farm to Cafeteria Canada

# An Evaluation Framework

## for Farm to School in Canada

# Letter from F2CC

**EVALUATION IS IMPORTANT.** It can help us understand the effects of our work, improve our programs, and share our stories of impact.

But it can also be complex and tough to know where to start. Over the years many school communities have asked Farm to Cafeteria Canada (F2CC) for help with evaluation so that they can better understand the impacts of their programs and share these impacts with funders, administration, families, and the rest of their community. We have developed this evaluation framework to inform our own evaluation work and to give school communities, as well as researchers and policy makers, some guidance on how they can measure what matters.

We know that the term "evaluation framework" may sound complicated. For us, the term means "a guide to what we want to measure".

This document has been designed to be short and to the point. It provides a set of farm to school outcomes and indicators that people have said they want to see measured. We're excited to share this framework as the first step toward a common approach to measuring and reporting the impacts of farm to school in Canada.

As a next step, we'll be developing and sharing practical tools to put this framework into practice. We invite your input! To stay up-to-date and learn how you can inform the framework's continued development please visit our website and join our newsletter. E-copies can be found at www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca/evaluation-framework

This framework is for you. We hope that it helps you in your own evaluation efforts and your farm to school journey.

**Jesse Veenstra**
*National Director*

**Carolyn Webb**
*Research & Knowledge Translation Lead*

On behalf of The Farm to Cafeteria Canada Team

**FARM TO SCHOOL** initiatives are being put in place with great enthusiasm across Canada. From coast to coast to coast educators, organizations, public health practitioners, policy makers, local food providers and many others are recognizing farm to school's potential to transform how students eat and learn about food at school.

Evidence is mounting that farm to school can contribute to a wide range of outcomes. It can improve student nutrition and food literacy, support chronic disease prevention, and contribute to vibrant regional food systems, climate change mitigation and Indigenous food sovereignty. However, it can be tough to measure the impacts of farm to school activities, especially given the cross-sectoral nature of this work. The time is right for a framework that can help us consistently evaluate and show the impacts of farm to school initiatives.

## Framework Snapshot:

**COORDINATED BY:** Farm to Cafeteria Canada as an initiative of the Farm to School: Canada Digs In! partnership.

**GOAL:** To inform how practitioners, researchers and policy makers in Canada can consistently articulate, implement, track and communicate the impacts of the farm to school approach.

**METHOD:** This framework was developed from August 2020 - March 2021 using a modified Delphi method process that consisted of 3 surveys and 4 virtual conversations. An estimated 140 individuals from diverse sectors across the country participated in the bilingual process.

**ABOUT THE FRAMEWORK:** The framework articulates 18 outcomes, 9 high-priority policy or community level indicators and 11 high-priority indicators that can be measured at the school level relating to 4 impact areas: Public Health, Education, Community Economic Development and the Environment. It then shares a full list of 45 priority indicators as well as other possible indicators to select from.

**FUTURE STEPS:** Next phases of this initiative will include the development of validated measurement tools, assessment toolkits, and evaluation training.

**Farm to Cafeteria Canada (F2CC) is a pan-Canadian partnership-based organization whose vision is "vibrant and sustainable regional food systems that support the health of people, place and planet." F2CC collaborates to educate, build capacity, and influence policy to put more healthy, local and sustainable food on the minds and plates of students, families and whole communities.**

**www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca/evaluation-framework**

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# What is Farm to School?

Farm to school gets students growing, gathering, cooking, eating, and embracing healthy local food. Through farm to school activities students connect with their broader communities and develop food literacy while strengthening a vibrant local food system.

**The term "Local food to school" can be used instead of "Farm to school".**

**This term is preferred in some Indigenous communities and some regions and reflects the diversity of local and traditional foods that can be enjoyed in schools from coast to coast to coast (many of which are not sourced from a farm).**

**FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS** look different in every school in Canada and new models keep emerging thanks to the creativity and partnerships of each school community. But farm to school always works to get more healthy local foods on the minds and plates of children and youth.

**The farm to school approach includes:**

**Healthy, local food:** Schools source local food in many ways, including directly from farms, through food distributors, or by harvesting wild or traditional Indigenous foods. The food may be served in a salad bar, hot lunch program, tasting activity, fundraiser, or community celebration.

**Hands-on learning:** Food literacy is a key part of farm to school. Students learn about food, food systems, and food skills in the school garden, greenhouse, kitchen and classroom. They connect with nature and the environment. They may take field trips to local farms, forests, and shores.

**School and community connectedness:** farm to school is built upon strong relationships. Schools establish relationships with local food providers, community members, and supportive organizations and tap into local knowledge, passion, skills, and resources.

**This evaluation framework focuses on K-12 schools; however, it can be applied to pre-schools and post-secondary institutions.**

# Objectives of the Framework

**OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS** we have seen policy makers at the federal, provincial and local levels show more and more interest in farm to school as they recognize that it can address a range of policy goals and priorities.

However, it can be tough to measure the impacts of farm to school activities. Baseline data are scarce and existing research protocols are not consistent. There is little guidance on how to consistently track, monitor and articulate farm to school activities and policies as well as their outcomes, especially given the cross-sectoral nature of this work. The time is right for a framework that can help us consistently evaluate and show the impacts of farm to school initiatives.

In 2014, the US National Farm to School Network (US NFSN) went through a process to develop a cross-sectoral Evaluation Framework for farm to school to guide practice, research and policy development. The process led to the articulation of priority outcomes, measures and indicators that could be tracked at the program, research and policy levels. The US NFSN was then able to develop the Benefits of Farm to School fact sheet to share the positive impacts of farm to school that have been documented through research.

This Evaluation Framework for Farm to School in Canada augments the US framework and presents priority outcomes and indicators that are relevant to the Canadian policy and program context. It also provides possibilities for next steps to support evaluation in this field.

## This Evaluation Framework has been developed to:

Guide how practitioners, researchers and policy makers in Canada can consistently articulate, implement, track and communicate the impacts of the farm to school approach.

**Over the longer term the framework and its next phases will allow practitioners, researchers and policy makers to:**

- Develop validated tools that can be used to measure priority indicators.
- Better communicate farm to school programs and their impacts.
- Identify and conduct research on farm to school areas of impact that need further study.
- Identify farm to school practices and related policies that have demonstrated benefits.
- Recommend practices and policies for implementation and evaluation.
- Identify barriers and opportunities for farm to school activities that decision makers can act upon.
- Commit to action and evaluation in this field.

