

# Umi Organic Whole Grain Yakisoba for Schools: A Love Story





- Based in Portland, Oregon
- Women-owned
- Certified organic ramen and yakisoba noodles and sauces
  - \* First-ever refrigerated organic ramen noodle for groceries. \*
- Sold to groceries, restaurants, and at farmers markets in OR and WA
- Founded in 2016

In Japan, ramen is more than just a bowl of soup. It's an expression of place. Our noodles feature local and whole grain flours, giving them exceptional nutritional value and a nutty, delicious flavor that speaks to the character of our region.

# Ecotrust's Local Link Event: Where I met Whitney (and Ben)

Whitney Ellersick,  
Senior Director,  
Nutrition Services  
Portland Public  
Schools



Me: Lola  
Milholland,  
CEO and co-  
founder,  
Umi Organic

# Farm to School \$ in Oregon!

In 2019, House Bill 2579 received unanimous support from Oregon legislators

\$15 million in funding for Oregon farm to school programming



# Where our Yakisoba Project began...



# Naomi and the Culture Committee



# Step 1: R&D and Sourcing Camas Country Mill

Edison



Durum





# Step 2: Navigating School Requirements

## ODA and ODE



Amy Gilroy,  
Farm to School  
Manager,  
Oregon Department  
of Agriculture

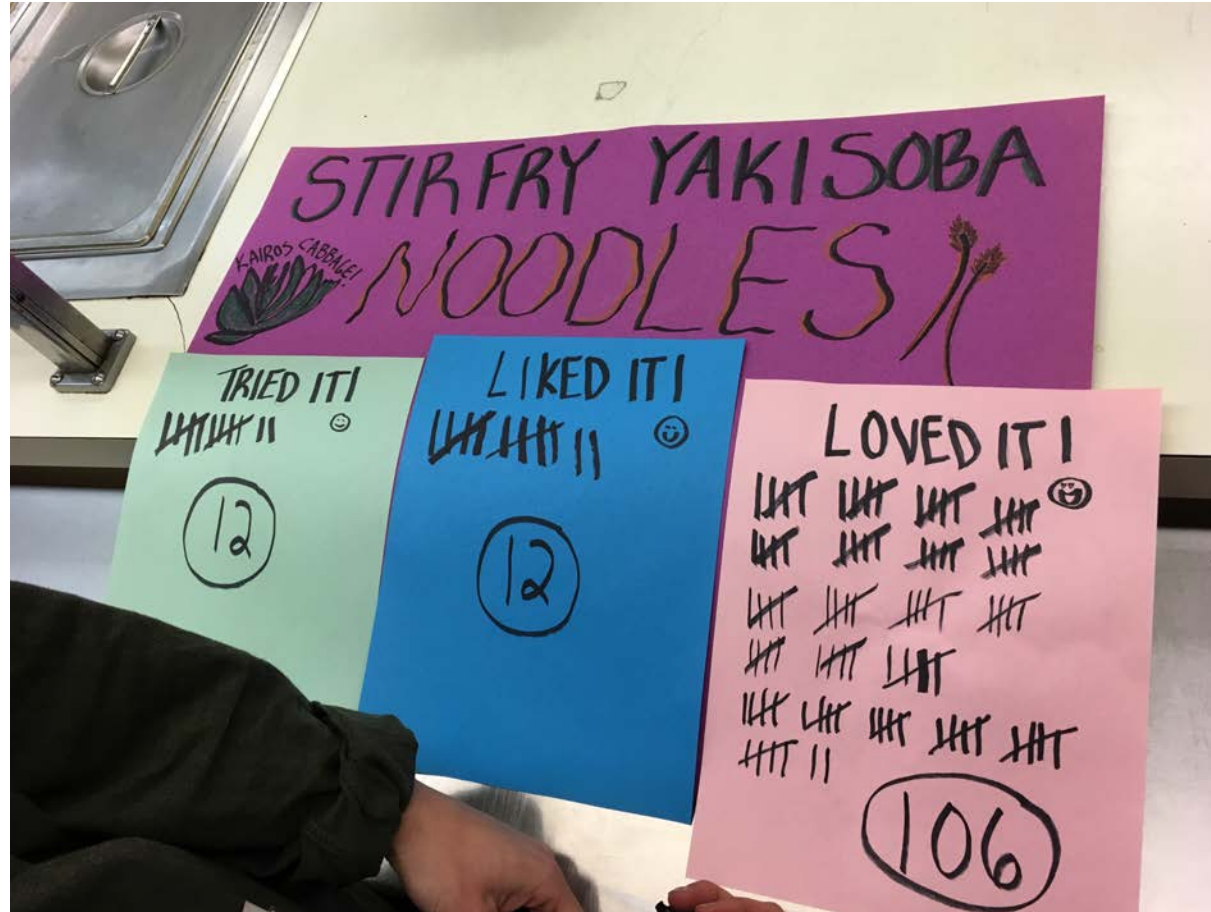
# Step 3: Making it work in a school kitchen

## Food Innovation Center



# Step 4: Making sure kids loved them!

## Betty Izumi and Food Corps



**\*\* Side note:  
Equal parts vegetables to noodles!!! \*\***



# May 2019: Ya-ki-so-ba!



# Nutrition directors talk to each other...

First Portland, then:

- Eugene
- Centennial
- David Douglas



Distribution!  
US Foods,  
formerly FSA



Talking to:

- Ashland
- Central Point
- Klamath
- Lebanon
- North Santiam
- Philomath



**Portland Public School's  
yakisoba lunch voted one  
of the nations best school  
meals**

The national recognition comes from Food Management magazine which voted on meals based on taste and nutrition.

# Our noodles win a big award!

Lots of news media cover it! Oregonian, Willamette Week, The Skanner, KGW, KATU.....

More school districts reach out...

# Working with Naomi on sauce





A photograph of three young girls sitting at a table in a school cafeteria, eating spaghetti. The girl on the left is wearing a purple long-sleeved shirt and has her arms raised in a 'V' sign. The girl in the middle is wearing a blue floral shirt and is holding a fork with spaghetti, also making a 'V' sign. The girl on the right is wearing a grey and black patterned shirt and is waving with her right hand. Each girl has a white bowl of spaghetti on a green tray, along with a carton of Little MOO milk and a side of fruit and vegetables. The background shows a yellow wall with a large framed picture of a forest scene and several smaller notices or papers pinned to the wall.

**Thank you!**

Photos by Shawn Linehan!