



Public Health Association of BC

A Fresh Crunch in School Lunch:

The BC Farm To School
Salad Bar Guide



DIG IN!

A Fresh Crunch in School Lunch: The BC Farm To School Salad Bar Guide

has been published by the Public Health Association of BC, a member of the BC Healthy Living Alliance.
Electronic copies can be downloaded from the Farm To School Salad Bar website at

www.phabc.org/farmtoschool

Executive Summary

British Columbia school children are experiencing a new farm fresh crunch in their lunch as Farm To School Salad Bar programs sprout up across the province. Thanks to the efforts of many in one short year the seeds for 16 Farm To School Salad Bar programs (F2S) have been sown. Today more than 6,000 children have an opportunity to feast at least twice per week from a garden of local greens right at school. The word is out about the success of these programs! Parents, educators, farmers, health professionals and others are clamouring for information and tools to start their F2S program – a program that nourishes the body and minds of children, and contributes to the health of farms, community, and the environment.

The Public Health Association of BC (PHABC) and our many partners want to see more children, more schools, more farms, and more communities enjoy the benefits of this program. This guide was developed to support communities in their F2S endeavours. It provides practical information, tips, and tools for developing a local program that complies with provincial and federal health regulations and is sensitive to the diversity of schools in BC. In the following pages you will find information on how to set up, maintain, promote, evaluate and celebrate a F2S program in your community. While components of this guide will be of interest to anyone seeking to build a F2S program, it will be of particular interest to the school and farming community.



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”

How to Use This Guide

A Fresh Crunch in School Lunch: The BC Farm To School Salad Bar Guide is an instructional resource and a reference guide. It has been designed to support anyone who has questions about starting or sustaining a F2S program.

The first chapter frames the F2S movement, providing information about what it is and how it came about. In the second chapter a handy planning tool is presented – A Year in The Life of Farm To School. This tool provides an overview of key steps to establish a program. The remaining 11 chapters cover the core elements of a F2S program – from engaging farmers to finding funds.

Throughout the guide topics have been divided in such a way that they can be easily referenced. Tools such as food safety tips, menus, and recipes have been included. These tools can be easily removed from the 3-ring binder for quick reference.

We encourage you to scan the Table of Contents and “A Year in The Life of Farm to School” before deciding how to dig into this great program!

Acknowledgements

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 - Jocelyne Jones, Community Nutritionist, Northern Health, Fort St. John, BC.
 - Cory Killoran, Principal, Thornhill Elementary School, Terrace, BC.
 - Heather Kelliher, Principal, SenPokChin School, Oliver, BC.
 - Gary Martens, Farmer, Corral Farms, Williams Lake, BC.
 - Kelly Melville, Co-coordinator, Mountview Elementary School, Williams Lake, BC.
 - Rick Miller, Principal, Mountview Elementary School, Williams Lake, BC.
 - Erica Nitchie, First Nations Agriculture Liaison Officer, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Williams Lake, BC.
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chapter 1

THE FARM TO SCHOOL SALAD BAR MOVEMENT





History and Background of Farm To School Salad Bar in British Columbia

Farm To School is not a new idea — it is a best practice operating in communities across the continent. One of the first programs was developed in Santa Monica, California in 1996. Their program sought to connect schools with local farms with the objectives of serving healthy meals in school cafeterias, improving student nutrition, providing health and nutrition education opportunities, and supporting local small scale farmers. Today there are over 10,000 Farm To School programs in 40 states. In Canada similar programs have emerged in almost every province. In the spring of 2006, Dragon Lake Elementary School piloted the first Farm To School Salad Bar program in BC.

One year later, the concept caught the attention of the Public Health Association of BC (PHABC), a member of the BC Healthy Living Alliance (BCHLA). The PHABC sought to support a program that utilized a health promotion approach to increase access to fresh vegetables and fruit for food insecure families. By January of 2008, BCHLA had committed funding to the PHABC to design, develop, and implement a provincial Farm To School Salad Bar initiative.

During the 2008-2009 school year, the PHABC supported the establishment of 16 new Farm to School Salad Bar programs in urban, rural, and remote communities across BC. From Fernie to Fort St John, more than 6000 school children have an opportunity to feast on farm fresh foods at least twice per week.

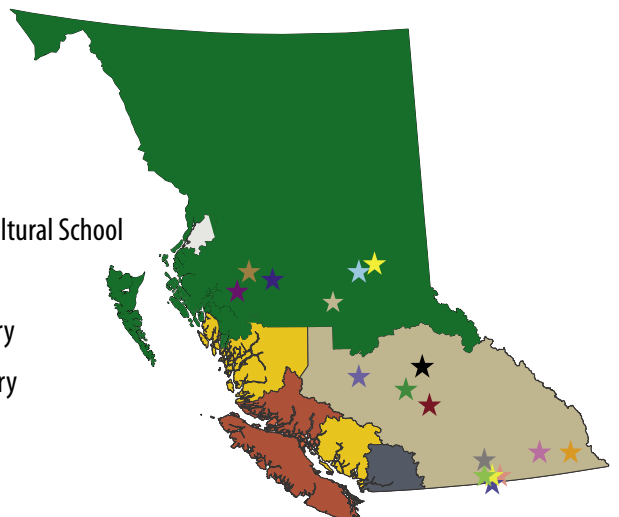


DRAGON LAKE STUDENTS DIG IN!
Photo courtesy of Dragon Lake Elementary School, Quesnel, BC

Seventeen Schools

Seventeen Farm to School Salad Bar programs are taking root in BC.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ★ Crawford Bay Elementary & Secondary | ★ Ntamtqen snm'a?aya?tn |
| ★ Chetwynd Secondary | ★ Oliver Elementary |
| ★ Dragon Lake Elementary School | ★ Outma School, Squiz'w Cultural School |
| ★ Fernie Academy | ★ SenPokChin School |
| ★ Mountview Elementary | ★ South Kamloops Secondary |
| ★ John Field Elementary | ★ South Okanagan Secondary |
| ★ Lake Kathlyn Elementary | ★ Thornhill Elementary |
| ★ Nkm'apl'qs'isn'ma'ma'ya.tn klsqilxwtet | ★ Vernon Secondary School |
| ★ North Peace Elementary | |



²Graham Riches, *First World Hunger* (1997).



Why Farm To School?

In this decade we observe an unprecedented situation in Canada – an epidemic of child obesity and an epidemic of child hunger. The state of child nutrition is mirrored in the spectrum of food outlets designed to feed kids. According to one prominent Canadian social policy analyst “*Food banks, one of the fastest growing food outlets in Canada, are outstripped only by the proliferation of McDonald franchises*”¹. At the same time we observe the capacity of communities to feed their children local, fresh, nutritious, and safe food is diminishing. Local farms, local food processing facilities, and local foods are disappearing. The average food travels thousands of miles to reach our plate. Food transport is a significant factor in the depletion of fossil fuels and global warming. Add to this scenario increasing poverty and increasing food costs — an outcome of the current economic downturn — and the need for action becomes clear.

Farm To School Salad Bar programs are one of the ways communities are stepping up to the plate to take action. While the BC programs are very much in the seedling stage, multiple positive impacts can already be seen. Local leaders offer these observations:

“We are seeing better eating habits. Children are eating more fresh fruits and vegetables, and a greater variety of foods.” Phillip Barron, Principal, Thornhill Elementary School, Terrace, BC.

“On non-salad bar days, student lunches have become significantly healthier. We do not see the junk food we used to see. Our primary students in particular are demanding these healthier foods in their lunches. In fact, our school has a significant presence at the Saturday farmers markets now.” Warren Kluss, Principal, Lake Kathlyn School, Smithers, BC.

“The Farm To School Salad Bar program is an opportunity to reconnect the young generations to the farms that their food is coming from and pique new interest in farming.” Erica Nitchie, First Nations Agriculture Liaison Officer, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Williams Lake, BC.

“Our students seem to be better behaved, more stable, and seem to be able to concentrate and learn more during the afternoon sessions than before.” Rick Miller, Principal, Mountview Elementary School, Williams Lake, BC.

BENEFITS OF FARM TO SCHOOL

Research on US Farm To School programs reveals multiple impacts^{2,3}

For Children

- ❖ The choice of healthier options in the cafeteria through Farm To School meals results in consumption of more fruits and vegetables.
- ❖ Better knowledge and awareness about gardening, agriculture, healthy eating, local foods and seasonality.
- ❖ Demonstrated willingness to try out new foods and healthier options.
- ❖ Reduced consumption of unhealthy foods and sodas; reduced television watching time; positive lifestyle modifications such as a daily exercise routine.
- ❖ Positive gains in phonological awareness of the alphabet, increased social skills, self-esteem.

For Farmers

- ❖ Diversification of market.
- ❖ Positive relationships with the school district, students, parents, and community.
- ❖ Opportunities to explore processing and preservation methods for institutional markets.
- ❖ Establishment of grower collaborative or cooperatives to supply institutional markets.

² Anupama Joshi and Moira Beery (June 2007). *A Growing Movement: A Decade of Farm To School in California*.

³ National Farm To School Network, Community Food Security Coalition, School Food FOCUS (March 2009), *Nourishing The Nation One Tray at a Time*.



Why the Focus on Local Foods?

Buying Local Food is Good for the Environment

- ❖ Purchasing local food supports small and mid-size farmers who in turn provide many benefits to their communities, including farming in ways that protect biodiversity and natural habitats, local air and water quality, and preserve scenic landscapes and open space.
- ❖ Buying local reduces the amount of fuel used to transport food and subsequently the greenhouse gases released into the air. This is an important consideration, since most of the food we buy is sourced internationally, and uses approximately 4 to 17 times more fuel than food from close by.
- ❖ The transport of food requires significant processing and packaging so that it arrives fresh and looks appealing. Food packaging comprises more than 30% of the waste in landfills.

Buying Local Food Supports Family Farmers and Communities

- ❖ Buying local helps farmers remain economically viable and on their land; they in turn support other businesses in their community. Ninety cents of every dollar spent on local food stays in our community.

Fresh Local Food is Tasty and Nutritious

- ❖ Food consumed closer to the time it is harvested usually retains more nutrients than food that is transported for days before it reaches the consumer.
- ❖ Because it is harvested at the peak of flavor and freshness, local food looks and tastes much better than foods transported from afar.

Purchasing Local Food Enhances Our Food Security

- ❖ Purchasing local food supports the smaller farmers who preserve biodiversity within both plants and animals, providing the opportunity for flexible responses to changing weather and other conditions.
- ❖ If the international food system were disrupted, BC grocery stores would run out of foods in 2-3 days.

Definitions

Farm To School Salad Bar

For the purpose of this guide, “Farm To School Salad Bar” is broadly defined as a school-based program that connects schools (K-12) and local farms. The goal of a F2S program is to ensure children have access to fresh, local, nutritious, safe, and culturally appropriate foods while at school. F2S programs aim to improve student fruit and vegetable consumption, provide health, nutrition and farming educational opportunities, and support local farmers.

Local

In this resource local foods are defined as foods grown, harvested, and processed as close to the school as possible. Local farms are those farms located as near to the school as possible. Schools are encouraged to source and serve as much local foods as possible with priority given to the nearest farmer or supplier of fresh produce. When local farms or foods are not available, schools are encouraged to buy BC products. When BC products are unavailable schools reach for the freshest highest quality foods from beyond BC borders.



chapter 2

A YEAR AT A GLANCE



A Year in the Life of Farm To School

SPRING–SUMMER

③ F2S Set-Up

- Have your kitchen inspected
- Purchase and install your F2S equipment
- Create your volunteer schedule and coordination system
- Pilot your F2S program



FALL–WINTER

② F2S Planning

- Develop your Food Safe plan
- Sign school/farm agreements
- Begin planning your menus
- Set your meal service schedule
- Farmers plant crops
- Find your volunteers
- Promote/advertise F2S

FALL

④ Official F2S Launch!

- Refine your menus and F2S schedule
- Promote your program in local media
- Plan your teaching units for the farm and for the classroom
- Recognize your volunteers and farmers

FALL

① F2S Initiation

- Build a core F2S team
- Develop your vision
- Set your short and long term goals for F2S
- Submit a proposal(s) for F2S core funding
- Build relationships
- Design your kitchen



⑤ F2S Evaluation

Reflect on the F2S program:

- How much local food was used in F2S?
- How many students participated?
- How did the school/farm relationship work?

Farm To School is mostly learning by doing. It probably takes 4-5 months to get the program on track with good people around.”

Rick Miller, Principal Mountview Elementary, Williams Lake, BC.

F2S programs can be very different from school to school. In the early stages of starting your program, there are two key things to keep in mind: **Start small and build your program gradually:** Farm To School requires new equipment, coordination, and above all building relationships with farmers and the community. This takes time, so plan a phased approach to bring the program into your school.

Start with whatever local foods are available: You may not be able to source all of the items you desire locally, especially in the early stages of your program, and over the winter months. Don't worry — keep going! Plan to supplement what you can purchase locally with fresh BC produce from other suppliers. When BC foods are scarce, purchase Canadian foods. When Canadian foods are scarce purchase products from beyond our borders. Remember to continue to source locally wherever you can. By working closely with your farmer and teaching children and youth about what eating locally means, your menu and items in the salad bar will become more local over time.



chapter 3

BUILDING A TEAM AND CREATING A VISION



Building Your Farm To School Team

The most successful F2S programs are created and supported by a team of people. A core team of 3-10 individuals is established early on. This group works collaboratively to create the program vision, goals, and objectives and team roles. Core team members manage, administer, and coordinate the program. They may lead communication, community outreach, education, fundraising or evaluation activities. As the program unfolds additional partners are engaged to form an ever-widening web of support.

Strong Farm To School groups are knitted together by a common set of values and beliefs. Three prominent US groups articulate the following ideals⁴...

“School meals are a vital part of our responsibility to ensure the health and well-being of future generations. Improving the quality of school meals, and making them accessible to all children, is essential to our nation’s future. Farm To School programs ensure that our children eat the freshest, highest-quality food available.”