**!** **This framework is not meant to be used to measure how individual schools succeed or 'fail' to achieve the framework's outcomes. It is meant to be used in the spirit of developmental evaluation, i.e. to be used by school communities to help them think about their farm to school programs and to learn, innovate and better communicate the impacts of their work.**

**!** **Our shared understanding of farm to school, what to measure, and how to measure it will continue to evolve. This framework reflects the input that we have heard to date and we look forward to continuing to build on it as our understanding of farm to school and its potential continue to shift and grow.**

# How to Use the Framework

This evaluation framework offers a menu of farm to school outcomes and indicators that can help you to gather program ideas, document your activities, measure your impacts, and expand your programs.

**WE ENCOURAGE YOU** to use it to inspire conversations among your school community about how to measure your own farm to school efforts!

- **Farm to school practitioners and program administrators** can use the framework to gain ideas about what priority outcomes their program could work towards, what indicators to track and document, and what elements or focuses to add to their farm to school programs.
- **Researchers and external evaluators** can use the priority indicators to identify and guide research questions and study designs.
- **Grant administrators and funders** can use the priority outcomes and indicators to align funding priorities and to put in place common reporting requirements for grantees.
- **Decision makers** at all levels including school boards/districts and provincial/territorial governments can use the priority outcomes to inform supportive policies and programs.

★ **Outcome:**
A change that we want to see happen as a result of farm to school activities

**Indicator:**
A way of measuring whether that change has happened

! **The framework is not a "how to" manual for program development or evaluation. Future work will develop or point to additional tools, research questions, training opportunities and other resources to support the goals of the framework.**

**(see the Conclusion for future steps)**

! **For more info about how the framework was developed and what considerations informed it check out**

***Appendix B: Process to develop the Framework,***

***Appendix C: Considerations that informed the framework***

***Appendix D: Limitations of the framework.***

# How to Use the Framework

The main content of this framework is the outcomes and indicators that are located in three different sections:

### Top Priority Indicators (page 13):

This section articulates 9 high-priority policy or community-level indicators and 11 high-priority indicators that can be measured at the school level. These indicators have been identified as top priorities by those who informed the framework. They are considered to be strong and measurable and F2CC will work to develop measurement tools to support them. We encourage you to measure these indicators in your own evaluation efforts.

### Other Priority Indicators (pages 15-20):

This section articulates the full list of 45 priority indicators and the 15 outcomes that they are intended to measure. We will support the development of measurement tools for these indicators. This section includes footnotes that elaborate on what to consider when measuring the indicators.

### Full List of Outcomes and Indicator Options (Appendix A):

This Appendix provides all 18 short to medium-term farm to school outcomes as well as many indicator ideas for measuring them that participants identified during the process of developing the framework. Practitioners and evaluators can consider these full lists for ideas when determining how to measure their own unique farm to school programs.

**! Many specific terms have been used in this framework. Please refer to our Glossary to understand what we mean when we use these terms and how they could be measured.**

**! You do NOT need to try to measure all of the priority indicators but you can choose which ones make sense to measure in your own community to meet your school community's goals. We know that every school community has different circumstances and goals and that some may find it difficult to measure or see change in different areas, e.g. because of socio-economic circumstances or rural, suburban or urban location.**

**! To be used effectively, the indicators are meant to be measured and compared year after year to identify whether a desired change is happening as a result of farm to school activities.**

**! Farm to school operates within the broader food system. While school communities will be able to measure some of the outcomes and indicators, others are more complex and will need to be measured by researchers, external evaluators, community partners or other members of the broader community.**

# Defining the Framework's 4 Impact Areas

**THE FRAMEWORK'S OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS** have been structured using the same 4 impact areas in the US's Evaluation for Transformation framework: Public Health, Education, Community Economic Development and the Environment. The following definitions are adapted from those in the US Framework and speak to how these 4 impact areas are considered in the context of farm to school in Canada.

**Items in blue font are defined in the Farm to Cafeteria Canada Glossary**

**PUBLIC HEALTH:** Healthy and culturally appropriate foods, including those that are locally and sustainably produced and processed, should be available in all schools and accessible to every child, regardless of race and ethnicity, economic standing, or geographic location. The hands-on element of growing, harvesting, and preparing food can increase the school's access to healthy food and can also support students to learn food skills as well as to prefer and adopt healthy eating patterns. Farm to school activities encourage widespread relationship building and can bring about a greater sense of well-being among members of the school community. Gardening and other experiential learning opportunities can also increase students' physical activity levels. Given its holistic nature, farm to school can support students' mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health and well-being.

**EDUCATION:** Farm to school can support educational outcomes for students by increasing student access to healthy foods in the school environment as well as promoting educational activities that engage children and youth to improve food literacy and develop food skills related to healthy eating. Farm to school curriculum and experiential learning activities are a platform to teach core content areas such as science, math and language arts through lessons on food and the food system and can support students' academic performance. Farm to school initiatives provide the opportunity for students to learn about, become more interested in and gain respect for agri-food careers, community food security, local foods and the local food system, diverse cultural foods and traditions including those of Indigenous communities, and sustainable food system practices.

**COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** Farm to school provides economic development opportunities to farmers and other local food providers, labourers, distributors, processors, cooks and food service staff, as well as others who support the local food system. Farm to school may also specifically benefit those who have historically lacked equal access to the conventional food system, such as small or mid-sized operations, lower income individuals, women, people of colour, and youth. Farm to school activities can support these groups by building long-term economic vitality within the local food system through creating a demand for local food products. When an equity lens is applied to community economic development it can advance living wages, safe working conditions, and equal opportunities for vulnerable populations.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Farm to school activities can support environmentally sound, sustainable and socially just approaches to food production, processing, packaging, transportation, marketing and waste management. These practices can build healthy soil, clean air, clean water and a healthy ecosystem in urban, suburban and rural environments. Activities may promote an ecological ethic among participants, develop infrastructure that supports healthy environments and communities, and promote agriculture and food distribution practices that mitigate climate change.

