council's "Best Mushroom Recipe Goes to Indianapolis," a contest held exclusively for foodservice directors within the Big Ten athletic conference.

The contest pitted executive chefs and foodservice directors from the 11-school conference against each other in a friendly competition to create mushroom recipes for three categories of university-favored cuisine: Pizza, Sandwich, and Entrée. Most entries were vegetarian, with mushrooms at the heart of the dish, which reflects the increased interest in vegetarianism among college students – a 2006 Aramark survey found that 30% of college students want vegetarian options when dining out.

"Based on the caliber of recipes we've seen through this contest, universities are redefining the concept of what students will eat, taking them in a very positive and healthful direction" said Bart Minor, president of the Mushroom Council. "More and more students who have embraced a vegetarian or flexitarian diet have found mushrooms add a satiating "meaty" mouth-feel to their favorite dishes. Now, universities across the nation are catering to their preferences."

In the final round of judging, students at Kendall College's School of Culinary Arts in Chicago prepared tasting portions of five top-scoring recipes in each category for a judging panel that included Minor, along with Liz Grossman of *Plate* magazine and Frank Chlumsky from Kendall. Recipes were judged based on creativity, flavor and visual appeal.

"Judging the dishes was difficult. There were so many great-tasting, creative entries," said Minor, noting that the pizza and sandwich categories' top finalists were separated by only a few points.

Purdue earned Big Ten bragging rights by winning two of the three recipe categories, including best overall recipe, landing them the grand prize package that includes a trip for four to the NCAA men's national basketball championship in Indianapolis this April. The University of Iowa's recipe for Chorizo Breakfast Sandwich with Mushroom Gravy scored best in the sandwich category. As category winners, both schools will receive scholarships to attend the 2010 National Association of College & University Food Services (NACUFS) annual conference in July.

Recipe entries for the Big Ten "Best Mushroom Recipe Goes to Indianapolis" contest are featured on MushroomInfo.com.

Following is Purdue's grand prize winning recipe for Vegetarian Mushroom Stir Fry.

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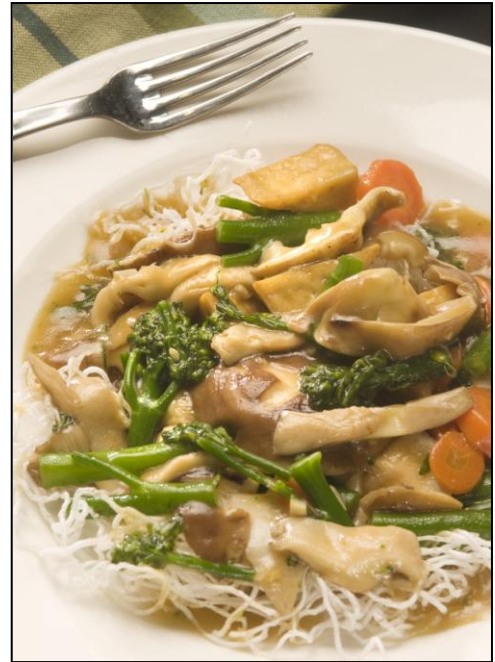
Serves 24

Sauce

- 1 ½ cups vegetarian oyster sauce
- 1 cup + 2 tablespoons sugar
- ¾ cup soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 4 ½ quarts water
- 1 cup + 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- ¾ cup vegetarian soup base

Stir fry

- 5 pounds firm tofu, drained, cut into triangles (½ x 1 ½ inches)
- 3 pounds dry rice stick noodles
- 1 ½ cups vegetable oil
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- ½ cup minced peeled ginger
- 6 pounds cleaned, sliced shiitake mushrooms
- 1 ½ pounds sliced carrots, blanched and drained
- 5 pounds Chinese broccoli, cleaned and cut into 4-inch pieces, blanched and drained



To make the sauce: Whisk together the oyster sauce, sugar, soy sauce, and sesame oil. Bring to a simmer. Whisk together the water, cornstarch, and soup base. Combine with the oyster sauce mixture and heat until slightly thickened. Remove from the heat. Makes about 6 ½ quarts.

Heat a deep fryer until 375 to 400°F. Deep-fry the tofu triangles in batches until golden brown, turning once. Drain on paper towels. Set aside.

For each serving, to order: In a deep fryer, cook 1 ½ ounces rice stick noodles until puffed but not browned. Drain on paper towels. In a wok, heat 2 tablespoons oil over high heat. Stir-fry ½ teaspoon garlic and 1 teaspoon ginger until fragrant. Add 4 ounces mushrooms and cook for 1 minute. Add 1 ounce carrots, 2 ½ ounces broccoli, and about 2 ounces fried tofu. Stir-fry to heat through, 1 minute. Add about 1 cup sauce mixture and simmer until heated through. Put the rice sticks in a bowl and ladle the vegetables and sauce on top. Serve immediately.

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The Mushroom Council is composed of fresh market producers or importers who average more than 500,000 pounds of mushrooms produced or imported annually. The mushroom program is authorized by the Mushroom Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act of 1990 and is administered by the Mushroom Council under the supervision of the Agricultural Marketing Service. Research and promotion programs help to expand, maintain and develop markets for individual agricultural commodities in the United States and abroad. These industry self-help programs are requested and funded by the industry groups that they serve. For more information on the Mushroom Council, visit mushroomcouncil.org.