While the composition of a core team and the process of pulling it together can be as varied as selecting and planting seeds in a garden, there are a few key steps that seem to work for most Farm To School enthusiasts:

- ❖ Identify a key school champion. This could be the principal or a teacher specializing in culinary arts, agriculture, home economics, nutrition etc. The school champion must be someone who is ready, willing and able to manage and administer the program. The champion must be someone who has the authority to make the changes to school programming, environment, and/or policy to support the program.
- ❖ Identify potential coordinator(s) to oversee the day-to-day aspects of the program. Consider people who have the passion, the skills and the time to devote to the program.
- ❖ Identify potential farmer(s) to provide the food for the program and/or on-farm/in-class educational opportunities.
- ❖ Identify potential volunteers to help run the program on a daily basis.
- ❖ Identify partners from the community who have a vested interest in Farm To School (consider your community nutritionist, a chef from a local restaurant, the coordinator of a local community garden, or food coop, or food box program, etc.).
- ❖ Host a Farm To School Salad Bar evening! Invite a guest speaker familiar with the program to promote the concept. Serve salad made with local farm fresh ingredients. Engage a local chef or a teacher or students in preparing the salads. Establish a list of individuals interested in supporting the program (as core team members or in another way).



LET THE KIDS COOK!

Photo courtesy of North Peace Secondary School, Fort St. John, BC

⁴National Farm To School Network, Community Food Security Coalition, School Food FOCUS (March 2009), *Nourishing The Nation One Tray at a Time*.



There are a number of individuals that may not be on the core team, but may still play important roles in the initial development, ongoing operation, and annual evaluation/planning of the program. Consider inviting the following people to your Farm To School Salad Bar Event:

🕒 Groups and Individuals to Help You Succeed

🕒 How They Can Help

Community Elders	❖ Provide insight and knowledge around traditional First Nations food systems.
Community Nutritionists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Provide information and guidance on nutrition and youth development. ❖ Help coordinate and review menus and recipes, including focusing on local food. ❖ Great source for educational resources, tools, and support.
Contracted Food Service Companies	❖ Work with any existing food service companies to support the local food objectives of the program.
Distributors, Processors and Retailers	❖ Because local foods are not always available in sufficient quantity and variety, you may need to supplement foods from your farmer with foods from BC and beyond the province. Work with local distributors to meet your program goals.
Equipment Manufacturers	❖ Help design a food preparation and salad bar space that meets your specifications (area, budget, capacity, renovation needs).
Local Environmental Health Officer / Public Health Inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Help you to create a safe food environment. ❖ Conduct inspections to ensure the health and sanitation of food preparation and service areas.
Local Food Policy Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Help you connect with farms and schools. ❖ Assist in advocating resources and policies.
Ministry of Agriculture and Lands Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Support with educational resources on agriculture, nutrition, and local food to schools. ❖ Put you in touch with other people that can help such as farmers.
Other Local Schools and Farm To School Participants	❖ Help through sharing lessons learned, funding sources, and recipes.
Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)	❖ Assist in coordinating F2S with existing school meal programs.
School Boards	❖ Help to find funding to support the program, especially to ensure all students can participate.
School Purchasing Manager	❖ For both food and equipment purchases.
School District Maintenance Workers	❖ Can provide excellent support during initial development especially for equipment installations.

Developing a Vision, Goals, And Objectives

In taking on this program, your team must decide what they are trying to accomplish: What is their vision? What are their goals? What are their objectives? Clarity about these matters will:

- ❖ Help to communicate and promote the program.
- ❖ Convey why the program is important to students and the community.
- ❖ Help to recruit material and human resources.
- ❖ Keep the program on track.
- ❖ Help to understand the success you are achieving.
- ❖ Guide evaluation and improvement.

A vision is a broad aspirational image or statement of the future. A vision tells others about the hopes, dreams and desires for your Farm To School Salad Bar program. Creating a collective vision is one of the most important first steps in building a F2S team. It is an opportunity to ensure everyone has a voice in shaping the program, and that everyone is operating from the same page.

Carrots are the craze at Oliver Elementary School in Oliver BC. But can they achieve their vision “A Carrot Within Arms Reach”? “Why not”, says Joanne Bays, Project Manager of PHABC’s Farm To School Salad Bar Initiative. “In 1923, Robert Woodruff, president of Coca-Cola Company, had a dream. He envisioned that Coca-Cola could be placed “within arms reach of desire”. Today Coke is sold in more than 200 countries. It can be found in supermarkets, convenience stores, hospitals, and until very recently in BC schools. If the pop industry can make a concoction of caffeinated brown syrup and carbonated water, desirable to millions world-wide, just imagine the craving that can be created for a sweet crispy carrot straight from the farm.”



A CARROT WITHIN ARMS REACH.

Photo Courtesy of Oliver Elementary School, Oliver, BC

A goal is a broad target that is set in order to realize your vision. Goals provide a general focus for the activities or the set of experiences your team plans to undertake. The Farm To School goals should guide your program, but talk to your team to get a sense of what is important to your school, farmers, and community. Align goals with existing school and program goals. Better alignment will result in better integration of the program, greater support, and a greater chance of success.

Objectives explain what is needed and by when in order to reach your goals. They are foundational to evaluating the success of your program, so remember to make them SMART:

- S — specific, significant, stretching.
- M — measurable, meaningful, motivational.
- A — agreed upon, attainable, achievable, acceptable, action-oriented.
- R — realistic, relevant, reasonable, rewarding, results-oriented.
- T — time-based, timely, tangible, trackable.

BC SCHOOLS HAVE CREATED ADDITIONAL GOALS SPECIFIC TO THEIR PEOPLE, PLACE AND SITUATION.



CELEBRATING TRADITIONAL FOODS AND FOOD CULTURE

Photo courtesy of Sn̓c̓camalat̓n and Nk̓m̓'ap̓l' q̓s̓ is̓n̓' ma'm̓a'ya't̓n̓ k̓ls̓q̓il̓x̓wt̓et̓ Language and Cultural Immersion
Elementary School, Okanagan Indian Band, Vernon, BC.



SPROUTING NEW CHEFS WITH AN APPRECIATION FOR LOCAL FOODS

Photo courtesy of Vernon Secondary School, Vernon BC.

The BC Farm To School Salad Bar Initiative brought together diversity of people - from principals, teachers, parents and students to chefs, caterers, farmers, nutritionists, and environmental health officers. They represented 16 urban, rural, remote, and aboriginal communities located in a geographic area twice the size of France. Together they came up with no less than 9 broad goals!

- ❖ Increased access to fresh, locally-grown, nutritious, safe, and culturally appropriate foods on school premises.
- ❖ Increased fruit and vegetable consumption amongst participating school aged children.
- ❖ Improved student knowledge about local foods, the local food system, nutrition and health.
- ❖ Enhanced student skills in the areas of food production, processing and serving.
- ❖ Strengthened farm, school, health, family and aboriginal relationships.
- ❖ Strengthened local food economy.
- ❖ To develop a Farm To School Salad Bar that is self-financing.
- ❖ To develop a Farm To School Salad Bar that is Eco-Friendly.
- ❖ To develop a best practice model that has potential to be replicated elsewhere.

Evaluation And Evolution of Your Program

Evaluation is foundational to both the success and the sustainability of the program. It deserves a spot at the table in the initial planning stages. A well thought out evaluation enhances:

1. Knowledge – it contributes to understandings about the process to create the program and the impact of the program on students, parents, the school, farmer, and community;
2. Planning – it assists schools and farms in determining next steps and how to modify programs to achieve maximum benefits;
3. Promotion and communication – it creates opportunities for programs to share information with other similar programs and agencies.
4. Funding potential– evaluation results can be used to build a case for more funding.

If you have an evaluator on hand who has helped to articulate the program vision, goals, and objectives, you are already well on your way with evaluation planning. The next steps are as follows:

- ❖ Identify feasible evaluation methods such as surveys, information tracking, interviews etc.
- ❖ Create a plan that is as comprehensive as possible, including an assessment of both the process of creating the program and the impacts of the program.
- ❖ Consider gathering both quantitative and qualitative data. Remember the number of children participating and the amount of vegetables they consume only tells a part of the Farm To School story. A video of excited and smiling children filling their plates and tummies tells another.
- ❖ Target your evaluation where you think it will add the most value. Evaluation may include monitoring and assessing the impacts of the program on:
 - **Students:** Focus evaluation on changes in knowledge of local food and healthy eating, attitudes towards the program, behaviors regarding food choices and nutrition, changes in Body Mass Index (BMI), academic performance, discipline, attendance, and activity patterns.
 - **Teachers:** Look at the changes in knowledge and attitudes of teachers and school administrators, changes in dietary behaviors and changes in classroom curriculum.
 - **Parents:** Assess the level of interest and support of the program, determine if the F2S program is making changes in the home in terms of increasing healthy eating and bringing back the family dinner hour.
 - **Farmers:** Measure sales to schools, changes in planting patterns, adoption of sustainable farming practices, breakthroughs in handling distribution and transportation issues, prevention of farmland loss, increase in the number of farms or farmers in the region.

Scope your evaluation to your available resources. If you have someone on board who has experience and/or skills in developing and implementing evaluation plans, processes and tools - wonderful! If you have someone on board who can capture the Farm To School story – someone with writing, digital photography, or video recording experiences and skills – equally wonderful.

EXCELLENT EVALUATION RESOURCES

- ❖ A Decade of Farm To School in California provides an overview of five different program evaluations. You can find it online at http://www.phabc.org/modules/Farmtoschool/files/A_Growing_Movement.pdf
- ❖ Bearing Fruit: Farm To School Evaluation Resources and Recommendations outlines methodology and techniques for creating an evaluation framework for your school. Available on-line at: <http://departments.oxy.edu/uepi/cfj/publications/BF%20full%20report.pdf>
- ❖ Salad Bars in Schools: A Fresh Approach to Lunch from Toronto Food Share, provides several resources on evaluating your program, including surveys and suggested measurement tools. Find it at http://www.phabc.org/files/farmtoschool/Salad_Bar_Manual.pdf



SMILING FACES ARE A MEASURE OF SUCCESS

Photo courtesy of SenPokChin School, Osoyoos Indian Band, Oliver BC

Developing an Initial Action Plan

The action plan helps to clarify how your group will accomplish their objectives in the quickest, most effective way. For each objective the group brainstorms the tasks that need to be accomplished. Questions for consideration during the brainstorming process include:

- ❖ What is needed to accomplish this objective?
- ❖ Where can we find the resources?
- ❖ How will the task be done?
- ❖ When it will be done? and
- ❖ Who will do it?

To keep your F2S program on track:

- ❖ Work with your core team to prioritize the tasks that need to be done.
- ❖ Ensure each task is assigned to a team member with timelines.
- ❖ Encourage core team members to look outside for support in accomplishing objectives. You will often find your best workers and supporters are those that only have small windows of free time but are willing to commit to short-term projects.
- ❖ Schedule regular meetings to update on progress and ensure tasks do not fall by the wayside. Regular core team interaction and cooperation will help to establish the program and make the experience a positive one.
- ❖ Set time to acknowledge and celebrate successes. A thank you card, a packet of seeds, a strawberry plant, a coupon to the farmers market – are gifts that go a long way to inspire and motivate!



chapter 4

ENGAGING FARMERS, PARENTS, STUDENTS AND OTHERS



Engaging Local Farmers

Farm To School Salad Bar is about connecting children to their land, their farmers, and their food. It is about closing the distance between the field and the classroom. It is about building relationships between farm and school. Without a farm, the program is just another salad bar.

Farmers tend to be passionate about food and willing to share that passion with others. Engage farmers and representatives of the farming community as soon as possible when developing program. They should have as much voice in as many aspects of the program as possible in order to help shape the program around local food and experiences on the farm.

Because farmers are few and often busy in the field, a “can do” attitude and creativity in making connections are central to bringing them on board. Keep in mind that relationships are built over time, so more interaction upfront is useful for getting on the right path.

Schools actively engaged in the program recommend securing more than one farmer to reduce supplier stress, increase variety, and ensure long-term supply of local food. The strongest programs have on board farmers who identify with the goals of the program, are happy to engage with students and to educate them on local farming, and who are willing to be part of a program that will be developing for years to come. The closer the farm is located to the school, the easier it is for everyone involved. Distribution costs will be less expensive, time demands on the school and farm will be lower, students will have a better opportunity to visit the farmer, and fewer greenhouse gases will be emitted.

Tips on Engaging Local Farmers:

- ☐ Engage farmers early on.
- ☐ Have an open discussion about roles and responsibilities. Use this discussion to form your terms of reference.
- ☐ Set appropriate targets for the amount of local food in the F2S program.
- ☐ Discuss how/when the farm can become a learning resource for students.
- ☐ Contact other F2S programs. Source and share resource materials that you develop to strengthen your farm and school relationships. Sample resources developed in BC schools include:
 - ☐ templates for agreements between schools and farms.
 - ☐ templates to profile farmers and local products.
 - ☐ question and answer sheets.
 - ☐ directories/maps, for local farms and foods.
- ☐ Develop written agreements with farmers after harvest (Oct) and before their planting season (Feb).
- ☐ Find opportunities for face-to-face connections.
 - ☐ Students can visit/work at the farmers market.
 - ☐ Students can visit/work on the farm.
 - ☐ Farmers can be invited to the school to sample the salad bar, to help establish a school garden, to demonstrate composting, gardening, seed saving, etc.
- ☐ Discuss opportunities such as increasing local food production, creating a generation of young farmers, reconnecting people to food and the land, and creating stronger connections between farmers and other people in the community.

DISCUSSION TOPICS FOR FARMERS AND SCHOOLS PREPARING FOR F2S:

- ❖ Growing: What (type and quality) can be grown this year? What could we add for next year? What will the school need to supplement with other sources?
- ❖ Menu design: How can we maximize local food in the menu? How can we use staple items in multiple recipes? What foods will be ready when?
- ❖ Eating: How many students will F2S be for? How much will they eat over the course of a school year?
- ❖ Distribution: What is the best and most efficient way to get the produce from the farm to the school?
- ❖ Promotion: How can we create community wide excitement and interest around this program? Can farms and schools collaborate in communication and marketing around F2S?



WHO CAN HELP YOU FIND A LOCAL FARMER?

- ❖ BC Farmers Market Association
www.bcfarmersmarket.org
 - ❖ Certified Organic Association of BC
www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca
 - ❖ Farmers involved in other Farm To School programs
www.phabc.org/farmtoschool
 - ❖ BC Food System Network
www.fooddemocracy.org
 - ❖ Local Food Policy Organizations
(visit the Food Security Gateway on the PHABC website) www.phabc.org
 - ❖ Ministry of Agriculture Regional Coordinators:
- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| North | Central | Coast |
| Prince George, BC | Vernon, BC | Abbotsford, BC |
| (250) 565-7200 | (250) 260-3035 | (604) 556-3001 |



**IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO
SUPPORT A FARMER. IT TAKES
A FARMER TO SUPPORT A
COMMUNITY.**

Photo courtesy of Fraserbench Farms, Williams Lake, BC.