# Top Priority Indicators

**PH - Public Health | EDU - Education | CED - Community Economic Development | ENV - Environment**

**Items in blue font are defined in the Farm to Cafeteria Canada Glossary**

**These indicators have been identified as top priorities by those who informed the framework. They are considered to be strong and measurable and F2CC will work to develop measurement tools to support them. We encourage you to measure these indicators in your own evaluation efforts.**

## POLICIES

**PH 2.1** Existence and quality of institutional policies that support access to and consumption of healthy and culturally appropriate food in schools

**CED 1.1** Existence and quality of local food procurement policies

**ENV 2.1** Existence and quality of procurement policies for sustainably produced food

## INSTITUTIONAL INVESTMENT

**PH 2.2** Financial and human resource investment in programs that support healthy and culturally appropriate food to be served in schools

**EDU 1.3** Institutional support and resources for food skills education

**CED 1.4** Percentage of schools' food budget spent on local food

## CURRICULUM

**EDU 1.2** Existence and quality of curriculum to support food skills education

**EDU 3.1** Existence and quality of curriculum regarding local food and local food systems

## SALES

**CED 1.3** Growth in incremental sales that local food providers have leveraged through access to school markets

## ENGAGEMENT

**ENV 1.1 / EDU 3.2** Number and % of students that are engaged in their local food system while at school

**ENV 1.2** Number of initiatives taken by the school to enable sustainable food production

**EDU 1.4** Number and quality of opportunities that allow students to learn and demonstrate food skills

**EDU 5.1** The school shares a mutually reciprocal relationship with Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers

**EDU 5.2** Students' understanding of diverse traditional Indigenous food systems

## CONSUMPTION

**PH 1.1** Student intake of vegetables and fruit during school hours

**EDU 2.1** Student willingness to try vegetables and fruits

**PH 2.6** Number of healthy meals and/or snacks provided at or by the school that are accessible to every student

**PH 2.7** Percentage of meals or snacks that serve vegetables and fruits to students

## STUDENT WELLBEING

**PH 3.4** Students' self-reported mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health and well-being

## WASTE

**ENV 1.3** Amount of food waste produced by students at school

# Full List of Outcomes

**THE FOLLOWING 18 OUTCOMES** were developed by participants throughout the framework development process in response to the question **"What short or medium-term outcomes would be valuable for farm to school programs across Canada to measure?"** These have been used to guide the development of the framework indicators and to help us better understand the potential of what farm to school programs can achieve.

## PUBLIC HEALTH:

1. Members of the school community consume healthier food
2. Members of the school community have more access to healthy and culturally appropriate food
3. Members of the school community have a better sense of well-being
4. Students engage in more physical activity

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

1. Local food providers increase their sales of food products
2. Local food providers who are traditionally underrepresented and disenfranchised earn a more representative part of the market share
3. There are more food jobs in the school community and workers have greater job satisfaction

## ENVIRONMENT:

1. Members of the school community practice greater environmental stewardship
2. Members of the school community purchase more sustainably produced foods

## EDUCATION:

1. Members of the school community learn and apply food skills
2. Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in nutrition and healthy eating
3. Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in local foods and their local food system
4. Members of the school community have more knowledge of, interest in and respect for the foods, traditions and food systems of diverse cultures
5. Members of the school community have more knowledge of, interest in and respect for local traditional Indigenous foods and food systems
6. Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in the health of the planet and sustainable food system practices
7. Members of the school community have more knowledge and skills needed for agriculture and food-related careers
8. Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in increasing access to healthy food and advancing community food security
9. Students' academic performance has improved

# Detailed List of Priority Indicators | Public Health

**THIS SECTION ARTICULATES** the full list of 45 priority indicators (including the top priorities from above) and sets them beside the 15 outcomes that they are intended to measure. We will support the development of measurement tools for these indicators. The footnotes in this section elaborate on aspects to consider when measuring the indicators.

**Outcome:** A change that we want to see happen as a result of farm to school activities

**Indicator:** A way of measuring whether that change has happened

**Items in blue font are defined in the Farm to Cafeteria Canada Glossary**

## PUBLIC HEALTH (PH)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **★ PH Outcome 1 -** Members of the school community consume healthier food | **PH 1.1** | Student intake of vegetables and fruit during school hours[1] |
| **★ PH Outcome 2 -** Members of the school community have more access to healthy and culturally appropriate food | **PH 2.1** | Existence and quality of institutional policies that support access to and consumption of healthy and culturally appropriate food in schools[2] |
| | **PH 2.2** | Financial and human resource investment in programs and infrastructure that support student access to healthy and culturally appropriate food in schools[3] |
| | **PH 2.3** | Number of schools that have or can easily access land, gardens, greenhouses, kitchen facilities and other food infrastructure |
| | **PH 2.4** | Amount of food produced or harvested by members of the school community and served at school[4] |
| | **PH 2.5** | Perception by members of the school community that the school food environment is one that promotes healthy foods and makes them easy to access |
| | **PH 2.6** | Number of healthy meals and / or snacks provided at or by the school that are accessible to every student[5] |
| | **PH 2.7** | Percentage of meals or snacks at the school that serve vegetables and fruits to students[6] |
| | **PH 2.8** | Perception by students and families that students can access healthy food in a dignified way regardless of their ability to pay |
| | **PH 2.9** | Perception by students and families that the foods grown and/or served at school reflect the cultural backgrounds and traditions of the student population |
| **★ PH Outcome 3 -** Members of the school community have a better sense of well-being | **PH 3.1** | Number of hours that members of the school community spend in outdoor spaces as a part of farm to school activities |
| | **PH 3.2** | Level to which students feel a sense of belonging / connection to the school and the broader community |
| | **PH 3.3** | Perception by students that their cultural food traditions are respected and celebrated at school |
| | **PH 3.4** | Students' self-reported mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health and well-being |
| **★ PH Outcome 4 -** Students engage in more physical activity | **PH 4.1** | Number of hours that students spend on garden and other land-based activities |

## PUBLIC HEALTH (PH)

[1] This indicator is not intended to suggest that vegetables and fruits = healthy eating, but that they are a strong indicator of a healthy eating pattern. Note that some traditional diets do not include large amounts of vegetables and fruits and so this indicator needs to be considered within the context of what is culturally appropriate. An alternative indicator, where appropriate and if effective measurement tools are available, is "Student intake of a diverse variety of whole foods during school hours".

[2] It is important for policies to ensure that access to school meals and snacks is universal, i.e. non-stigmatizing and accessible to any student regardless of their ability to pay. Policies can also support a healthy school food environment. What makes up a quality institutional policy will need to be defined but might include: the participation of community members; strong language with clear and practical approaches as well as timelines and funding; and review and accountability processes to make sure that it is implemented.

[3] Human resource investment can include garden or other food educators, or staff to manage procurement, distribution, and food service. Infrastructure can include but is not limited to kitchen facilities, school growing infrastructure (gardens, greenhouses etc.), building materials as well as equipment and tools for school kitchens, gardens or classroom-based learning.

[4] This includes food grown in a garden or greenhouse as well as food that is traditionally harvested. Members of the school community would include food providers. It would be valuable to track separately the food produced or harvested by students, staff, volunteers, food providers, and volunteers.

[5] Includes foods served in the cafeteria, meal and snack programs, and foods courses.

[6] Includes foods served in the cafeteria, meal and snack programs, and foods courses.

