

Shoshone County Sheriff's Blog #47, Meals in Our Jail

Sheriff Mitch Alexander

Over the last fifteen months, I have written forty-seven blogs and shared these with the citizens, visitors and employees of Shoshone County. It has been my goal to be transparent in my job as your sheriff and to show the citizens how and why we do things here at the Shoshone County Sheriff's Office.

During my years as your Sheriff, I have had several citizens; including some good friends ask me if we serve steak to the inmates. My response is always the same. Once I recover from the shock of anyone thinking this is true, my answer is "no!"

I was recently asked again about Salisbury steak being served to inmates. If we did serve up Salisbury steak, it would likely be a concoction of onions and some type of tomato based sauce served over a low-grade hamburger patty. Like many cooks who are feeding big families, crews of people, or in our case, inmates, food made from scratch is usually better and cheaper than preparing processed meals. A big pot of soup, or biscuits and gravy are very tasty and can feed a large group of people without breaking a tight budget.

Idaho Jail Standards require us to serve meals that provide a total of at least 2,500 calories each day. In order to accomplish this, our head cook prepares a no frills menu that's reviewed by a dietician to make sure that we are meeting the requirements. Some people may think that these requirements are frivolous, but as your Sheriff, I have a legal obligation to provide adequate food and housing for all of our inmates. The menu that we end up with meets the minimum standards for healthy nutrition and protects the county, the jail staff and me from being sued for mistreatment of inmates.

I'm including a typical jail menu below which is an example of what we serve during a week at the Shoshone County Jail. The menu varies from week to week, but always meets the minimum standards. Our breakfast is served at 0700am and our big meal of the day, commonly referred to as lunch or supper, is served at noon. Dinner is a smaller meal and is served at 700pm.

Monday :

Breakfast- 2 pancakes, 1 sausage patty, 1 egg, 1 small orange, syrup and a carton of milk.

Lunch- Corndogs, jo jo's, green salad, chili, pudding and coffee.

Dinner- Hamburger macaroni and cheese, soup, meat and cheese sandwich, 2 crackers, chips and a small carton of milk.

Tuesday:

Breakfast- biscuits & gravy, 1 sausage patty, small apple, jelly and a carton of milk.

Lunch- Taco wrap with lettuce, cheese, onion, salsa, sour cream, refried beans, peaches and coffee.

Dinner- Potato, meat and vegetable soup, meat and cheese sandwich, 2 crackers (restaurant style,) chips (very small bags,) carton of milk.

Wednesday

Breakfast- Breakfast burrito containing flour tortilla, eggs, sausage, hash browns, salsa, sour cream, a small apple and a carton of milk.

Lunch-Turkey roast, mixed vegetables, mashed potatoes, gravy, applesauce, cookie and coffee

Dinner- Chili dog soup, peanut butter and jelly sandwich, 2 crackers, chips and carton of milk.

Thursday

Breakfast- 2 slices of French toast, syrup, 1 sausage patty, 1 scrambled egg, banana, carton of milk.

Lunch- Kielbasa sausage, tater tots, green salad, pork and beans, ½ apple, coffee.

Dinner- Beef and vegetable soup, 1 grilled cheese sandwich, 2 crackers, chips and carton of milk.

Friday

Breakfast- Cereal, 2 pieces of toast, 2 sausage links, a small apple, jelly and a carton of milk.

Lunch- 2 biscuits, hamburger gravy, green beans, salad with ranch dressing, jello, 1 cookie, coffee.

Dinner- Tomato, celery and macaroni soup, meat and cheese sandwich, 2 crackers, chips and carton of milk.

Saturday

Breakfast- Hash browns, eggs, 2 sausage links, small apple, toast and jam and a carton of milk.

Lunch- Ham, macaroni and cheese, Green Beans, green salad, Cookies and coffee.

Dinner- Hamburger and vegetable soup, 2 crackers, chips, peanut butter and jelly sandwich, carton of milk.

Sunday

Breakfast- 1 muffin, with sausage patty, egg and cheese, banana, cereal and milk.

Lunch- Sloppy Joes on a bun, Corn, French fries, green salad, cake and coffee.

Dinner- Hamburger bean & barley soup, 2 crackers, chips, grilled cheese sandwich, carton of milk.

In closing, we are feeding our inmates on an average of a little less than \$6.00 a day per inmate while providing them with a menu that meets the minimum dietary standards established for Idaho jail inmates. We have explored other options, including contracted food services that some jails use, but we have not found one that can meet these requirements for less than what we are spending. We will always strive to spend the taxpayer's money wisely, but until we find a cheaper alternative, you can rest assured that our inmates are not eating steak.