Engaging Students And Parents

Students and parents bring a lot of energy and insight to your program. Connect with them early, to build support for the program and to receive direction on key program aspects. Below are some ideas for engaging students and parents.

Group

Engagement Ideas

Students

- ❖ Interview students — What are they eating for lunch? What healthy foods would they like?
- ❖ Give them an opportunity to build their ultimate salad bar on paper.
- ❖ Poster contest promoting the salad bar.
- ❖ Contest to name the salad bar.
- ❖ Ask them to bring in their favourite healthy snack/salad/meal/recipe from home.
- ❖ Find older students to join the core team or set up a student committee to provide feedback.
- ❖ Get students involved in different ways that they are interested in, such as having home economics students prepare food, arts students create promotional materials, marketing students to develop campaigns and interview students, and others get involved in events and program planning.

Parents

- ❖ Ask for parent representation on your team.
- ❖ Ask for input on what parents would like to see served.
- ❖ Ensure regular correspondence back to parents on progress, changes, etc through meetings and newsletters.
- ❖ Make sure parents have a forum for providing input, concerns, etc. Respond to them on a timely basis.

Engaging Volunteers

Volunteers are the mainstay of any F2S program. The program relies on the energy and passion that volunteers bring to kitchen and classroom. Volunteers may assist by:

- ❖ Developing recipes.
- ❖ Preparing foods.
- ❖ Helping students serve themselves.
- ❖ Reminding students of etiquette and manners.
- ❖ Encouraging students to try new foods.
- ❖ Answering students' questions.
- ❖ Ordering and shopping for food and other items.
- ❖ Washing dishes and cleaning up.
- ❖ Helping plan menus.
- ❖ Searching for ideas on using local food in new ways.
- ❖ Helping with fundraising events or field trips.
- ❖ Promoting and communicating the program to others.
- ❖ Recruiting additional volunteers.

Recruiting And Coordinating Volunteers

The majority of your volunteers are likely to come from families of the children you are serving but, as with your core team, it is good to have a diversified group representing different aspects of your community. Develop a one-page information sheet that describes your program, its location and a brief description of what volunteers can do to help. Once you have this, you are ready to start the recruiting process.

When recruiting, make sure you have involvement from your principal, administrative staff, and/or teachers. If you are in a primary school, look to local high schools for volunteers. Many organizations, business and service groups encourage volunteerism. Consider any School Board policies or guidelines regarding volunteers working with school children.

Once you have familiarized yourself with the guidelines, reach out to your community. Here are some ideas for how to reach out to volunteers:

- ❖ Talk to religious organizations, cultural associations, Friendship Centres, seniors' clubs, service clubs, business associations, the Girl Guides and Boy Scouts, your local health unit volunteer coordinator, and any other group within your community.
- ❖ Tap into your network to get the word out about your program and the great impact it will have on the community if well-supported.
- ❖ Look for passionate people that are well-known in the community. Start by looking for certain parents that fit this description and may be willing to help you build your volunteer network over time.
- ❖ Approach leaders or administration about volunteers for programs at First Nations schools or schools that have children from local First Nations communities.

Ways to Recruit Volunteers:

- ❖ Talk to the PAC first.
- ❖ Send flyers home with students.
- ❖ Post flyers at local community centres.
- ❖ Advertise in local newspapers.
- ❖ Request space in local church or service group newsletters.
- ❖ Ask to speak at a service group or business luncheon.
- ❖ Ask local faith leaders to encourage congregations to participate.



SOWING SEEDS IN THE QUEENSWAY COMMUNITY GARDEN, PRINCE GEORGE, BC.
Photo Courtesy of Joanne Bays, Project Manager, Farm to School Salad Bar, Vancouver, BC.

Volunteers will be attracted to what they identify with, so take time to figure out what that may be in your community. Here are some general selling points to attract volunteers:

- ❖ Make a difference in the lives of our children and youth.
- ❖ Help ensure no child in our school goes hungry.
- ❖ Support our local farmers and the farming community.
- ❖ Get FoodSafe Training.
- ❖ Enjoy free tasty, healthy, and local meals.
- ❖ Learn about local food, where to find it, and delicious ways to dish it up!
- ❖ Learn about ways to go green in the kitchen.
- ❖ Learn about gardening, root cellars, canning, composting and more.
- ❖ Meet others in a fun atmosphere.



Keeping Volunteers Motivated

Maintain volunteers' motivation and enthusiasm by regular encouragement and by acknowledging their contributions to the program's successes. Celebrate often!

Upon signing up to help you out, volunteers should expect to receive three things to clarify their role in the F2S program:

1. **Roles and Responsibilities:** Outline what the responsibilities and benefits are for participating in F2S as a volunteer.
2. **Training:** Provide volunteers with the training and tools necessary to instill a sense of pride in a job well done. Develop a volunteer manual that gives your volunteers the resources they need to do their job well and safely.
3. **Schedule:** Provide volunteers with a work schedule that reflects their personal time commitment. Also provide instructions on who to call should something come up that will interfere with the schedule.

TIP:

Organize volunteers into two teams: preparation and clean-up. Each team should expect to spend 2-3 hours at the school per F2S day.

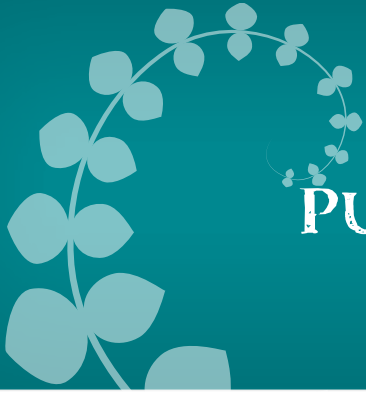
Here are a few great ideas to acknowledge and honour your volunteers:

- ❖ Maintain close contact with each.
- ❖ Encourage volunteers to suggest ideas and incorporate those ideas where possible.
- ❖ Keep them up to date with how the program is going.
- ❖ Hold regular gatherings to encourage and thank volunteers for their efforts.
- ❖ Ensure they are well taken care of during their efforts (offer free meals, coffee and other drinks).
- ❖ Have the students make cards for volunteers on special occasions such as Valentine's Day, Volunteer Day (December 5), and birthdays.
- ❖ Have a 'Generous People' board that displays all your volunteers' pictures, names and something about themselves.
- ❖ When a new volunteer starts, name the lunch or menu items after them (e.g., 'Sally's Spinach Salad').
- ❖ Plan a few special days in the year that recognize all the work your volunteers do. Pamper them with a meal served by students or a little gift that will make them feel special.
- ❖ Give them a recognition award during a school assembly or at an end of the year awards event.
- ❖ Purchase a stereo for the kitchen – a little rhythm cures any blues.



**WE ARE DOING MORE THAN
TOSSING SALADS, WE ARE
CHANGING LIFESTYLES.**

Photo courtesy of Fernie Academy, Fernie, BC



chapter 5

PURCHASING EQUIPMENT AND ENSURING FOOD SAFETY



School Equipment

Creating a safe, efficient, and effective food environment is one of the first items a school must attend to once the core team is established. Purchasing and installing equipment often represents the largest program investment. The cost of obtaining the equipment will vary based on existing equipment and what you decide to purchase. Some schools have a full cafeteria-style kitchen with industrial equipment and large preparation surfaces. Others manage simply with a lone refrigerator, 3 sinks and a hot plate.

Whatever your facility, be aware of and adhere to public health requirements for safe food preparation and handling. Consider the following questions: Where will the program operate in the school? Where will the foods be received, prepared, served and stored? Where will the children eat their foods? How will foods be transported from service to eating areas? What structural modifications are necessary? What equipment is needed?

Basic Farm To School Salad Bar Equipment List

- ☐ A large refrigerator is essential – even if you are feeding a handful of students. Two large refrigerators or a large cooler will be necessary if you are feeding more than 50 children. You will be receiving large quantities of food and primarily fruits and vegetables. Milk, dairy, eggs and meats must go in the refrigerator. Fruits and vegetables are best stored in the refrigerator, but a cool place like a root cellar will work as well.
- ☐ A sink is required. It must have 2-3 compartments if an industrial dishwasher is not purchased.
- ☐ A table-top salad bar kit including the following items is essential:
 - ☐ 1x Table Top Salad Bar w/ Sneeze Guard.
 - ☐ 1x Rectangular Table Top Hot Food Warmer.
 - ☐ 4x Plastic Serving Spoons.
 - ☐ 6x Clear Squeeze Bottles.
 - ☐ 4x Tubs w/Clear Lids.
 - ☐ 2x Stainless Steel Bowl.
 - ☐ 2x Clear Plastic Bowl.
 - ☐ 2x Clear Plastic Food Saver Tub w/ Lid.
 - ☐ 8x Stainless Steel Spoons.
 - ☐ 16x Stainless Steel Tongs.
 - ☐ 3x Stainless Steel Full Size Inserts.
 - ☐ 3x Stainless Steel Full Size Lids.
 - ☐ 4x Stainless Steel ½ Size Inserts.
 - ☐ 4x Stainless Steel ½ Size Lids.
 - ☐ 4x Stainless Steel ¼ Size Inserts.
 - ☐ 4x Stainless Steel ¼ Size Lids.
 - ☐ 3X Large Cutting Boards.
 - ☐ 3X Sharp Knives (various sizes).

In the spring of 2009, Community Nutritionist, Loraina Stephen, was kind enough to provide a list of items for a table-top salad bar kit and an estimate of its cost. At that time the kit cost around \$2,500 when purchased from a Prince George supplier - Northern Food Equipment and Ice Supply Ltd. Note: this list does not include items such as coolers and dishwashers, and the price is dependent on the US exchange rate. Moreover, this estimate does not include the cost of a moveable salad bar set-up (a table with wheels fitting beneath the salad bar unit). One table-top salad bar kit serves approximately 150 children in 15- 30 minutes.



Other basic kitchen needs:

- ☐ Measuring cups.
- ☐ A food processor.
- ☐ A strainer/colander.
- ☐ A large salad spinner.
- ☐ Ice packs.
- ☐ Thermometers and a probe thermometer.
- ☐ Can openers.
- ☐ Tin foil.
- ☐ Plates and bowls (dishwasher safe).
- ☐ Forks, knives, and spoons.
- ☐ Detergent.
- ☐ Sanitizer.
- ☐ Wash cloths and tea towels.
- ☐ Aprons.
- ☐ Hats/hair nets.
- ☐ Rubber gloves.
- ☐ Liquid soap.
- ☐ Paper towels.

Additional Useful Equipment Items:

- ☐ A stove is not absolutely necessary, but will certainly help – especially in the preparation of hot soups, stews, and one-dish meals that often accompany a salad bar. Optional small equipment may be purchased to serve hot foods – a slow cooker or a soup warmer are good examples.
- ☐ An industrial dishwasher is not absolutely necessary but will certainly help. In addition to ensuring dishes are properly cleaned and sanitized, dishwashers cut down on waste. Imagine the amount of paper, plastic and Styrofoam that will not end up in the local landfill when real dishes and cutlery are used instead of disposable products? While the investment may seem large upfront, over time the savings are considerable both economically and environmentally.
- ☐ A freezer is not absolutely necessary but will certainly help. Freezing local foods is one way to store them longer so that they can be enjoyed all year long!
- ☐ A root cellar is not absolutely necessary, but like the freezer, it will certainly help to store local foods. Children will be able to enjoy fresh local root vegetables – like carrots, potatoes, beets, squash, onions, and cabbage – all year long.

KITCHEN AT THE HEART OF LAKE KATHLYN SCHOOL

“The kitchen brought people into our school that had never been there. Grandparents, community members, Board of Education Trustees, and even other schools came to see what “all the fuss was about”. Many of these people have become volunteers. The kitchen has also enriched our life skills program and leadership groups – It has provided a place which has enhanced the self esteem of many of our kids. It has become a social gathering place as well. I often comment that they are “having way too much fun in there” as I walk past hearing the laughter and animated conversations.” Warren Kluss, Principal, Lake Kathlyn School, Smithers, BC.



Ensuring Food Safety and Healthy Operation of Your School Program

Food service operations in public schools must be approved by an environmental health officer (EHO), or a public health inspector (PHI), employed with the regional health authority. Some schools have found the process challenging and lengthy, and a steep learning curve at times. Luckily, you should only have to do it once. Your local EHO is an excellent resource. Bring an EHO or PHI into your program early and they will ensure the food safety of your program. First Nations schools should contact their federal health inspectors. The office will often have a standard information package that is given out to those wishing to start up a new food operation.

The EHO/PHI/inspector will:

- ❖ Conduct a site assessment.
- ❖ Verify equipment and space needs.
- ❖ Provide forms to create a food safety plan and obtain appropriate permits.
- ❖ Review and approve plans, and issue permits.
- ❖ Help you understand exactly what it is you need to do to remain food safe.

There are two main food safety protocols for starting a salad bar: 1) getting operation approved 2) being food safe certified. The sections below outline procedures to make this process as smooth as possible.

You will need to take the following steps:

1. Develop a plan for the construction / renovation of the kitchen.

A written plan must be submitted to your local Health Protection office for sign-off. Even if no significant changes are proposed, the facility details will need to be provided to the health inspector. The health inspector will review the plan to ensure it meets requirements of the Food Premises Regulations. The plan should include details showing the layout of the kitchen, materials used for construction (e.g. flooring, wall finishes, countertops, lighting details, etc.), and types of kitchen equipment and their location. Get the plan signed off on by the local Environmental Health Protection office before construction to avoid making costly changes.

2. Develop a food safety plan.

The food safety plan is a written guide for food handlers to help ensure more hazardous foods being served are handled appropriately at the various preparation stages. For each potentially hazardous food, it must: Identify all critical control points – a critical control point is a step in food preparation processing where a hazard can be controlled. Loss of control may

result in an unacceptable health risk. Describe critical limits for those control points. List monitoring steps for each of the control points. Identify corrective actions if the monitoring shows the critical limit was not achieved.