CAMPUS DES ÎLES-DE-LA-MADELEINE, QC

# Full List of Priority Indicators | Education

## EDUCATION (EDU)

**★ EDU Outcome 1 -** Members of the school community learn and apply food skills

- **EDU 1.1** Level to which teaching staff understand and feel confident teaching food skills and using food skills education as a means to meet a variety of curriculum expectations
- **EDU 1.2** Existence and quality of curriculum to support food skills education
- **EDU 1.3** Institutional support and resources for food skills education[7]
- **EDU 1.4** Number and quality of opportunities that allow students to learn and demonstrate food skills[8]
- **EDU 1.5** Number of schools that have or can easily access land, gardens, greenhouses, kitchen facilities and other food infrastructure
- **EDU 1.6** Number of school staff who lead and participate in farm to school programming
- **EDU 1.7** Students' reported self-confidence in applying food skills

**★ EDU Outcome 2 -** Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in nutrition and healthy eating

- **EDU 2.1** Student willingness to try vegetables and fruits[9]

**★ EDU Outcome 3 -** Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in local foods and their local food system

- **EDU 3.1** Existence and quality of curriculum regarding local food and local food systems
- **EDU 3.2** Percentage of students that are engaged in their local food system while at school[10]
- **EDU 3.3** Students' understanding of their local food system, local foods, local food providers and foods in season[11]

**★ EDU Outcome 4 -** Members of the school community have more knowledge of, interest in and respect for the foods, traditions and food systems of diverse cultures

- **EDU 4.1** Students' understanding of foods belonging to different cultures
- **EDU 4.2** Number of students who share their cultural food traditions at school
- **EDU 4.3** How often cultural ceremony in relation to food is demonstrated within the school community

**★ EDU Outcome 5 -** Members of the school community have more knowledge of, interest in and respect for local traditional Indigenous foods and food systems

- **EDU 5.1** The school shares a mutually reciprocal relationship with Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers
- **EDU 5.2** Students' understanding of diverse traditional Indigenous food systems

**★ EDU Outcome 6 -** Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in the health of the planet and sustainable food system practices

- **EDU 6.1** Number of school events and activities that raise awareness about sustainable food system practices

## EDUCATION (EDU)

[7] To succeed, food skills education often needs infrastructure and resources such as staff time (including release time for training, and preparation time in advance of lessons), food, garden beds, kitchen facilities, and more.

[8] It is important for these to be age-appropriate. Measures of opportunities could include Number of schools / courses / programs; Number of school events and activities; Number of assignments; Number or % of students who participate.

[9] Measurement could include whether students demonstrate curiosity and interest in eating a variety of healthy foods. Willingness to try could also include whether students show a preference or are motivated to try new foods.

[10] Can include engagement at all stages of the food system including growing, harvesting off the land, preserving and cooking, and composting food.

[11] It is important to keep in mind that local foods may not be relevant to students and families from diverse cultures who may not see their cultural foods reflected in what is available locally.

CENTREVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL, CENTREVILLE, NB

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CED)

**★ CED Outcome 1 -** Local food providers increase their sales of food products

- **CED 1.1** Existence and quality of local food procurement policies[12]
- **CED 1.2** Number of contracts and partnerships that have been established between local food providers and schools
- **CED 1.3** Growth in incremental sales that local food providers have leveraged through access to school markets[13]
- **CED 1.4** Percentage of schools' food budget spent on local food[14]

**★ CED Outcome 2 -** Local food providers who have been underrepresented earn a more representative part of the market share

- **CED 2.1** Number of contracts and partnerships that have been established between schools and local food providers who are underrepresented[15]

**★ CED Outcome 3 -** There are more food jobs in the school community and workers have greater job satisfaction

- **CED 3.1** Quality of paid positions[16]
- **CED 3.2** Number of hours that food service workers and providers are engaged in the school's farm to school activities[17]

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[12] What makes up a quality institutional policy will need to be further defined but can include: a procurement target or goal; the participation of community members in developing it; strong language with clear and practical approaches as well as timelines and funding; and review and accountability processes to make sure that it is implemented.

[13] When measuring growth in sales, it is also valuable to measure increases in market opportunities as well as increases in income.

[14] To consistently measure this indicator there will need to be a definition of what constitutes local food and what percentage of local ingredients are included in a local food product. It will be valuable to measure and report on total food purchases, the dollar amount of local purchases as well as the percentage of the food budget spent on local food. Ideally, money spent would be broken into different categories of food (e.g. fruits and vegetables, proteins, dairy, eggs). It would also be valuable to separate money paid to different food providers (e.g. retailers, farmers, fishers).

[15] May include Indigenous food providers, Black food providers, people of colour, newcomers, members of the LGBTQ2S+ community, women, youth, disabled food providers and other members of equity seeking groups. It would be valuable for school communities to go through an exercise to identify who is underrepresented in their own community.

[16] The quality of a paid position will depend on a number of factors including whether it upholds a living wage, is full or part-time, and whether it offers paid leave, medical benefits and / or flexible hours. In the short to medium-term any evaluation could start by looking at the immediate school community (i.e. working in the school or directly serving the school) rather than the broader community.

[17] Can include planning menus, supporting local supply chains, gardening, training students in knife skills, etc.

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# Full List of Priority Indicators | Environment

## ENVIRONMENT (ENV)

**★ ENV Outcome 1 -** Members of the school community practice greater environmental stewardship

- **ENV 1.1** Percentage of students that are engaged in their local food system while at school[18]
- **ENV 1.2** Number of initiatives taken by the school to enable sustainable food production[19]
- **ENV 1.3** Amount of food waste produced by students at school
- **ENV 1.4** Amount of food packaging waste produced by food service staff

**★ ENV Outcome 2 -** Members of the school community access more sustainably produced foods[20] [21]

- **ENV 2.1** Existence and quality of procurement policies for sustainably produced food[22]
- **ENV 2.2** Percentage of the school's food budget spent on sustainably produced food

[18] Examples of these activities include gardening, harvesting traditional Indigenous food off the land, preserving and composting. Because of the scale of these activities in a school setting it is assumed that they will use methods that are relatively environmentally sustainable.

[19] Examples include water harvesting, composting, and seed saving.

[20] Accessing foods can include purchasing or receiving foods as donations including traditional Indigenous foods.

[21] There is no agreed-upon definition of sustainably produced food or how to measure it. Meal Exchange's Good Food Wheel can provide a valuable tool to explore the concept. School communities may want to consider going through a process to define what "sustainably produced foods" mean for their own community.

[22] What makes up a quality institutional policy will need to be further defined but can include: a procurement target or goal; the participation of community members in developing it; strong language with clear and practical approaches as well as timelines and funding; and review and accountability processes to make sure that it is implemented.

