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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ORANGE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT CREATES PROGRAM TO RECOGNIZE FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS WHO EXCEL IN PUBLIC HEALTH SAFETY

Orange County, NC (August 30, 2016) - North Carolina's restaurant sanitation grade cards are iconic. However, the grade posted on the wall is only a snapshot from the day of that specific inspection by the health department.

The Orange County Health Department always strives to make health information, such as food [establishment inspection reports](#), easily accessible to the public. Reports are available to the public through a variety of sources including as part of the restaurant's listing on [Yelp](#). In an effort to provide diners additional health information, the health department's Environmental Health Division has created a program to showcase food service restaurants that excel in their inspection and/ or make extra effort to do more than the minimum required for compliance with the rules.

A decal posted on the door will supplement the information Orange County consumers can already access about the inspection grade history. A list of all establishments of excellence is also available on the Orange County Health Department's [Environmental Health webpage](#). This is a voluntary program with the consent of the food establishment. Eligible establishments include restaurants, dining halls, and cafeterias.

Qualifications for this recognition include earning inspection scores of 98 or better for 2015-2016 or making an extra effort by participating in specialized food processes training or [HACCP](#) (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points) training.

Also, the implementation of North Carolina Food Code in September 2012 presented significant challenges. Food service establishments who were previously producing foods considered "specialized" had to quickly orient themselves with rules and monitoring requirements, [HACCP principles](#), and tolerate a dynamic application process. They did this because it is their business; consumers want these

foods; and many local operators work under farm-to-fork ideals or to preserve access to culturally diverse menus.

A recent meeting of food service establishments convened to provide training, updates, and application assistance. These food service establishments have earned the distinction of excellence just as much.

Environmental Health recognizes food service establishment owners for their quality efforts. They hope to motivate food service establishment to address lingering maintenance and equipment problems that lower their scores or to reinforce the safety of their specialized food products.



Photo Caption: Decal for recognized establishments to post

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