3. Develop a sanitation plan.

A sanitation plan is a written guide for the food handlers on cleaning and maintenance of the facility. It needs to include:

- ☐ The cleaning and sanitizing requirements for the equipment used in the facility, as well as for the facility itself.
- ☐ A list of the cleaning and sanitizing agents to be used, what they will be used for and their concentrations for the different tasks.
- ☐ Identification of any pesticides used in the facility, along with their specific uses and their storage requirements.

4. Ensure appropriate staff get FoodSafe training .

In the Food Premises Regulation, there is a requirement for FoodSafe certification (or equivalent training), ensuring those handling food have a suitable level of understanding of the precautions needed to prevent foodborne illness. This certification is required for the operator of the kitchen and, in the absence of the operator, at least one other person onsite.

5. Call for inspection for the Permit to Operate.

Getting the Permit to Operate gives approval to operate the kitchen and serve food. Typically an on-site inspection is conducted by the local EHO or PHI to ensure that all the approved written submissions correspond with physical site provisions intended for safe food preparation and service to students, it will be necessary for them to confirm the facility was constructed and finished as per the plan that was signed off on, confirm the food safety plan and sanitation plans are suitable, confirm staff training has been completed, and confirm the facility is cleaned up, equipment is working properly and it is ready to be used.



GREAT FOOD SAFE RESOURCES

Food safe resources designed specifically for F2S programs have been developed by environmental health protection leads from Interior Health and Northern Health authorities. Topics include:

- ❖ Food Safety Guidelines For School Kitchens.
- ❖ Frequently Asked Food Safety Questions.
- ❖ Contacts for Inquiries About Food Safety in your Farm To School Salad Bar Program.

These resources are available on the Farm To School Salad Bar website at: <http://www.phabc.org/modules.php?name=Farmtoschool&pa=showpage&pid=4>.

The BC Centre for Disease Control has developed an excellent resource that will help you write your Food Safety Plan called Ensuring Food Safety: Writing Your Own Food Safety Plan. You can find it online at <http://www.bccdc.org/downloads/pdf/fps/reports/EnsuringFoodSafety-HACCPWay.pdf>.

Visit <http://www.foodsafe.ca> for information on Foodsafe certification.

Don't hesitate to contact other schools involved in the Farm To School program to get a sense of their experiences and perhaps a tip or two.

Remember your local EHO or PHI is always your best resource!

Food Safety on The Farm

While whole fruits and vegetables are the primary local food product delivered to a F2S program, AND these products pose a lower food risk hazard than other foods, farmers do need to be aware of biological, chemical and physical substances that may contaminate their products.

Some excellent web resources about food safety on the farm include:

- ❖ Food Safety – Good Agricultural Practices, BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/fieldvegetable/production_guide/2008_2009/food_safety.pdf
- ❖ On Farm Food Safety – Canadian Horticultural Society <http://www.hortcouncil.ca/FSHome.htm>
- ❖ Code of Practice for Minimally Processed Ready-to-Eat Vegetables – Canadian Food Inspection Agency. <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/frefra/safsal/minproe.shtml#5-0>

Maintaining a Safe And Healthy Kitchen

Use the checklists below to maintain good practice around your food and offer FoodSafe training to parents, students and others who will be processing and serving the foods.

Maintaining Proper Food Temperatures

- ☐ Keep cold food at or below 4°C.
- ☐ Keep hot food at or above 60°C.
- ☐ Keep frozen food at or below -18°C.
- ☐ Put thermometers in all refrigerators and freezers.
- ☐ Cook all food to a minimum internal temperature of 74°C.
- ☐ Do not store/leave/keep hot or cold food at room temperature for more than 2 hours.
- ☐ Don't overstock containers as they will be harder to keep cold.

Preventing Food Contamination

- ☐ Store cooked and ready-to-eat food items on shelves above raw foods.
- ☐ Cover and refrigerate produce you have cut with lids or plastic wrap.
- ☐ Keep all food stored in plastic air-tight containers in refrigerator.
- ☐ Don't combine leftovers with new product when replenishing food items on the salad bar – especially mixed salads such as tuna, potato, etc.
- ☐ Replace an empty or almost empty container with a fresh container; do not put fresh product into a used container.
- ☐ Always ensure there are separate tongs, spoons, etc., for each item on the salad bar.
- ☐ Clean and sanitize surfaces (including cutting boards), utensils, and hands.
- ☐ Wash all fruits and vegetables just before using.
- ☐ Use proper utensils to reduce direct hand contact with prepared food.
- ☐ Keep soap and bleach in a separate cupboard.
- ☐ Keep all food items 15cm off the floor on shelves, racks or pallets.
- ☐ Use plastic or glass cutting boards only.
- ☐ Replace deeply grooved food contact surfaces.

Washing Produce

- ☐ Wash all fruits and vegetables in clean drinking water before eating even if you don't eat the rind or skin (such as melons and oranges).
- ☐ Peel and discard outer leaves or rinds.
- ☐ Wash produce just before you use it, not when you put it away.
- ☐ Scrub hearty vegetables (e.g., potatoes, carrots) if you want to eat the fiber- and nutrient-rich skin

Sanitizing Food Contact Surfaces

- ☐ Use detergent and hot water followed by a sanitizing solution of 2ml of household bleach per 1 litre of water to clean all dishes, utensils and food prep surfaces.
- ☐ To sanitize food service bin, wash in hot soapy water, rinse and sanitize by spraying inside and outside surfaces (and lids if applicable) with sanitizing solution (4ml household bleach and 1 litre of water) and then air-dry.
- ☐ Clean and sanitize cloths and sponges daily.

Maintaining Good Personal Hygiene

- ☐ Provide hot and cold running water, liquid soap in a dispenser and a supply of paper towels.
- ☐ Use hand-wash basins only for hand-washing and not for food preparation or dishwashing.
- ☐ Wash hands thoroughly before and after handling food, sneezing or coughing, touching something contaminated such as your hair, and using the washroom.
- ☐ Food handlers are not to handle food if they are ill with diarrhea, coughing or sneezing.
- ☐ Food handlers must not handle food if they have open cuts on their hands or are wearing bandages unless gloves are used.
- ☐ Food handlers must wear headgear that confines hair. Hairnets, chef's hats and baseball caps are acceptable headgear. Hair must be confined to prevent it from falling into food and stop food handlers from touching hair to move it out of their face. Hair has been known to cross-contaminate food.
- ☐ Food handlers must wear clean clothing and change aprons as often as necessary. Do not wear aprons outside of the establishment. Always change and hang aprons in the change room, never in the kitchen or food storage areas. These aprons should be cleaned daily.
- ☐ Food handlers must have trimmed nails and wear no jewellery when preparing food.
- ☐ Food handlers must be aware of their bad habits such as biting nails and touching their face, especially around the mouth, nose and eyes.



chapter 6 RECIPES, MENUS AND MORE





What Foods Are Served In The Salad Bar?

In BC programs, at each salad bar service children are offered a choice of:

- 6 vegetables (fresh leafy greens, sliced cucumber, cherry tomatoes, celery sticks, julienned carrots etc.)
- 3 fruits (fresh, frozen, or dried berries, peaches, pears, apples etc.)
- 1 grain or bread (a whole wheat bun, tortilla, pita, etc.) and
- 1 meat or alternative (local beef jerky, grated cheddar cheese, boiled egg, tuna fish, chickpeas, etc.)

Foods high in salt, fat and sugar are limited.

Schools are encouraged to serve as much local food as possible. They are encouraged to serve fresh raw sliced, diced, and julienned fruits and vegetables at each service. They are also encouraged to serve one mixed leafy green salad and at least one other fresh mixed salad at each service. Caesar, potato, and taco salads are big hits with most kids. To warm children's tummies during the cold winter months, many schools serve a hot soup, chili, or stew with their salad bar. Others roast, steam, stir-fry or bake their vegetables. Getting creative with the menu helps to pique student interest. Serving soups and stews is a great way to use up leftovers.

"The Farm To School Salad Bar program aims to improve student fruit and vegetable consumption while supporting local farms and the local food economy. While it is not the same as a school meal program – where the focus is to ensure children have 1/3 of their daily nutrition requirements at each setting - Farm To School Salad Bar can compliment existing school meal programs. Rounding up the nutrition by adding a serving of milk or dairy products is highly encouraged!"

Joanne Bays, Project Manager, Farm To School Salad Bar.



SALAD BAR SMORGASBOARD.

Photo courtesy of Oliver Elementary School, Oliver, BC



Menu Development – Where to Start?

Creating menus to meet everyone's needs can be a complex process, but the satisfaction of seeing eager young faces light up at the sight of the feast of local greens will make it all worthwhile! Menu development varies from program to program, but the general theme is to start with the farmers.

WHAT DO FARMERS HAVE TO SAY?

"The approach that I am most in favour of, and it makes sense from a farmer's perspective, would be to list all the products that I can grow, present it to the school. The school would look at the list and say 'Okay, we have this many students, and these types of products available, so we can make up these recipes, and then we can project what recipes and menus we will be using.' Then the school can come back to me and say this is roughly how much we need of this product this week and that product that week." — *Thomas Tumbach, Farmer and Owner of Localmotive Organic Delivery in Okanagan Falls, BC providing food to five schools in the South Okanagan.*

"I start out by doing the basics — tomatoes, cucumbers, lettuce, carrots — I go heavy on them and make them last as long as possible — then I add specialty things every once and awhile." — *Gary Martens, Corral Farms, Williams Lake, BC.*

The farmer provides a list of foods that can be produced on the farm for the school. The farmer also provides an estimate of how much food can be provided and a sense of when different foods are available. If more than one farmer is involved with one school, it is important that they coordinate with each other to give the school a realistic picture of what is available.

Once the farmers have provided an understanding of what they can provide, the coordinator spends some time browsing the list and creating menus and recipes that will satisfy the principles, goals, and objectives of the F2S program. The focus will be on using recipes that use local, seasonal product before looking at other recipes. The community nutritionist at the local health unit will be an excellent resource during this time.



TIPS FOR RECIPE AND MENU DEVELOPMENT

- ❖ Use Canada's Food Guide to help you in choosing healthier options.
<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php>.
- ❖ Remember, recipes must follow the Guidelines for Food and Beverages Sold in BC Schools http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/guidelines_sales07.pdf.
- ❖ "Tips and Recipes for Quantity Cooking: Nourishing Minds and Bodies" is a great resource with plenty of healthy recipes that meet the guidelines. Tips and Recipes For Quantity Cooking is available at <http://www.healthyeatingatschool.ca/category/resources/>.
- ❖ Bake Better Bites: Recipes and Tips For Healthier Baked Goods <http://www.healthyeatingatschool.ca/category/resources/>
- ❖ If you're buying packaged products you can find out if they meet the guidelines at <http://www.brandnamefoodlist.ca>.
- ❖ A student survey based on the foods that your farmer can provide would help you understand what your students are interested in and what would make your salad bar popular.
- ❖ Look for creative ways to discover new menus and recipes, talk to other schools and organizations in your area that may be doing the same thing. Consider a community recipe contest to tap into local knowledge and as a means to announce the program and get people involved.
- ❖ Recipes should be culturally appropriate and sensitive to student food preferences and/or special dietary needs. Connect with community nutritionists, and coordinators of existing food programs in and around your community for ideas and resources to assist with this.
- ❖ Plan your menus to use potential leftovers from the salad bar earlier in the week. This will help reduce waste (setting an example for students) and food costs (helping feasibility).
- ❖ Encourage the farmers to review the menus and recipes. They may know of additional recipes and/or ways to use their products!



GREAT RECIPES BEGIN IN THE GARDEN: CHEF APRIL OTTESEN OF SASSAFRAS SAVOURIES IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COMMUNITY GARDEN.

Photo Courtesy, Joanne Bays, Project Manager Farm To School Salad Bar, Vancouver, BC.

Recipes: Celebrating A Dozen Local Foods

There are at least a dozen local foods that can be found (fresh, frozen, or dried) at almost anytime of the year and in almost any community in BC. Apples, beef, beets, berries, cabbage, carrots, lettuce, onions, peaches, pears, potatoes and squash top the list. And if you ask Chef April Ottesen of Sassafra's Savouries in Prince George, BC there are at least a dozen ways to prepare each. In this section April shares some of her favourite soup, salad and dessert recipes using local foods. All recipes meet the Guidelines for Food and Beverages Sold in BC Schools.

ROAST POTATO WEDGES

Kids love potato wedges! Serve them with toppings of grated cheddar cheese, home made chili, green onions, and/or nonfat sour cream.

10 minutes to prepare; 1 hour to bake

Makes 8 servings (4 wedges/serving)

Ingredients

- 4 medium local new, red, white or Yukon gold potatoes (or 4 cups) cut in wedges
- 2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil (or whatever oil you have)
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. crushed garlic (2 cloves smashed)
- 1 tbsp. chopped fresh rosemary, or 1 tsp. dried rosemary
- Cajun spice or pepper to taste

Method

1. Wash and scrub potatoes.
2. Cut into wedges.
3. Place in colander and drain very well (or use a paper towel to pat dry).
4. Drizzle with olive oil and toss to coat evenly.
5. Season with salt, fresh crushed garlic, rosemary, and Cajun spice or pepper.
6. Place evenly on a parchment paper covered pan and bake at 350° F for about one hour or until tender when poked with a fork.
7. Stir at regular intervals to prevent uneven browning and crisping.





SASSAFRAS THAI NOODLE WRAP

The Thai Noodle Wrap is light and delicious. We offer it in our café chilled or grilled.

30 minutes to prepare.

Makes 6 wraps or 12 servings (Cut each wrap in half for child sized servings).

Ingredients

- 6 medium wraps (6 soft tortilla shells).
- 300 grams dried, or 4 cups cooked rice noodles
- 1 tbsp. sesame oil
- 2 tbsp. soya sauce
- 1 tbsp. lime juice
- 1 grated local carrot
- 1 ½ cups chopped, cooked chicken (This is equivalent to 3 roasted chicken thighs)
- ¾ cup bottled peanut sauce
- 3 chopped green onions
- 6 tbsp chopped cilantro
- 6 tbsp. chopped peanuts

Method

1. Cook rice noodles according to package instructions.
2. Drain and rinse with cold water.
3. Toss noodles with sesame oil, soya sauce and lime juice to coat (test noodles for taste).
4. Place open fresh wraps on a counter.
5. Place approximately ¾ cup of cooked noodles in the center of the wrap in a narrow rectangular shape, leaving enough space on each side to fold the wrap.
6. Top each wrap with 2 tbsp. shredded carrot (spread out over noodles) and ¼ cup packed of cooked chicken.
7. Drizzle with peanut sauce (approximately 2 tbsp. per wrap).
8. Top with chopped cilantro and chopped green onion, and a light sprinkling of chopped peanuts.
9. Tuck front of wrap and the two sides over the noodles, and pressing to make a nice tight wrap, roll the wrap to the far side.