ÉCOLE LOUIS-DE-FRANCE, TROIS-RIVIÈRES, QUÉBEC

# Concluding Thoughts and Future Steps

**THIS FRAMEWORK HAS BEEN DEVELOPED** to guide how practitioners, researchers and policy makers in Canada can consistently articulate, implement, track and communicate the impacts of the farm to school approach. It articulates 18 outcomes, 9 high-priority policy or community level indicators and 11 high-priority indicators that can be measured at the school level relating to 4 impact areas: Public Health, Education, Community Economic Development and the Environment. It also shares the full list of 45 priority indicators as well a much longer list of possible indicators for those who are involved in evaluation work to consider using.

F2CC is excited by how this framework will support the efforts of practitioners, researchers and policy makers who are advancing farm to school policy and programs in Canada. And we know that our understanding of these concepts, what to measure, how to measure them effectively and appropriately, and even how we understand farm to school and its potential will keep shifting. This framework reflects the input that we have heard to date and we look forward to continuing to build on it as our understanding of farm to school and its potential evolve into the future.

We also know that more evaluation support is needed to achieve the framework's full potential. The framework process has started to collect tools that can be used to measure the priority indicators and we have learned that these tools are not plentiful or easy to find.

**We will continue to collaborate with others to identify, adapt, develop and share useful evaluation tools including the following resources:**

- **Validated measurement tools and sample assessment strategies** for priority indicators.
- **Framework toolkits or packages that are geared to specific audiences**, e.g. a practical evaluation toolkit for a teacher to use to measure the priority outcomes that can be assessed at a classroom level. This could include guides for different audiences on how to use the framework and what indicators might apply to their context. This might include discussion about how these different audiences can communicate the evaluation results.
- **Program articulation resources** (such as spreadsheet matrices, logic models and theory of change development guides) to help program administrators, evaluators, researchers and grant administrators prioritize which outcomes and indicators they would like to focus on to achieve their specific goals.
- **Evaluation primers and considerations** including how to bring health equity impact assessment or gender based analysis into the design stage of a program and in evaluation efforts.
- **Tools to support the documentation and sharing of stories** to assess and communicate some of the more complex but important concepts in this framework.
- **Scoring features** to help school communities determine whether their farm to school program meets their specific goals and how they could improve on their program (e.g. does it provide adequate access to healthy food, is it culturally responsive).
- **Research priorities and questions.**
- Resources to inform **how to develop program goals**, activities and strategies with the framework's outcomes and indicators in mind. This can include approaches on **how programs can expand** so that they can impact multiple farm to school impact areas.
- **Examples of quality institutional policies.**
- **Statements of barriers and opportunities** that policy makers can act upon.
- How the framework's outcomes and indicators **align with public health, agri-food and other sector targets** so that measurement can support multiple strategies.
- An initiative for Canada to **share metrics and data** among organizations with complementary mandates, similar to the US' National Farm to Institution Metrics Collaborative.
- **Evaluation training opportunities.**

**We are proud of the collaborative process that has been taken to articulate the framework's farm to school outcomes and indicators and we are excited by the next stages of what we can achieve together. We look forward to continuing to support the evaluation of the significant and important outcomes that are being achieved across Canada through the farm to school approach.**

# **Appendix A:** Detailed List of Outcomes and Indicator Ideas

**THIS APPENDIX PROVIDES** the full list of 18 short to medium-term farm to school outcomes as well as indicator ideas that participants identified during the process to develop the framework. Practitioners and evaluators can consider these ideas when determining how to measure their own unique farm to school programs.

**Items in blue font are defined in the Farm to Cafeteria Canada Glossary**
Priority indicators (from the lists above) are identified in **bold and include an indicator number (e.g. PH 2.3)**

## Public Health

**SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES**

1. Members of the school community consume healthier food
2. Members of the school community have more access to healthy and culturally appropriate food
3. Members of the school community have a better sense of well-being
4. Students engage in more physical activity

### Full List of Outcomes and Indicators:

### ★ PH Outcome #1 Members of the school community consume healthier food

#### INDICATOR IDEAS

Institutional support:

- Percentage of schools that comply with provincial school nutrition policy

Food intake:

- **PH 1.1 - Student intake of vegetables and fruit during school hours**
- Student intake of a diverse variety of whole foods during school hours
- Daily student intake of vegetables and fruit
- Student intake of ultra-processed food during school hours
- Daily student intake of ultra-processed food
- Daily staff intake of vegetables and fruit
- Daily staff intake of ultra-processed food
- Staff intake of vegetables and fruit during school hours
- Staff intake of a diverse variety of whole foods during school hours
- Family intake of vegetables and fruit

# Appendix A: Public Health

★ **PH Outcome #2** Members of the school community have more access to healthy and culturally appropriate food

## INDICATOR IDEAS

Institutional support:

Policies:

- **PH 2.1 - Existence and quality of institutional policies that support access to and consumption of healthy and culturally appropriate food in schools**
- Degree to which healthy school food policies are implemented

Investment:

- **PH 2.2 - Financial and human resource investment in programs that support healthy and culturally appropriate food to be served in schools**

Training:

- Quantity and quality of training programs for teaching staff to learn to teach about nutrition and healthy eating
- Quantity and quality of training programs for food service workers to prepare healthy meals and snacks

Community collaboration Indicators:

- Number of community members that are involved in providing healthy food to the school and their level of engagement
- Number of occurrences where traditional Indigenous Knowledge Keepers support school staff in educating students about traditional Indigenous food practices
- Amount of collaboration and monitoring of joint activities among relevant stakeholders (meetings, working groups, etc.)

School / family access:

- **PH 2.3 - Number of schools that have or can easily access land, gardens, greenhouses, kitchen facilities, and other infrastructure to support food access and education**
- **PH 2.4 - Amount of food produced or harvested by members of the school community and served at school**
- **PH 2.5 - Perception by members of the school community that the school food environment is one that promotes healthy foods and makes them easy to access**
- Amount of healthy food that is contributed to the school by the community
- School food budget
- Amount of vegetables and fruits purchased or produced by families
- Percentage of healthy food used in fundraising efforts

Healthy food served:

- Average number of healthy meals / snacks served to students per week
- **PH 2.6 - Number of healthy meals and / or snacks provided at or by the school that are accessible to every student**
- **PH 2.7 - Percentage of meals and / or snacks that serve vegetables and fruits to students**
- Variety of healthy foods served at school
- Amount of ultra-processed foods that are available at the school
- Perception by members of the school community of the quality, freshness, taste, and nutrition of food served at school

Dignified and equitable access:

- **PH 2.8 - Perception by students and families that students can access healthy food in a dignified way regardless of their ability to pay**

Culturally appropriate food is served and accessible:

- **PH 2.9 - Perception by students and families that the foods grown and/or served at school reflect the cultural backgrounds and traditions of the student population**

