





International Brotherhood of Real Bearded Santas

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The Super Heroes of the Holidays



Santas team with Doctors to bring the gift of "good health" to children at Farmers Markets

Is Santa a Health Promoting Professional? The Doctors at the University of Calif. San Francisco Medical School, led by Dr. Robert Lustig head of Pediatric Endocrinology appear to think so. This past year they have had their foundation, the Institute for Responsible Nutrition (IRN) tracking and supporting the efforts of Sustainable Santa® and the Real Santa's United to end Childhood Obesity in their efforts to locate Healthy, Happy Santas in Farmers Markets throughout California.

What started as a Santa led effort to address the growing crisis of American children filling up on fast and processed foods has now morphed into a full-fledged "movement" teaming Healthy Santas with Farmers Markets from San Diego to Sebastopol – north of San Francisco. There in addition to just posing for pictures, which the parents take with their own camera, they pass out and discuss "Santa's Three Food Rules" – rules designed to help the kids break the habit of eating unhealthy fast and processed foods. Then they send the children into the Market looking for "Garden Bites."

This year the IBRBS Board, in addition to endorsing the effort, have gone on to provide these Santas and all IBRBS members with several thousand cards containing the "Food Rules" for distribution. As an added bonus, children emailing IBRBS their pledge to "eat healthy" receive a token declaring "I am one of Santas Healthy Children."

The "Garden Bites" are tastes of Real Food, fresh, raw or fermented, which are supplied by the farmer/vendors.
"It's like a treasure hunt for healthy food," notes Santa Larry at the North San Diego County Certified Farmers Market located at a Historic Sikes Adobe Farmstead.

The Doctors, who have been seeking ways to permanently change America's bad dietary habits developed over the past 20-30 years have taken interest in the Santa's efforts "because these Santas are promoting the culture shift that is essential for the future of a healthy America," says Wolfram Alderson, Executive Director of the IRN, which was founded by Dr. Robert Lustig. "The major food and beverage corporations and government policy makers have changed our food landscape from a cornucopia of healthy food to a garbage dump; one that fosters illness instead of wellness," says Alderson. "The importance of what these Santas are doing cannot be overstated." "IRN has documented dramatic increases in metabolic diseases, of which obesity is one of the symptoms," states Alderson. "A primary cause of these health issues are industrial processed foods where fiber and nutrients are removed, and unhealthy food additives are added, resulting in chronic metabolic disease never seen in children 20 years ago. Sugar is the leading marker of processed foods, now added to 74% of the foods sold in the United States. The result is that \$1.4 trillion in healthcare costs are wasted due to preventable and chronic metabolic diseases fostered by the food industry."

The IRN has now established a permanent web site to track the Healthy Happy Santa effort. That effort is open to any Santa wishing to join in the mission to bring the "Gift of Good Health" to America's children. The IRN site is: http://www.responsiblefoods.org/santas. The site contains much of the national and international media coverage which this effort received this year.





At left, Santa Larry guides Alex Carlos, age 6 to a "Garden Bite" of raw sugarcane, showing himthat Sugar is a commodity to be added by you, not added by the industrialized food processors. At Right, Santa Glen and Elf Ellyanna prepare to distribute Santa's Food Rules Cards at the Tuesday night market in Escondido, CA.