This recipe contains peanuts.

Follow allergy policies or guidelines in place at your school. See "Allergy Aware School and Childcare Settings: Tips For Parents Whose Children Attend Allergy Aware Settings" at <http://www.bcsta.org:8080/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-30472/Allergy%20Aware%20School%20and%20Childcare%20Settings.pdf>



TIP: Post the list of ingredients when serving mixed foods on the salad bar.



HEARTY BEEF VEGETABLE CHILI

There is nothing more satisfying than a hot bowl of chili on a cold winter day. Top with grated cheddar cheese and serve with a crispy green salad.

Approximately 30 minutes to prepare, then allow 1 – 4 hours to simmer

Makes 8 – 10, ½ cup servings

Ingredients

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 4 tsp. extra virgin olive oil | 2 tbsp. sugar |
| 2 cups chopped onions | 3 bay leaves |
| 1 cup chopped celery | ¼ tsp. allspice |
| 1 tbsp. finely chopped garlic | 1 tbsp. chili powder |
| 1 lb. roasted or fried local ground beef | 1 tsp. oregano |
| 2 cups drained chopped canned tomatoes | ½ tsp. ground pepper |
| 2 cups tomato sauce | ¼ tsp. ground cumin |
| 12 oz. drained and rinsed garbanzo beans | ¼ tsp. cayenne or red chilies |
| 12 oz. drained and rinsed kidney beans | 1 tsp. dried basil |
| 1 cup chopped green pepper | |

Method

1. In medium nonstick skillet, heat oil; add onions, celery, and garlic; cook over medium heat until softened.
2. Add beef and spices, stir well.
3. Place with all remaining ingredients in slow cooker. Stir some more!
4. Cook at low temperature for up to four hours to allow flavours to meld.

TIP: To reduce sodium when using canned tomatoes or canned tomato sauce, use the “no added salt” or “reduced sodium” varieties.





SASSAFRAS CABBAGE AND APPLE COLESLAW

The apples make this coleslaw quite delightful, with an extra sweet and sour crunch. Not only that, but it is packed with vitamin C! At Sassafras, we get our cabbages locally from September to February from Caribou Growers. When that supply runs out we always try to obtain BC cabbages at the very least.

15 minutes to prepare

Makes 8 – 10, ½ cup servings

Ingredients

- 1 small head of cabbage, shredded (approximately 8 cups shredded)
- 1 large stalk of celery, thinly sliced
- 1 large carrot, grated
- 2 crispy apples, peeled, cored and chopped (plus 1 tablespoon of lemon juice from dressing to prevent browning)
- 2 green onions finely sliced

Dressing

- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 tsp. sugar
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper
- 1 tbsp. pickled banana pepper juice (or 1 tbsp white vinegar and a dash of cayenne pepper)

Method

1. Prepare all vegetables and toss together in large bowl.
2. In a separate bowl, mix all ingredients for the dressing.
3. Pour the dressing over the mixed vegetables, toss, and taste for seasoning.
4. Adjust seasoning as necessary.





RUSSIAN CABBAGE BORSCHT

(Don't worry, it's still all about the beets)

Before I started Sassafras Savouries eight and a half years ago, I was a treeplanting cook for 10 spring and summers. I had lots of vegetarians in my camps and relied heavily on the primarily vegetarian Moosewood cookbooks. This recipe was from the original Moosewood cookbook by Mollie Katzen, called Russian Cabbage Borscht. We have evolved the recipe and taken many liberties with quantities and ingredients. It is still positively one of our best sellers. Most of my soups are vegetarian, and I start with our own veggie stock (which Mike makes twice per week).

30 minutes to prepare, plus 1 ½ - 2 hours to simmer

Makes 16, 1 cup servings

Ingredients

2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
2 cups chopped onion
1 stalk of celery (thinly sliced)
2 ½ cups potatoes (thinly sliced)
3 cups beets (thinly sliced)
1 large (or 2 small) carrots (sliced)
3 cups cabbage (shredded)
1 tsp. caraway seed
6 cups vegetable stock
black pepper to taste
1 tbsp. dried dill
1½ tbsp. cider vinegar
1½ tbsp. honey
1 cup tomato paste
sour cream or yogurt



Method

1. Heat the olive oil and sauté the onions and celery until tender.
2. Add the cabbage, carrots, salt and the caraway seed. Turn the heat down and cover with a lid stirring occasionally.
3. Put the beets and potatoes in a large pot and cover with a lid; salt lightly and cook until tender (about 20 minutes).
4. Add the beets and potatoes (including the water they were cooked in) to the cabbage mixture with the 6 cups stock. Now add the dill, the cider vinegar, the honey and the pepper.
5. Cook at a low temperature, stirring frequently for 30 minutes to one hour.
6. Stir in the one cup of tomato paste. Adjust seasonings. Cook for another 30 minutes.
7. Serve with a large dollop of sour cream or yogurt and fresh chopped dill.



MESCLUN (OR MIXED GREENS) SALAD

15 minutes to prepare

Makes 6 adult sized servings, or 12 child sized servings

Ingredients

- 6 cups fresh local mesclun mix (or any combination of salad greens, e.g. romaine, escarole, endive, arugula, spinach)
- 1½ cups grated carrot
- 8-10 sliced radishes
- ½ red pepper sliced thinly
- ½ cup toasted walnuts (optional)
- 2 green onions sliced on the diagonal

Method:

1. Place clean greens in a large bowl.
2. Add ½ of the remaining ingredients. Toss gently.
3. Garnish with remaining ingredients.
4. Dress with your favourite dressing.

SHOGA DRESSING

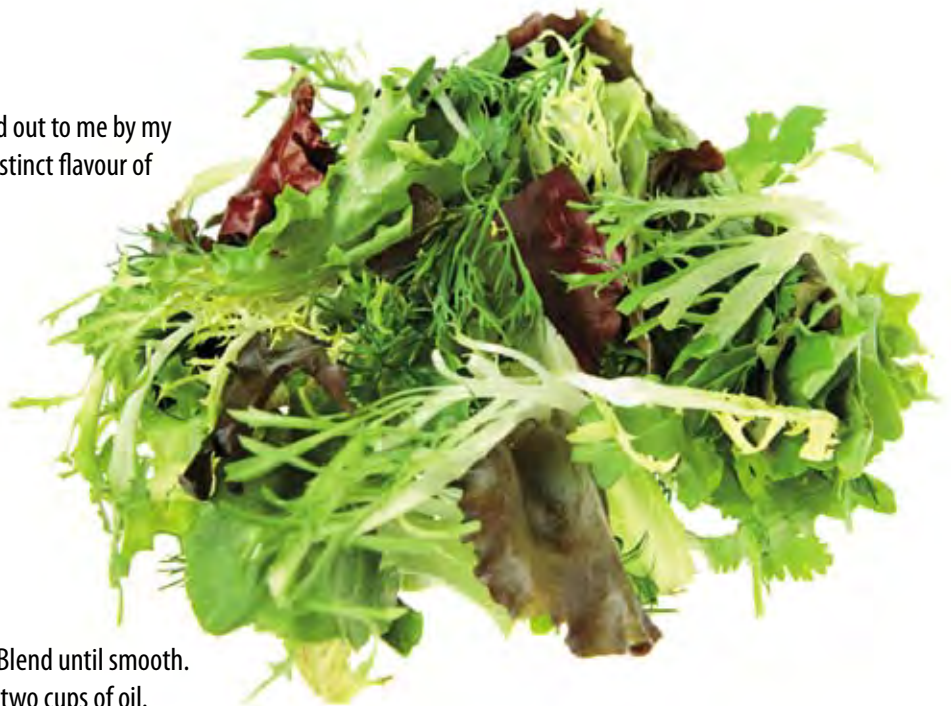
Shoga means ginger in Japanese, which was pointed out to me by my friend Kay, who is Japanese. My Shoga has a very distinct flavour of ginger and it is the house dressing in my home.

Ingredients

- ¼ cup plus 1 tsp. peeled ginger
- ¼ cup chopped white onion
- ½ cup soya sauce
- ½ cup rice vinegar
- 2 pinches sugar
- 2 cups vegetable oil

Method

1. Put all ingredients except the oil in a blender. Blend until smooth.
2. With the blender running, slowly trickle in the two cups of oil.
3. Refrigerate until ready to use.





FLUFFY VEGETABLE QUICHE

I love pastry, and this is my favourite crust. I have worked in many restaurants and bakeries, but have stuck with my mom's recipe for pastry. When I was young, she used a combination of lard and butter, but I eventually chose straight butter. I am careful to use only cold water, butter and egg. And I mix with the least amount of stirring possible.

One quiche makes 6 adult sized servings or 12 child sized servings



TIP : Pie dough can be prepared and then frozen for use up to 6 months later. If time is short, prepared frozen pie shells from your local grocer may be used. Consider trying whole wheat crusts.

PASTRY:

Pastry (makes 5 large pie shells)

30 minutes to 1 hour to prepare all crusts

Ingredients

5 ½ cups unbleached flour
1 lb. butter
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. sugar
One egg whisked with 1 tbsp. vinegar; add water to make 1 ½ cups total liquid

Method

1. Cut butter into the flour, salt, and sugar with a pastry cutter or food processor with chopping blade. Make certain the butter is evenly distributed, with tiny balls of butter remaining in the mixture.
2. Using a fork, gently and gradually mix the egg, vinegar and water mixture in.
3. Without overmixing, and using your hands, bring the mixture together into a soft dough. Divide into 5 balls.
4. Gently knead the balls to form nice soft and even balls. Let sit for 30 minutes covered with plastic wrap or a clean tea towel.
5. Roll out the balls on a floured surface to a circle large enough to fit your pie plates.



CUSTARD:

(makes 1 quiche)

10 minutes to prepare

Ingredients

1 cup skim milk
 ½ cups nonfat sour cream
 5 eggs beaten
 Salt, cayenne, thyme to taste
 Pinch nutmeg
 Pinch dried mustard

Method

1. Whisk all ingredients together and refrigerate until ready to fill quiche.

VEGGIE FILLING:

(makes 1 quiche)

15 minutes to prepare; 20 minutes to cook onions

Ingredients

1 ½ cups small diced onions sautéed in a small amount of butter - cook slowly for 20 minutes at a low temperature to prevent browning
 1 ½ cups grated Swiss cheese

Method: Putting it all together

1. Preheat your oven to 375° F
2. Start with one pie crust.
3. Sprinkle Swiss cheese on bottom of crust, add sautéed onions.
4. Fill pastry with custard and bake on the bottom rack of your oven for 30 to 40 minutes until custard is set, but still tender .

There are endless variations to this vegetarian quiche. Consider adding the following combinations of vegetables and cheese to create unique pies

- ❖ 1 cup chopped, wilted spinach, 1 cup of feta cheese and 1 chopped roasted red pepper;
- ❖ 1 cup sautéed zucchini and 1 cup of shredded cheddar;
- ❖ 1 cup of sautéed sliced mushrooms and 1 cup of shredded asiago cheese; or
- ❖ 1 cup of blanched broccoli and 1 cup of cheddar.



STUFFED ACORN SQUASH

(or whatever squash the harvest brings)

Stuffed squash is a meal in itself. For a fancy meal at my house, we add salad with a yummy dressing.

30 minutes to prepare; approximately 1 hour to bake

Makes 16 adult servings (32 child sized servings)

Ingredients

4 acorn squash, cut in half and seeded
2 onions, chopped
2 stalks of celery, chopped
½ cup walnuts, finely chopped
3 cups cooked short grain brown rice
(or other rice you have on hand)
Salt and pepper to taste
1 tsp. dried basil

6 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
1 tbsp. chopped or pureed garlic
1 red pepper, seeded and diced
½ cup sunflower seeds, finely chopped
1 cup grated cheddar
½ cup grated parmesan
1 tsp. dried thyme

Method

1. Brush halved and seeded squash with a small amount of olive oil, lightly salt and pepper. Bake at 350° F uncovered (or foiled if you are in a rush) until tender (30 to 40 minutes).
2. While squash is baking, saute onions, garlic, celery, and red pepper in remaining olive oil.
3. When vegetables are tender, add salt, pepper, thyme and basil.
4. Remove from heat and stir in finely chopped walnuts and sunflower seeds.
5. Finally, stir in cheeses.
6. Taste for seasoning, and if it is to your liking, stuff the squash halves.
7. Return to the oven and bake for a further 30 minutes, or until the filling is heated through and the cheese is melted.



TIP : Use a light hand when adding salt



BABE'S APPLE CAKE

My mom made this at home – she was really big on not peeling fruits and veggies and only using whole wheat flour. For the café I do not peel the apples, but we use a combination of unbleached and whole wheat flour.

20 minutes to prepare. 50 minutes to bake

Makes 12 - 18 servings

Ingredients

2 cups of whole wheat flour	1 cup granulated sugar
¼ cup toasted wheat germ	1 cup packed brown sugar
2 tsp. baking soda 1 tsp. cinnamon	½ cup oil
1 tsp. salt	1 cup chopped walnuts
½ tsp. nutmeg	2 eggs well beaten
4 cups diced tart cooking apples (4 apples)—leave the peel on, and wash thoroughly	1 tsp. vanilla
	¼ cup of icing sugar

Method

1. Stir together flour, wheat germ, soda, cinnamon, salt and nutmeg; set aside.
2. In a large bowl combine diced apples, sugars, oil, walnuts, eggs and vanilla.
3. Add flour mixture to apple mixture.
4. Stir gently with wooden spoon to blend well.
5. Turn into greased 13" x 9" x 2" baking pan.
6. Bake in preheated 350° F oven 50 minutes or until cake bounces back to the touch and has pulled away from the sides of the pan.
7. Cool on rack.
8. Dust with icing sugar.





SPINACH, PEAR, FETA AND PECAN SALAD

I think I have always loved fruit in salad. If the dressing is particularly good, I can make it the main course. I especially love pears in salad as they have some texture, they don't have to be perfectly ripe to have some sweetness, and we can obtain BC pears almost year round.