## ★ PH Outcome #3 Members of the school community have a better sense of well-being

### INDICATOR IDEAS

Community collaboration indicators:

- Number and quality of opportunities for peer-to-peer relationship building and learning among teaching staff, volunteers, administrators and community partners
- Number and quality of relationships that students report having with members of the school community, including with Elders, farmers, community partners, health professionals
- Existence and strength of teachers' / administrators' relationships with families, community partners and other members of the school community

Environment provided:

- **PH 3.1 - Number of hours that members of the school community spend in outdoor spaces as a part of farm to school activities**
- Percentage of students who eat together in a communal setting
- Percentage of students who stay at school for lunch instead of leaving school grounds

Reports of wellbeing:

- **PH 3.2 - Level to which students feel a sense of belonging / connection to the school and the broader community**
- Percentage of students who report that they have access to enough healthy food at school to meet their needs
- Students report having stronger friendships and relationships with other members of the school community
- Members of the school community report that they feel connected to the land (a concept based upon traditional Indigenous teachings)
- Members of the school community report that they feel gratitude for the land and what it offers (a concept based upon traditional Indigenous teachings)
- Level of student involvement and engagement in school activities
- **PH 3.3 - Perception by students that their cultural food traditions are respected and celebrated at school**
- Students' reported and demonstrated confidence in implementing food skills and being able to maintain a healthy lifestyle related to food decisions
- Level to which students believe that they have some influence over their own food system
- Students' reported desire to be at school
- Reported level of vibrancy and excitement at the school
- Student attendance at school

- **PH 3.4 - Students' self-reported mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health and well-being**
- Percentage of students that report that farm to school activities have improved their health
- Students' level of focus and concentration in class
- Demonstrations of students' character strengths including motivation, responsibility, confidence, initiative, leadership and creativity

## ★ PH Outcome #4 Students engage in more physical activity

### INDICATOR IDEAS

- Percentage of students who are involved in gardening
- **PH 4.1 - Number of hours that students spend on garden and other land-based activities**
- Percentage of students who are involved in food preparation activities
- Number of students who gain physical activity through building food infrastructure

# Appendix A: Education

## Education

**SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES**

1. Members of the school community learn and apply food skills
2. Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in nutrition and healthy eating
3. Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in local foods and their local food system
4. Members of the school community have more knowledge of, interest in and respect for the foods, traditions and food systems of diverse cultures
5. Members of the school community have more knowledge of, interest in and respect for local traditional Indigenous foods and food systems
6. Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in the health of the planet and sustainable food system practices
7. Members of the school community have more knowledge and skills needed for agriculture and food-related careers
8. Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in increasing access to healthy food and advancing community food security
9. Students' academic performance has improved

### Full List of Outcomes and Indicators:

★ **EDU Outcome #1** Members of the school community learn and apply food skills

#### INDICATOR IDEAS

Institutional support:

- **EDU 1.1 - Level to which teaching staff understand and feel confident teaching food skills and using food skills education as a means to teach a variety of curriculum expectations**
- **EDU 1.2 - Existence and quality of curriculum to support food skills education**
- Quality and quantity of professional development for teachers to be able to teach food skills as well as how to use food as a way to teach a variety of curriculum expectations
- Institutional policies include stronger language to support food skills in schools including the development of school gardens and engaging students in food preparation
- **EDU 1.3 - Institutional support and resources for food skills educations**

Community collaboration Indicators:

- Number of staff, volunteers and students that learn food knowledge and skills from members of the broader community
- Number of partnerships that leverage opportunities e.g. working with community kitchens.

# Appendix A: Education

Learning opportunities offered:

- **EDU 1.4 - Number and quality of opportunities that allow students to learn and demonstrate food skills**

Student and staff participation and engagement:

- Number of meals and/or snacks prepared by students for their class / school / community
- Amount of food produced or harvested by students
- Amount of food produced or harvested by members of the school community and served at school
- Number of times/week that students apply food skills at home / with their family / with their community
- Number and quality of stories where students apply food skills at home / with their family / with their community
- **EDU 1.5 - Number of schools that have or can easily access gardens, greenhouses, kitchen facilities, and other infrastructure to support food access and education**
- **EDU 1.6 - Number of school staff who lead and participate in farm to school programming**

Student knowledge:

- Number or % of students that are able to demonstrate food skills

Student confidence / feelings of self-efficacy:

- **EDU 1.7 - Students' reported self-confidence in applying food skills**

Culturally appropriate:

- Perception by members of the school community that food skills education at the school reflects the knowledge and traditions of cultures that represent the student body

## ★ EDU Outcome #2 Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in nutrition and healthy eating

### INDICATOR IDEAS

Institutional support:

- Number of nutrition-related goals in the school action plan
- Number of positions / paid staff / resources allocated to food literacy education
- Quality and quantity of professional development for teachers to be able to teach nutrition and healthy eating as well as how to use food as a way to teach a variety of curriculum expectations
- Existence and quality of food literacy education in the curriculum

Community collaboration Indicators:

- Number of staff, volunteers and students that learn food knowledge and skills from members of the broader community
- Number of partnerships that leverage opportunities e.g. working with community kitchens.
- School staff and families model healthy eating at school (e.g. through events, fundraisers, etc…)

Learning opportunities offered:

- Number of lessons, activities and events that identify, celebrate and feature healthy foods
- Number of schools that host healthy farm to school fundraisers

# Appendix A: Education

School environment that models healthy eating:

- Perceptions by members of the school community that students are encouraged to try new and diverse healthy foods in a comfortable and supportive way
- Percentage of money fundraised through healthy vs unhealthy food
- Perception by members of the school community that the school food environment is one that promotes healthy foods and makes them easy to access

Student knowledge:

- Students' understanding of general nutrition and dietary knowledge including healthy eating behaviours
- Students' understanding of the impacts of the food environment on eating behaviours and physical and mental health
- Students' understanding of media literacy and the impact of media on food choices and health

Change in student preference and action:

- **EDU 2.1 - Student willingness to try vegetables and fruits**
- Percentage of students that express a stronger preference for vegetables and fruits
- Percentage of students that are more familiar and comfortable with diverse healthy foods
- Measure of student excitement about eating healthy food
- Students demonstrate curiosity and interest in eating a diversity of healthy foods
- Amount of healthy food that students purchase or otherwise access during school hours
- Number of student activities outside of school hours or beyond graduation related to healthy food
- Number of hands-on activities that students engage in that improve the food environment at school

Change in knowledge and interest of food service workers:

- Food service workers' understanding of healthy food

Change in family action:

- Amount of healthy food that families purchase
- Number of families that participate in healthy farm to school fundraisers

## ★ EDU Outcome #3 Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in local foods and their local food system

### INDICATOR IDEAS

Institutional support:

- **EDU 3.1 - Existence and quality of school curriculum regarding local food and local food systems**
- Quality and quantity of professional development for staff to use local food system concepts as a way to teach a variety of curriculum expectations

Learning opportunities:

- Number of classes that teach about local food systems
- Number of school days where local food is served
- **EDU 3.2 - Percentage of students that are engaged in their local food system while at school**
- Number of schools that host healthy farm to school fundraisers

# Appendix A: Education

- Amount of place-based education practices that link food to the local context of community, geography, ecosystems, politics, economy, etc.
- Amount of school communications about local food (on school website, social media, on posters, messaging home, signage in the school cafeteria)
- Number of field trips to or local connections/activities with local farms

Student knowledge:

- Level of student knowledge of how, where and when to find local foods in their area
- Percentage of students who are aware of when local food is served to them at school
- Students' understanding of different food system models and their impacts on the health of people and planet
- **EDU 3.3 - Students' understanding of their local food system, local foods, local food providers and foods in season**
- Students' understanding of the intersectionality between food, race, sovereignty, justice, health, the climate, and the environment

Family and staff knowledge:

- Families' level of knowledge of how, where and when to find local foods in their area
- Level of staff knowledge of how, where and when to find local foods in their area

Student interest and action:

- Students' perceptions and attitudes towards locally sourced food and local food providers
- Students' reported intention to buy local foods
- Students' reported preference for eating local food
- Number of students who ask for or buy local food at home
- Number of students who ask for local food to be served in the school's food service
- Amount of local food eaten by students
- Level to which students believe that they have some influence over their own food system
- Number of activities that students participate in outside of school hours or beyond graduation related to local food (e.g. jobs, hobbies, learning, recreation, purchasing)

Staff interest and action:

- School staff perceptions and attitudes towards locally sourced food and local food providers
- School staff's reported intention to buy local foods
- Amount of local food eaten by school staff

Family interest and action:

- Percentage of families that participate in healthy farm to school fundraisers
- Level to which families report an intention to buy local foods
- Amount of local food purchased by families

# Appendix A: Education

★ **EDU Outcome #4** Members of the school community have more knowledge of, interest in and respect for the foods, traditions and food systems of diverse cultures

## INDICATOR IDEAS

Institutional support:

- Quality and quantity of professional development for teachers and other school staff to support inclusive learning environments / culturally responsive classrooms
- Number of schools that apply / have policies so that members of the school community can decide what foods are procured and served

Community collaboration indicators:

- Number of community members of various cultures and backgrounds, especially those representative of the school community, who have a relationship with the school and share their foods, traditions and teachings

Learning opportunities:

- Number of educators who embed awareness of diverse cultural foods, traditions and food systems in class lessons in a variety of ways
- Level to which food skills education at the school reflects the knowledge and traditions of cultures that are representative of the student body

Student knowledge:

- Students' capacity to identify foods meaningful to their own culture, family and ancestry
- **EDU 4.1 - Students' understanding of foods belonging to different cultures**
- Students' capacity to grow foods in the school or community garden that are appropriate to their cultures

Demonstration of diverse cultural practices:

- **EDU 4.2 - Number of students who share their cultural food traditions at school**
- **EDU 4.3 - How often cultural ceremony in relation to food is demonstrated within the school community**

# Appendix A: Education

★ **EDU Outcome #5** Members of the school community have more knowledge of, interest in and respect for local traditional Indigenous foods and food systems

## INDICATOR IDEAS

Institutional support:

- Quality and quantity of professional development for teachers and other school staff to support inclusive learning environments / culturally responsive classrooms
- Number of schools that apply / have policies so that members of the school community can decide what foods are procured and served

Community collaboration indicators:

- Amount that Elders and other Indigenous community members participate in students' learning journeys when it comes to the education of traditional Indigenous food practices
- Number and quality of partnerships with local Indigenous organizations
- **EDU 5.1 - The school shares a mutually reciprocal relationship with Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers**
- Number of occurrences where traditional Indigenous Knowledge Keepers educate school staff about traditional Indigenous food practices

Learning opportunities:

- Number of events / activities / opportunities where students are taught the history and methods of traditional Indigenous foodways

Staff and student knowledge:

- Level of understanding by school staff about traditional Indigenous food practices
- **EDU 5.2 - Students' understanding of diverse traditional Indigenous food systems**
- Number or % of students who are able to identify and sustainably harvest traditional Indigenous foods on the land
- Students' understandings of the intersectionality between food, race, sovereignty, justice, the climate, the environment etc.
- Students' understandings of the connections between human health and the health of the land
- Students' understandings of the importance of food sovereignty for Indigenous cultures

# Appendix A: Education

★ **EDU Outcome #6** Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in the health of the planet and sustainable food system practices

## INDICATOR IDEAS

Institutional support:

- Existence and quality of curriculum regarding sustainable food system practices
- Quality and quantity of professional development for school staff to be able to teach sustainable food system practices
- Number of schools that embed an "eco-friendly" commitment and the value of students' connection to the natural world into school policies and practices

Community collaboration indicators:

- Number of hours that Indigenous Knowledge Keepers are engaged to teach about local land, waters and traditional Indigenous foods

Learning opportunities offered:

- **EDU 6.1 - Number of school events and activities that raise awareness about sustainable food system practices**
- Number of students enrolled in courses that teach about the connections between food system practices, human health and the environment
- Number of students that pursue careers and post-secondary education related to sustainable food systems
- Number of courses that teach students how to apply food skills that contribute to environmental stewardship

Student knowledge:

- Students' understanding of sustainable food system practices
- Students' understanding of traditional Indigenous food system practices
- Students' understanding of different food system models and their impacts on the health and wellbeing of people and planet
- Students' understanding of the intersectionality between food, race, sovereignty, justice, health, the climate and the environment
- Students' understanding of how the food system and their own personal choices influence aspects of personal and planetary health, for example human health, the environment, race, justice, and climate

Student interest and action:

- Students' reported preference for sustainably produced foods
- Number and quality of stories of students who have translated environmental stewardship lessons into action
- Number of opportunities where a school participates in traditional Indigenous food system methods in a culturally appropriate way
- Members of the school community report that they feel connected to the land (a concept based upon traditional Indigenous teachings)
- Members of the school community report that they feel gratitude for the land and what it offers (a concept based upon traditional Indigenous teachings)

# Appendix A: Education

## ★ EDU Outcome #7 Members of the school community have more knowledge and skills needed for agriculture and food-related careers

### INDICATOR IDEAS

Institutional support:

- Quality and quantity of professional development for school staff to be able to teach skills and support student career development related to agriculture and food-related careers
- Number of volunteers and school staff that receive training to advance their own food related careers
- Number of career-related scholarships offered to graduating seniors for agriculture and food-related careers