15 minutes to prepare

Makes 4--6 adult sized servings or 8 – 12 child sized servings

Ingredients

- 6 cups fresh, clean spinach
- 1 pear, peeled, cored, coarsely chopped, and placed in lemon juice to prevent browning
- ¼ cup grated feta cheese
- 1/3 cup toasted pecans
- ¼ red onion sliced thinly

Method

1. Place clean spinach in a large bowl.
2. Add ½ of all remaining ingredients. Toss gently.
3. Garnish with remaining ingredients.
4. Serve with a dressing of your choice. (... ours is the Sassafras House dressing)

SASSAFRAS HOUSE DRESSING

Ingredients

- ½ cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 pinches ground black pepper
- 2 cloves peeled garlic
- 1 tbsp. honey
- ¼ cup water
- 1 cup olive oil
- 1 cup vegetable oil

Method:

1. Combine all ingredients except for oils in a blender; puree. Slowly drizzle in both oils.
2. Cover and refrigerate until required.





MIXED BERRY AND PECAN MUFFINS

Luckily I grow all the local and organic raspberries we can use at Sassafras for the year. We do, however, buy frozen mixed berries for our muffins and fruit crisps. I encourage anyone who has access to local berries, to freeze them, single layer, on cookie sheets, and then transfer them to freezer bags or containers once frozen. You can then utilize local product year round.

15 minutes to prepare. 30 minutes to bake

Makes 12 large muffins or 24 child-sized muffins

Ingredients

3 cups flour	1 ½ cups milk
5 tsp. baking powder	2 eggs
1 cup sugar	½ tsp. salt
½ cup melted butter	
1 cup mixed berries	
½ cup pecans (optional)	

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Whisk together wet ingredients (milk, eggs, melted butter).
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together dry ingredients (flour, baking powder, sugar and salt).
4. Very gently fold together, leaving some dry ingredients evident.
5. Fold in berries and pecans.
6. Scoop into muffin tins lined with paper muffin cups.
7. Bake on top shelf of oven approximately 30 minutes, until set and lightly browned.





PEACH KUCHEN

My mom found this recipe in the Tassajara Bread Book around 1970. At that time she made all the wholewheat bread, yogurt and granola with organic ingredients for a family of five. At our house, local honey—she produced it—was the main sweetener, and sugar was rarely used, or allowed.

20 minutes to prepare. Approximately 45 minutes to bake.

Makes 12- 16 generous portions.

Step One – Make The Crust

Ingredients

- 2 ¼ cups flour
- ¾ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- 3 tbsp. sugar
- ½ cup butter

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 400° F.
2. Blend dry ingredients together and cut in butter with pastry cutter or food processor until just crumbly.
3. Press into greased 9"X13" pan.

Step Two – Add The Fruit:

1. Arrange 8 peeled and sliced local peaches over crust. Canned peaches are just fine, but make certain you have an even layer of drained peaches over the crust.
2. Sprinkle with 6 tbsp. of sugar mixed with 1 ½ tsp. cinnamon.
3. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes. Look for the sugar to start bubbling.
4. Remove from oven and reduce the oven temperature to 350° F.

Step Three – Finish With Custard:

Ingredients

- 2 eggs beaten
- 1 ½ cups of nonfat sour cream

Method

1. Beat together custard and pour over the kuchen (it means cake in German).
2. Return to the oven and bake for approximately 30 more minutes until custard is set.



TIP : If using canned peaches, use a BC brand with "no added sugar".



Sample Salad Bar Menu

BC schools are dishing up mouth-watering farm fresh foods – from a plate of crisp greens to a bowl of steaming soup. Here’s a sample 4-week menu plan using recipes from Chef April Ottesen. Be sure to provide the basic 6 vegetables, 3 fruits, 1 protein and 1 grain at each salad bar service. Round up the nutrition serve the salad bar on the same day you run your school milk program. Provide the salad bar service at least two days per week. Try one of April’s soups, entrées, or a mixed salad at each service.

CELEBRATING LOCAL: A 4-WEEK MENU PLAN

🕒 Tuesday

🕒 Thursday

Week 1	Hearty Beef Vegetable Chili (Page 33)	Mesclun Salad (Page 36)
Week 2	Russian Cabbage Borscht (Page 35)	Roast Potato Wedges (Page 31)
Week 3	Fluffy Vegetarian Quiche (Page 37 & 38)	Sassafras Cabbage and Apple Coleslaw (Page 34)
Week 4	Stuffed Acorn Squash (Page 39)	Spinach, Pear, Feta and Pecan Salad (Page 41)



chapter 7

SOURCING AND ORDERING LOCAL FOODS





Getting fresh local fruits and vegetables in a school salad bar – during winter months and in northern, rural and remote communities– requires a very special group of people. It requires a team that understands and buys into local. It requires a team that has a commitment to ensure the “farm” remains in Farm To School. It requires a team of people who are resourceful, creative, practical and above all else willing to roll up their sleeves to do the upfront legwork to make this happen!

We are fortunate here in BC. We have found teams in 16 different communities who have managed to source local foods for their programs. They have developed systems for ordering, delivery, and processing so that children can sample local foods all year long. They suggest that there are a few key milestones in the path to get local on the salad bar:

- ❖ Know what local foods are available and when they are available.
- ❖ Know which farmers are ready and willing to supply these foods.
- ❖ Gather recipes and plan menus around the foods that are available.
- ❖ Understand the types of local foods, and the approximate quantities of such foods that may needed to fill the salad bar each week.
- ❖ Develop an agreement with one or more farmers.
- ❖ Order the foods.
- ❖ Meet regularly with the farmer to review the process.

Local Food Maps

A local food map is an excellent resource for locating farmers and sourcing local foods. The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands has Farm Fresh maps showing the locations of some farms offering local fare. <http://www.al.gov.bc.ca/farmdirect/index.html>. As well a number of communities have created their own local food directories. Contact your community nutritionist at your local health unit for assistance.

CREATE YOUR OWN LOCAL FOOD MAP!

One of the ways to move local food forward is to create a local food map. Engage your F2S team in processes to identify local seasonal food resources. Identify what food is available, where, and when. Map the data onto a colourful brochure. Promote local farmers, growers and distribution networks where you can get local food. Bring the community into the development of the map and hold an event to celebrate its release.



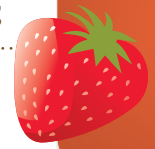
Understanding Quantities

Salad Bars in Schools – A Fresh Approach to Lunch helped guide the development of Farm To School programs in Ontario. They have provided the following outline of food quantities necessary to serve 120 students. This is only a template to help the coordinator understand the volume of food necessary. Please remember the produce, protein, dairy and grain products should reflect the desires of the school and community and be as local as possible.

PRODUCE ON HAND FOR EVERY SALAD BAR LUNCH

🕒 Greens Choose 1	🕒 amount per case	🕒 number of cases
Lettuce		
Romaine/Iceberg	24 count	0.5 case
Spring Mix	3 lbs	0.5 case
🕒 Vegetables Choose 5	🕒 amount per case	🕒 number of cases
Mini Carrots	10 – 2 lb bags	1 case
Cherry Tomatoes	12 pints	1 case
Broccoli	# varies	0.5 case
Cauliflower	# varies	0.5 case
Celery	24 count	0.5 case
Mushrooms	12 packages	0.5 case
Potatoes	10 lb bags	2 bags
English Cucumbers	14 count	2 cases
Green Peppers	40 count	0.5 case
Red Peppers	40 count	0.5 case
Snow Peas	3 lbs	0.5 case
Sugar Snaps	3 lbs	0.5 case

** Counts vary depending on the size of the fruit/vegetable*



PRODUCE ON HAND FOR EVERY SALAD BAR LUNCH

🕒 Fruits Choose 3

🕒 amount per case

🕒 number of cases

Apples	100 count	1 case
Pears	80 count	1 case
Cantaloupe	18 count	0.5 case
Honeydew Melon	8 count	1 case
Watermelon	1 count	3 units
Strawberries		
Blueberries		
Raspberries		
Huckleberries		
Soapberries (fresh, frozen or dried)		
Peaches		
Plums (fresh, dried, frozen or canned)		

** Counts vary depending on the size of the fruit/vegetable*



MEATS / ALTERNATIVES AND GRAINS ON HAND FOR EVERY SALAD BAR LUNCH

🔄 Grains Choose 1	🔄 no. / size of package	🔄 amount per package
Whole Wheat Macaroni	2 – 2.27 kg bags	
Taco Shells	8 – 468 gram boxes	36 shells / box
Brown Rice	4 – 900 gram boxes	0.5 cases
Orzo Pasta	2 – 450 gram bags	1 case
Whole Grain Wraps	24 packages	10 per package 6"
Whole Grain Buns	10 packages	24 per package
Whole Wheat Pita	20 packages	6 per package
Pumpernickel Bread	6 loaves	
High-fibre Melba Toast	4 – 350 gram boxes	
Whole Wheat Bagels	10 packages	6 per package
Whole Wheat Rotini	1 – 2.27 kg bag	
7 Grain Bread	12 loaves	
Baked Bannock		

MEATS / ALTERNATIVES AND GRAINS ON HAND FOR EVERY SALAD BAR LUNCH

Meats / Alternatives Choose 1 **no. / size of package** **amount per package**

Cheese		
Halal Cheddar	10 – 600 gram blocks	
Monteray Jack	4 – 600 gram blocks	
Feta	1 – 5 lb tub	
Milk	1 or 2%	2 litres
Salmon, canned	24 – 230 gram tins	
Tuna, canned	48 – 120 gram tins	
Tofu	10 – 350 gram packages, extra firm	
Textured Vegetable Protein	10 – 454 gram packages, frozen	
Eggs	24 dozen	
Beans		
Pinto Beans	6 – 19 oz. tins	
Kidney Beans	6 – 19 oz. tins	
Black Beans	6 – 19 oz. tins	
Chickpeas	6 – 19 oz. tins	
Lentils	6 – 19 oz. tins	
White Beans	6 – 19 oz. tins	



HOW MANY MEALS SHOULD OUR SCHOOL PLAN TO SERVE?

Rule of thumb:

Students are hungry and some of them will want to come back for seconds and thirds. Calculate your number of meals served at every F2S day by taking the estimated number of students who will utilize the salad bar service and multiply that number by one quarter or 1.25. E.g. 120 students X 1.25= 150 meals per F2S day.

HOW MANY VOLUNTEERS DO WE NEED ON SALAD BAR DAYS?

Rule of Thumb:

Two volunteers for the first fifty meals and one additional volunteer for every additional group of fifty meals.



SOURCING FOOD AT THE LOCAL FARMERS MARKET

Photos Courtesy of Bill Cohen, Director of Curriculum Development, Nk'm'ap' q's is'n' m'a'm'a'ya'tn k'sq'lxwtet Language and Cultural Immersion Elementary School, Okanagan Indian Band, Vernon, BC.





Establishing Agreements Between Schools and Farmers

An agreement between school and farm is a promise on the part of the farmer to produce (and in some cases deliver) a specified type, quantity, and quality of food for school on specified dates for a specified length of time. For the school it is an agreement to purchase the specified type, quality, and quantity of foods at the specified times at an agreed upon price. For some Farm To School relationships a handshake is all they require to seal the deal. In other instances, the school and/or the farm seek something more formal and on paper.

Several face-to-face meetings between the farmer and school coordinator may be necessary before an agreement can be signed. Coordinators may want to visit the farm or cooperative site to inspect the fields and washing and cooling facilities.

Farmers wanting to establish and maintain agreements with schools should be particularly sensitive to the need to deliver their products in a timely manner that is consistent with food preparation schedules. Their products also need to be stored in a manner that retains product freshness until the contracted delivery time. Farmers may also need to adjust their production schedules and the manner in which they process and package their products to meet the needs of the school.

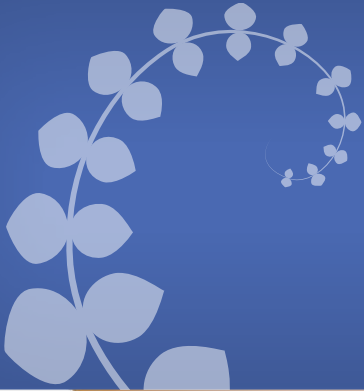
These are all topics that should be discussed among the core team, including the coordinator and farmers. The goal is to make things relatively easy for everyone.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CREATING AGREEMENTS

Once farmers have an initial agreement to supply food to schools, the school and the farm should draw up finalized agreements that include the following components:

- ❖ Total estimated volume of each item to be delivered.
- ❖ Time an item will be ripe, when it will be delivered and acceptable seasonal substitutes.
- ❖ Amount and price of standing order items.
- ❖ Delivery schedule: time of day, frequency, and location.
- ❖ Packing requirements: standard box, grade, loose pack, bulk, etc.
- ❖ Postharvest handling practices; is the product pre-cooled?
- ❖ Processes for meeting health and safety standards.
- ❖ Cost per unit, payment terms, payment process.

For more ideas about working with farmers download *Bringing Local Food to Local Institutions – A Resource Guide for Farm-to-School and Farm-to-Institution Programs* <http://www.attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/PDF/farmtoschool.pdf>.



chapter 8

PROMOTING YOUR PROGRAM



When you are introducing anything new, whether it is to your students, families, farmers, or your community, there are bound to be many questions. Change can be greeted with enthusiasm, indifference or resistance, so it is best to be prepared! People will want to know:

- ❖ What is the F2S program?
- ❖ Why are we changing the way we currently feed students?
- ❖ What is the benefit of the program?
- ❖ Why the focus on local?
- ❖ How will the program work in our school?
- ❖ How are farms involved?
- ❖ What foods will be served?
- ❖ How much will the program cost?
- ❖ Who will pay for this new program?

The answers to all of these questions can be found right here in this guide! A mini PowerPoint® is also available on the Farm To School website:
<http://www.phabc.org/modules.php?name=Farmentoschool&pa=showpage&pid=43>

Know Your Purpose, Audience and Messages

The primary purpose of a promotional campaign is to increase participation in and/or support of the program. There are three key audiences for a promotion campaign within the school community: students, staff, and parents. A community-wide campaign would also target farmers, community nutritionists, and other food security enthusiasts. The campaign can be tailored in approach, process, and activities to garner differing types of support for different audiences.

Get in touch with coordinators at other schools to see what audiences they have worked with, and what approach, process and tools worked for them. Sharing lessons is a great way to build and improve your program. Questions for coordinators:

- ❖ Which audiences were they focusing their efforts on?
- ❖ What methods did they find worked well and what didn't?
- ❖ What key messaging did they focus on?
- ❖ Have they created tools that they are willing to share?
- ❖ What could you work on together?

The forum on the Farm To School website is a great place to post your questions to others: <http://www.phabc.org/ftsblog/>

BC FARM TO SCHOOL MESSAGES

- ❖ Dig In!
- ❖ Make the healthy choice the easy choice.
- ❖ Buy local foods.
- ❖ Buy foods in season.
- ❖ Eat lots of vegetables and fruits - 5- 10 servings - every day.
- ❖ Choose wholesome fresh food over packaged and processed food.
- ❖ Choose water – Water is GREAT beverage choice!
- ❖ Know what is in your food and beverages.
- ❖ Take time to cook, eat and eat with others.
- ❖ Be food safe.
- ❖ Eat more from our own back yards.
- ❖ Taste a tomato today.
- ❖ Become a loco-vore.
- ❖ Eat fresh – grow smart.



Ways to Engage Students, Parents and Others:

Jazz up the salad bar

- ❖ **Vary the selection** on the salad bar and use themes to entice the kids to keep coming back. (Try a Mexican Madness Monday or a Go Greek Week).
- ❖ **Serve a hot soup or stew** or entrée with each salad bar service (try beet borscht, hearty vegetable, or black bean).
- ❖ **Serve a mixed salad** during each salad bar service (try coleslaw, caesar, apple waldorf, or thai noodle salad).
- ❖ **Mix up the colours, textures and shapes!** Remember we eat with our eyes first. Imagine a spread of fresh leafy greens, cherry tomatoes, roasted asparagus spears, julienned yellow, green and red peppers, sliced cucumbers, chopped green onions, grated cheddar cheese, toasted garlic bread, and vegetarian chili.
- ❖ **Keep the salad bar containers full.** Children should feel comfortable taking adequate portions.
- ❖ **Clean up** spills and messes quickly.
- ❖ **Feature a local food.** Add colourful signage near the food. Describe the food - the farmer who produced it, the distance it traveled to get to the salad bar, and the nutritional content.

Jazz up the eating area

- ❖ **If a common eating area** can be created – do so!
- ❖ **If it can be located in the centre** of the school- even better!
- ❖ **Ensure the dining area is bright, colourful, comfortable and inviting.** Large windows, cheerful paint, posters, chairs and tables can draw a crowd.
- ❖ **Try tablecloths, flowers, and placemats.**
- ❖ **Conduct a Student Survey**
 - When getting your program going, try using a survey to find out what interests students and parents and what would make them more interested in the program. Dawn Deydey of the Fernie Community EcoGarden has provided a survey she used in developing Fernie Academy's program. Take a look at it and think about how you might use a survey in your program. http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=YIBZ7u5v_2bV4s1JKDwziX4g_3d_3d

❖ Create Place Mats

- Engage elementary school students in creating colourful F2S placemats. Ask them to produce a drawing that illustrates the program, or their experience with the program, or the benefit of planting, buying and eating local, healthy, and/or traditional foods. Laminate the placemats and use them during lunch service. Post them in the cafeteria and throughout the school.

❖ Create Signs

- Elementary and high school students are attracted to different types of signs. Experience has shown that traditional printed, glossy signs work better for elementary students, than for high school students. Engage high school students in creating their own signs based on what they like and think will work well. Help them understand the goals of the program, but let them decide what it is that attracts them and their friends to the salad bar. This also helps students identify with the program and creates a sense of ownership.

❖ Use Video Shorts

Andrea Gunner of Heartland Quality Foods, a food co-op providing foods to South Kamloops Secondary, was kind enough to provide a list of some fantastic video shorts that can be used to engage both students and parents! These videos could be a great way to get people interested in the program at the beginning. All are available for free at the following sites.

- Ensuring the Future of Food, 4 min 20 sec www.youtube.com/watch?v=ok3ykR2GHcA A Japanese video providing a comprehensive overview of worldwide food issues, how things became a mess, the effects it is having on everything, and how we can make things better.
- Every Lawn a Garden, 2 min 50 sec www.youtube.com/watch?v=LEUv2-zwXQY A great BC-based video and movement to connect people back to food gardening and the land that we need to support us.
- The Meatrix I II and 2.5 www.themeatrix.com/inside/ An award-winning series of videos based on the Matrix that also provides amazing resources on the effects of large scale agriculture and the loss of healthy, traditional farming.

**CHECKLIST****MORE IDEAS!**

- ☐ Present the program at a PAC meeting and make a request for funds, or parent volunteers.
- ☐ Have samples of food available at parent teacher interviews and a brochure outlining the program and positive influence it has on students.
- ☐ Create a recipe book. Engage your local farmer to make it local. Engage your students and parents too.
- ☐ Call local radio, television and newspapers so that there are articles available on an ongoing basis. The program is seen as a 'good news' story in media as it addresses children's health and the environment — two hot topics.
- ☐ Profile farmers, the foods they produce, and where to get local foods.
- ☐ Promote the program through school print media (put F2S on the school website and in school newsletters. Create F2S flyers, posters, menus, etc.).
- ☐ Host a sample Farm To School Salad Bar day or evening with parents, teachers, local politicians, school trustees, local media, and more.
- ☐ Invite parents to the educational opportunities that you develop (such as farm tours, gardening workshops, composting lessons etc...)
- ☐ Create and distribute information cards with recipes, and facts on the benefits of eating nutritious, fresh, local, and/or traditional, foods. Parents are especially interested in recipes.
- ☐ Invite your farmer or community nutritionist to discuss nutrition, food or farming to students and their families. Engage your local arts community about how you could promote the program.



chapter 9 FUNDING YOUR PROGRAM



Initial Start Up Funds

Farm To School Salad Bar programs can be launched for as little as \$2,500 (the cost of a table-top salad bar unit) or for as much as \$45,000 (the cost of a state of the art kitchen serving 500 students). Much depends on what is already available at the school and farm in terms of human and material resources.

Initial start-up funds can be raised in a variety of ways including:

- ❖ Grants: Money may be received from government organizations, foundations, or charitable organizations.
- ❖ Applications are often required and can require 6 months for processing.
- ❖ Monetary Donations: Donations can come from a number of sources — parents, community businesses, local service groups such as Rotary, Kiwanis, faith organizations, local unions, professional associations, etc. Often requires a letter writing campaign. Success requires a good letter, solid mailing list, cost of stamps and patience. Donations can lead to regular financial support from an organization in your community.
- ❖ Fundraising Events: Events can be a great way to increase awareness around F2S while fundraising for the project. Figure out what might work best by talking to other schools that have been involved in the program, connecting with your PAC about their fundraising experiences, and talk directly to the people you are trying to attract to the event.
- ❖ In-Kind Donations: Often businesses are willing to give product, supplies or equipment rather than cash. Target businesses in your community with items you may need for start-up or for ongoing operation.

For most BC F2S programs the purchase of kitchen equipment, and services to modify kitchen space were the two largest expenses. These one-time expenses needed to be paid up front. In addition most schools required start up funds to set up coordination, promotional, educational, and evaluation systems. Some schools were able to get the program to a point of self-financing in the first year of operation. Others are dependent on continued fundraising efforts.

Rule of Thumb:

A program that is paying a farmer a fair market price for his foods, and has 150 participants per salad bar service who are each paying \$3.00 per meal will generate about \$100.00 revenue per salad bar service. This money can be used to pay for children who cannot afford to pay, or additional human and material resources to run the program.



CHECKLIST

FUN FUNDRAISING IDEAS!

- ☐ Create and sell Farm To School calendars, recipe books, aprons, seed packages, or re-useable grocery bags.
- ☐ Grow your own food in a school garden and serve it in the salad bar.
- ☐ Invite other schools to visit your salad bar.
- ☐ Organize a Halloween trip to a pumpkin farm.
- ☐ Host a Christmas sleigh ride on a local farm.
- ☐ Organize a meet the Farm To School team barbeque.
- ☐ Host a local foods lunch with local celebrities.
- ☐ Try a food talent show.
- ☐ Host a spring fair. Sell bedding plants, poinsettias, bulbs, seeds etc.
- ☐ Organize a science fair focused on educating about local, nutritious food.
- ☐ Organize a community sponsorship drive (fundraising letter, funds thermometer in school entrance).
- ☐ Host a community harvest festival.
- ☐ Invite the community to a local foods potluck supper and dance.

Daily Financing of the Program

Parental contributions are essential to sustaining the program. Contributions begin with having parents that are able to pay contribute a reasonable amount for the lunch their children will receive at school.

A parental contribution system should be set up before the program begins. Ideally, this should be an 'advance payment' system. This will limit the need to handle money and food at the same time and lessens the chance of stigmatizing children who cannot afford to pay. Parental contributions, if managed properly, will take care of a substantial part of the on-going cost of your program.

Each school is responsible for setting an appropriate charge for the Salad Bar Lunch, taking into consideration their school population, financial situation, etc. The cost of food and supplies for each meal is approximately \$2.50. Most schools charge each student \$3.00/meal. Additional funds generated go towards the program. Rarely does the cost go higher than this.

In some schools, a sliding scale is used. This helps account for the difference in amount of food eaten by an 8-year old versus a 15-year old. Parents pay what they think is fair between a low and high amount. This has worked well in schools and should be supported with good information for parents about what their children are receiving.

At smaller schools, breaking even might be a greater challenge given that fewer students will be paying into the system. Finding alternative funding becomes more important in these situations.

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

For more about the fundraising process, potential partners and great ideas check out Healthy Fundraising for Schools <http://www.healthyeatingatschool.ca/>.

For information on current available sources of funding check out the Farm To School website <http://www.phabc.org/modules.php?name=Farmtoschool&pa=viewdoc&cid=12>

GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING PARENTAL CONTRIBUTIONS:

- ❖ Have a solid system to manage collections – payment envelopes with monthly or weekly options indicating family name and number of students.
- ❖ Establish a method of communicating regularly with parents about the program, including reminders to ‘get payments in’.
- ❖ Keep payments confidential.
- ❖ Consider establishing family discounts.
- ❖ Have a system to handle cash for emergency lunches – those who have not signed up but want to eat at the Salad Bar because it looks terrific or parents did not have time to make a lunch.

Ensuring all Students Have Equal Access

All BC F2S programs are guided by the principal that F2S can work for any child, in any school, and in any community. Where ever the program is implemented, local champions work to ensure all children have access regardless of their ability to pay. And whatever policy or process is put into place, local leads take care that they do not stigmatize the child in any way.

Some ways to ensure equitable access:

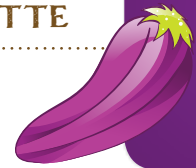
- ❖ Develop and adopt a school food and nutrition policy. It can be as basic as “no child shall go hungry while at school” to as broad as policy “all children shall have equitable, dignified access to local, healthy, safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate foods and food programs while on school premises.”
- ❖ Explore and integrate existing meal and snack programs and resources within the school.
- ❖ Explore and integrate existing meal and snack programs for children within and the broader community. (In First Nations communities it is a common practice that the band pays for the children’s meal and snack programs while in school).
- ❖ Contact other Farm To School programs or school meal programs to discuss methods to overcome these challenges.
- ❖ Work with your Parent Advisory Council to explore ways to fundraise to ensure children can participate.



chapter 10

FARM TO SCHOOL ETIQUETTE





Salad Bar Savvy

A fun and well run salad bar requires training. Equipped with the right knowledge and skills children can maneuver themselves through the garden of greens with ease. Whether the salad bar is to operate in a primary, middle, or secondary school, it is strongly recommended that salad bar etiquette is developed and communicated with the students before the official salad bar opening date. Make “salad bar savvy” the topic at an F2S assembly, in an F2S article in school newsletters, or on other salad bar promotional materials. Schools have discovered that numerous issues can be avoided if children are given a practice run through the salad bar a couple of times in advance of the official launch date.

Salad Bar Savvy tips:

- ❖ Pick up food with the tongs or spoons provided.
- ❖ Eat from your plate only after you have finished serving yourself and are sitting at your table.
- ❖ Take only what you think you can eat as you cannot return the uneaten items to the salad bar. These uneaten items will be wasted if not eaten.
- ❖ The sneeze guard is there to protect the food. Therefore, only your arm and hand should go under the sneeze guard and only when you are serving yourself.
- ❖ Each item in the salad bar will have its own serving spoon. Please make sure it is only used in the food that it was originally meant to serve.
- ❖ And most importantly, there are people behind you that would also like to have a sampling of all the items offered so take only what you can eat and try many items, not just your favourite!



SALAD BAR SAVVY
Photo courtesy of Oliver Elementary School, Oliver, BC.

Offer vs. Serve

One of the goals of the program is to encourage children to increase their consumption of fruit and vegetables. Another is encourage children to consume a greater variety of foods. A third is to enhance student knowledge about healthy eating and their skills in making healthy food choices. In order to accomplish these goals, it is imperative that students serve themselves. It may seem simpler and faster to serve them, but the students will miss out on a very important learning opportunity — to understand the types of foods and the portions they need for health. Encourage all volunteers to use the ‘offer vs. serve’ method. This just means that rather than serving the student, you offer them choices. Older students can play an important role in helping younger students serve themselves.

Encourage Students to Try Something New

It may take a number of times (statistics say approximately 10 to 20 times) before a student will try something new, but familiarity helps in this process. Tell them about the options on the salad bar, answer their questions if they are unfamiliar with what is being offered. Let them know it is fine to take a small sample and okay if they do not like it on the first try. Encourage them to give it another try some other time as likes and dislikes change. It can be challenging getting younger kids to try new things it's important for staff or volunteers to remember that it's OK to offer foods to children but not to force them to take something they don't want. Through exposure to the food over time and enjoying their lunch with friends children will be more likely to try new things when they are ready.



Ellyn Satter, a renowned child nutrition expert, has developed a division of responsibilities during meal times that helps adults to better understand their role and a child's role in food selection. Ellen suggests there are 4 decisions to be made about meals. Children are to make two of the decisions, while adults make the other two.

- ❖ The parent or adult decides what will be served.
- ❖ The parent or adult decides when and where the food will be offered.
- ❖ The child/student decides what they will eat
- ❖ The child/student decides if and how much they will eat.

In her sessions with countless parents and children, Ellyn has discovered clarity and consistency with the division of responsibilities works!

School staff and volunteers can assist children in their decision making by noting what is on the child's plate and suggesting that they take foods from each of the four food groups (vegetables/fruit, grains, milk and alternatives and meat and alternatives). Signs at the salad bar to make clear what is available, what food group it falls into, and why that food group is important to health, help students with their decision-making. Connect the "offer vs serve" philosophy to educational efforts in the classroom and in the field related to the program.

Encourage Students to Take an Appropriate Portion Size That is Right for Them

It is important that students understand appropriate serving sizes, otherwise there is a tendency to heap on favourites, and/or skimp on the less desirable foods. This can lead to inequitable distribution of food for other students, and/or excess food waste. Some schools have had success in teaching portion sizes by placing a sample plate of food at the beginning or end of the tray line. Others have found that it is helpful to post Canada's Food Guide or a poster of serving sizes in the lunch room. Encourage students to think about portions to avoid creating waste, let them know they can come back for more. Remind them that what they don't eat will go into the garbage

Courtesy Health Canada

The BC Farm To School Salad Bar Guide **64**

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chapter 11

RUNNING A GREEN(ER) PROGRAM



Running a greener program means being more thoughtful about the impact of the program on the environment. Green thinking can be extended to all aspect of the program – from the purchase of food and food equipment to the disposal of waste.

Buying foods from local farmers who apply practices that protect the environment is a great example of green thinking. Buying local reduces the distance food travels from field to plate or “food miles”. When we buy local we reduce our dependency on fossil fuels – a nonrenewable energy source. We also reduce CO₂ emissions - the result of transporting of foods longer distances. Furthermore, buying local reduces the food waste associated with the packaging and processing of food to enable it to travel long distances.

Environmentally Friendly Equipment Purchasing Decisions

Think green when purchasing equipment as equipment sets the stage for long lasting positive impact on the environment. A few equipment tips:

- ❖ Ensure that all appliances are energy efficient.
- ❖ Purchase an industrial dishwasher, and use re-useable dishes and cutlery.
- ❖ When an industrial dishwasher is not a feasible option (space, price, manpower limitations), purchase biodegradable plates and cutlery.
- ❖ Consider building a root cellar – this avoids electricity consumption for cold storage altogether!
- ❖ Before buying any other form of cold storage, investigate your options.
 - Are there root cellars in your community already?
 - Could you get a share in an existing root cellar?
 - Would your farmer be interested in a root cellar?
 - What are the long-term financial implications of a root cellar vs. electricity-based cold storage (e.g., purchase price, maintenance, electricity consumption, etc.)?
 - When you analyze life-cycle costs, you get a much better understanding of the true financial impact of your purchase.



Day-to-Day Green Decisions

Everyone can make decisions throughout the day that can help reduce our negative impact on the environment. Every effort, large or small, adds up day after day to make a big difference on how we influence our surroundings and the students you spend time with everyday.

Go Green:

- ❖ Properly ripen fruits and vegetables to ensure you get the most out of your produce.
- ❖ Do not to use paper plates, plastic cutlery, or any other disposable items. One time use items are huge contributors to waste and some of the hardest things to break down.
- ❖ Use reusable, sealable containers to store leftovers rather than saran wrap or tin foil.
- ❖ Use environmentally friendly cleaning products. Eco-friendly products tend to have fewer chemicals and are less harmful to the environment.
- ❖ Be aware of how much your students eat and how much is thrown into the waste bin. Constantly try to get to that point where your students are happily fed and you have no food to dispose of after. Look at this as a fun challenge.
- ❖ Compost whatever waste you do have!

Closing the Loop — Composting and Waste Recovery

Cradle-to-cradle is a simple concept and a key sustainability goal around waste. It simply means that instead of producing, using, and then disposing of products, we produce and use products that can be reentered back into the system and used again. There is no easier product for this than food.

Food, especially local organic, is a natural green candidate. Throughout the day, there will inevitably be several pounds of food waste produced by your school and the program. Instead of throwing food away, set up a compost system in your school and turn it back into nutrient-rich soil. Composting is a great way to start adding layers to your program. Use it as a way to help students understand the importance of reducing waste to a sustainable lifestyle. Connect composting to etiquette and use the soil produced to plant food for your program. This is a great way to demonstrate how food systems can easily be managed sustainably. Go further by using that nutrient-rich soil as a base for a school garden and plant the seeds to produce the foods you are already using. Connect your cradle-to-cradle food system to education and a local growing program to help educate your students and teach them skills to create and manage their own system at home. Before setting up a composting system, check with your school, school board and health protection/environmental health branch to find out if there are any regulations around composting at your school.



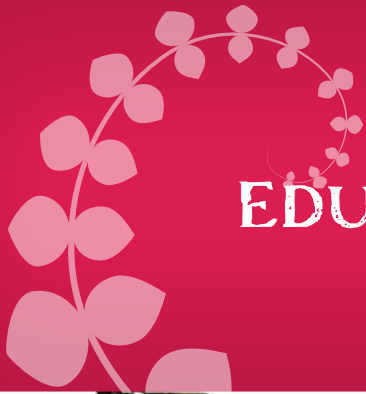
RAISING A BED

Photo Courtesy of Fernie Academy, Fernie BC



BACK TO THE EARTH - STUDENTS COMPOST THEIR GREENS

Photo courtesy of Oliver Elementary School, Oliver, BC.



chapter 12

EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM AND IN THE FIELD



Learning in the Classroom

Experiences from existing programs prove that innovative nutrition education, experiential education, and marketing programs for the salad bar are key to generating enthusiasm about the Farm To School program and maintaining strong participation in the cafeteria meal program. Almost all Farm To School programs conduct some form of in-class education, with a large majority identifying nutrition and health as the focus; other prominent themes include agricultural education, farmer in the classroom presentations, or cooking demonstrations.

Dozens of government and nongovernment agencies and organizations offer lesson plans for all ages. Start with some of these and see how well your students pick up on things. Get a sense of what works for your students and what does not.

- ❖ **Action Schools! BC** - A best practices model designed to assist schools in creating individualized action plans to promote healthy living. All registered schools are eligible to receive training workshops, resources and support materials. The Classroom Healthy Eating Action Resource provides creative activities that aim to enhance students' knowledge of and consumption of vegetables and fruit. Physical Activity resources available for Grades K-9; Healthy Eating resources available for Grades K-7. www.actionschoolsbc.ca
- ❖ **Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation BC** offers local recipes, educational activities, and information on BC agriculture. To support your F2S program, check out their publications at www.aitc.ca/bc/bcs_agriculture.
- ❖ **Agriculture in the Classroom US** is a grassroots program coordinated by the United States Department of Agriculture. Its goal is to help students gain a greater awareness of the role of agriculture in the economy and society, so that they may become citizens who support wise agricultural policies. Peruse the website for lesson plans and resources for students. <http://www.agclassroom.org>
- ❖ **BC Dairy Foundation.** Comprehensive, ready-to-teach lessons based on Canada's Food Guide including grade appropriate, sequential programs designed to fit in the classroom and the curriculum can be found on this site. There are resources available for Grades K-8. www.bcdf.ca
- ❖ **Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Resources** - Healthy living curriculum based resources that complement the Health and Career Education curriculum and Planning 10 can be found on the BC Ministry of Education website. There are resources available for grades K-12. http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/active_living/physical_activity_learning.htm
- ❖ **Heart and Stroke Foundation** - Grade appropriate lesson plans for healthy living can be found on the Heart and Stroke Foundation website. There are resources available for grades K-8. www.heartandstroke.bc.ca
- ❖ **EcoSource** — An innovative environmental organization bringing green living to communities (and schools). EcoSource specializes in fun, hands-on programs that focus on how each person can change their daily habits to become better environmental citizens www.ecosource.ca
- ❖ **LessonPlanet** – A search engine for teachers. Provides links to thousands of lesson plans, many of which focus on foods, nutrition, and/or farming. <http://www.lessonplanet.com/>
- ❖ **Farm Animal Teaching Ideas** – This is a subsection of the Alphabet Soup website. Alphabet Soup contains thematic units, holiday units, games and activities for kids; teacher and parent resources; and crafts, humor and recipes for all! Be sure to check out the Kindergarten Kafe, recipes dictated by 5-year-olds! Includes plenty of free printables! <http://www.alphabet-soup.net/farm/farmteach.html>
- ❖ **The Food Project** – The mission of the Food Project is to grow a thoughtful and productive community of youth and adults from diverse backgrounds who work together to build a sustainable food system. A number of nutrition, food, and farming resources for students may be downloaded or purchased from this website. <http://www.thefoodproject.org/buy/internal1.asp?ID=144>
- ❖ **Evergreen** – Is a not-for-profit organization that aims to make cities more livable, by deepening the connection between people and nature. Explore 'teachers corner' on the Evergreen site <http://www.evergreen.ca/eng/lg/lg-teach.html>



Learning on the Farm

Educational activities and programs on farms are an important part of reconnecting children and youth with their food and the land, as well as building future generations of citizens that care about farms and farming. Farm visits provide a perfect opportunity for students to use all of their senses to learn: the more they can touch, smell, and taste the things they are learning about, the more deeply they will understand and remember what they learn.

Organizing a Farm Tour

Teachers should visit the farmer before the field trip to find out what the students will be learning. Try to do some activities in the classroom to help prepare them for their time at the farm. Or after the farm visit, build on what the students learned in the classroom.

Possible farm tour activities:

Even the simplest aspects of farm work are worthwhile for students to experience. While harvesting produce or helping to milk cows or goats are time-honoured activities, weeding, turning compost, digging, gleanings, and other tasks can be equally as engaging. Engaging students in these activities will help create a generation of people that understand food production and its importance to our health and survival, feel connected to the land, and want to be part of the process. Farmers can do their part by showing the students how a farm works and talking to them about why a local farmer and his or her farm is so important to the health and happiness of the student, their friends and family, as well as the rest of the community.

The Items A Farmer Should Have on Hand:

- ❑ **A Plan** — What activities do you plan to do? What age group(s) would you like to work with? Make a rain plan – have strategies for handling surprise weather changes and a cancellation policy due to weather. The more specific your plans are for your farm field trips the smoother they will run.
- ❑ **Personnel** — How many groups do you expect to serve during a season? Are you and your family capable of providing the time for each group?
- ❑ **Parking** — To cater to school groups you need to make sure there is a site in which school buses have space to turn around, load and unload. What would be the flow of traffic? How much space do you have available for car parking?
- ❑ **Facilities** — At a minimum you will need a bathroom available. Many farms rent port-a-potties. If students will be petting farm animals or eating food, sites for hand washing should also be made easily accessible.
- ❑ **Insurance** — Find out what activities you are covered for and plan accordingly. Students may be covered through their schools. You may want to ask teachers to provide a letter from the school or school board saying the schools liability insurance covers students during field trips.
- ❑ **Water** — Make sure there is a source of drinking water available for students to refill their water bottles.

The Items A Student Should Have on Hand:

- ❖ A good sun hat.
- ❖ Sturdy shoes (no open toes).
- ❖ A water bottle.
- ❖ A wind parka or rain gear (if rain is likely).
- ❖ A T-shirt.
- ❖ Long pants, with shorts as an option.
- ❖ Notebooks, art paper, pens.
- ❖ Recyclable (reusable) eating utensils and plates.
- ❖ A bag lunch (minimal waste please).

FARM TOUR RESOURCES

Guide to Farm Field Trips for Farmers and Teachers is available online at

<http://www.growing-minds.org/FARM%20FIELD%20TRIp%20guide.pdf>.

A Farmer's Guide to Hosting Farm Visits for Children

[http://www.phabc.org/modules.php?name=Farm to school&pa=showpage&pid=2&NSNST_Flood=f93ad10c1ee534bdff04448240547c4b](http://www.phabc.org/modules.php?name=Farm%20to%20school&pa=showpage&pid=2&NSNST_Flood=f93ad10c1ee534bdff04448240547c4b)

Learning in Gardens

Schoolyards provide fertile ground for learning. Establishing a garden, a greenhouse, fruit trees, honeybees or even edible flowers on school grounds adds depth and richness to a child's F2S experience. Kids get a lot of satisfaction out of planting, taking care of, and then eating their own food. This satisfaction is important as it connects them to the experience of farming and eating local food. The foods from the garden also help the school eat local year round. Gardens give that extra flavour and activity kick to the program. They move excitement about the program up a notch!

School Year Gardens: A Toolkit for High Schools to Grow Food from September to June is an excellent local resource that can help your school become its own local food producer. It even has lessons plans to go along with it. Find it on the Farm To School website at: <http://www.phabc.org/modules.php?name=Farmtoschool&pa=showpage&pid=65>.

Evergreen has funding to support greening and food garden projects on school grounds at <http://www.evergreen.ca/en/lg/lg-funding.html>.



ESTABLISHING AN EDIBLE SCHOOLYARD

Photo courtesy of Outma School, Penticton Indian Band, Penticton, BC



BUILDING A ROOFTOP GREENHOUSE

Photo courtesy of North Peace Secondary School, Ft. St. John, BC



chapter 13

BUILDING COMMUNITY AROUND FOOD



In communities across British Columbia and beyond our borders concerned citizens are coming together to change the environment and the policies that impact what, when, where, why, how and even “if” we eat. The result? Community food action groups and food policy councils have formed. Programs having similar aims as Farm To School - community shared agriculture, community gardens, rooftop gardens, food cooperatives, farmers markets, community kitchens, community restaurants, and community food box programs – dot BC’s landscape. Like Farm To School, these programs work to address the health of British Columbians and their understanding of, appreciation of, and connection to local food. The result? For many people in many communities, access to the high quality nutritious, safe and culturally appropriate foods is becoming easier.

We want to see more children, more farms, more communities enjoy the benefits of Farm To School. We hope this guide has provided enough information and inspiration to get started. We invite you to join British Columbia’s Farm To School Network as we build community around food. Visit our website to: read the latest Farm To School news, subscribe to our newsletter, download resources, and/or post questions and answers to others in the Farm To School forum.

WWW.PHABC.ORG/FARMTOSCHOOL



A Fresh Crunch in School Lunch:

The BC Farm To School Salad Bar Guide

www.phabc.org/farmtoschool



An initiative of these BC Healthy Living Alliance members



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