Community collaboration indicators:

- Number of partnerships between the school and those who work in the food sector

Learning opportunities offered:

- Number of schools / courses / programs that provide students with skills for food-related careers
- Number of opportunities given to students to learn about agriculture and food-related careers

Student interest and action:

- Number of students that participate in school activities or courses where they gain hands-on skills relevant to careers in agriculture and/or food
- Students' awareness of agriculture / food-related career opportunities
- Number of students that apply to / graduate into food-related careers

## ★ EDU Outcome #8 Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in increasing access to healthy food and advancing community food security

### INDICATOR IDEAS

Institutional support:

- Quality and quantity of professional development for teachers to be able to teach about the intersectionality between food, race, sovereignty, justice, health, the climate and the environment
- Existence and quality of curriculum that includes the intersectionality of food, race, sovereignty, justice, health, the climate and the environment

Student knowledge:

- Students' understanding of the socio-economic underpinnings of our current food system and the root causes of current food system inequities
- Students' understanding of food security / insecurity and its effects on people
- Students' understanding of the intersectionality between food systems, race, sovereignty, justice, health, the climate and the environment and the influence of their own personal choices

- Students' understanding of different food system models and their impacts on the health of people and planet
- Students' understanding of the importance of food sovereignty for people's well-being
- Students' understanding of areas for action to increase access to healthy food
- Number of students that learn how to budget for and purchase or otherwise access healthy food

Student interest and action:

- Number of students and staff who participate in activities / take concrete actions to increase access to healthy food at the school or in the community
- Number of students and staff who participate in activities / take concrete actions to help advance community food security
- Number and quality of stories of students who have applied what they have learned to action that increases access to healthy food and/or community food security
- Number of school staff / administrators that take concrete actions to help advance access to healthy food at the school or in the community

## ★ EDU Outcome #9 Students' academic performance has improved

### INDICATOR IDEAS

- Reports of student interest, focus and motivation in class
- Level of student involvement and engagement in school activities
- Student grades
- Number of curriculum expectations met by students
- Number and quality of stories of students being more engaged at school and achieving greater academic performance
- Student attendance

# Community Economic Development

**SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES**

1. Local food providers increase their sales of food products
2. Local food providers who are traditionally underrepresented and disenfranchised earn a more representative part of the market share
3. There are more food jobs in the school community and workers have greater job satisfaction

## Full List of Outcomes and Indicators:

### ★ CED Outcome #1 Local food providers increase their sales of food products

#### INDICATOR IDEAS

Institutional support:

- Amount of local food infrastructure that has been established to support school food programs (e.g. food hubs, food incubators, community kitchens, processing equipment)
- **CED 1.1 - Existence and quality of local food procurement policies**
- Amount of financial investment by schools, school boards/districts, provinces, territories, municipalities and other institutions in programs and training opportunities that support local procurement in schools
- Number of school boards or schools that implement one or more programs or initiatives to support local food procurement (e.g. food forward contracts, food origin audits, etc.)

Community collaboration Indicators:

- **CED 1.2 - Number of contracts and partnerships that have been established between local food providers and schools**
- Number of collaborative efforts among local food system partners
- Amount of social infrastructure to support collaboration (meetings, conferences, networks.)

Sales:

- **CED 1.3 - Growth in incremental sales that local food providers have leveraged through school markets**
- Income that local food providers report that they have earned from school markets
- Local food providers report that schools provide them with a way to diversify their sales
- Number of local food providers or processors selling products to schools
- Number of local food distributors delivering to schools
- Number of locally sourced products / services sold to schools, broken down by category (fruit and vegetables, protein, dairy, eggs, other specialty products)

Schools' actions:

- **CED 1.4 - Percentage of schools' food budget spent on local food**
- Number of local food providers that schools purchase local food from
- Number of local food products that schools purchase
- Percentage of days where local food is served in school
- Number of schools that host healthy farm to school fundraisers
- Number of schools that are an access point for Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) or other local food boxes
- Cafeteria income from sale of local food

Family actions:

- Number of families that participate in healthy farm to school fundraisers

## ★ CED Outcome #2 Local food providers who are underrepresented and disenfranchised earn a more representative part of the market share

### INDICATOR IDEAS

- **CED 2.1 - Number of contracts and partnerships that have been established between schools and local food providers who are traditionally underrepresented (Indigenous food providers, Black food providers, people of colour, newcomers, members of the LGBTQ2S+ community, women, youth)**
- Amount of local food that schools purchase from businesses owned by those who are traditionally underrepresented (Indigenous food providers, Black food providers, people of colour, newcomers, members of the LGBTQ2S+ community, women, youth)
- Reported growth in sales that local food providers who have traditionally been underrepresented have leveraged through schools

# Appendix A: Community Economic Development

★ **CED Outcome #3** There are more food jobs in the school community and workers have greater job satisfaction

## INDICATOR IDEAS

Institutional support:

- Existence and quality of human resource policies for school food workers and providers that include training and professional development, workplace standards, planning for retention, mentorship and recognition, and that promote diversity and equity

Number of jobs:

- Number of food service, food coordination or food education jobs (part time and full time) at schools
- Number of jobs in the school community that support farm to school
- Number of student jobs that exist to support the school food system
- Number of school food volunteers that gain food-related skills

Quality of jobs:

- **CED 3.1 - Quality of paid positions**
- Job satisfaction among food service workers
- **CED 3.2 - Number of hours that food service workers and providers are engaged in the school's food activities (e.g. planning menus, supporting local supply chains, supporting a school garden, training students in knife skills, etc.)**
- Level to which individuals from traditionally marginalized populations are employed in numbers that represent the population and have equal status (equal wages, hours, conditions and benefits)
- Level to which food service workers and providers feel as though they are a part of the school community

# Appendix A: Environment

## Environment

**SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES**

1. Members of the school community practice greater environmental stewardship
2. Members of the school community purchase more sustainably produced foods

### Full List of Outcomes and Indicators:

**★ ENV Outcome #1** Members of the school community practice greater environmental stewardship

#### INDICATOR IDEAS

Institutional support:

- The school has identified a school environment lead or created a paid position to be an environmental lead
- The school has embedded an "eco-friendly" commitment and the value of students' connection to the natural world into school policies and practices

Growing / harvesting:

- **ENV 1.1 - Percentage of students that are engaged in their local food system while at school**
- Amount of food produced or harvested by members of the school community and served at school
- Amount of food grown by students or harvested on the land
- **ENV 1.2 - Number of initiatives taken by the school to enable sustainable food production (such as water harvesting, composting, recycling, seed saving, etc.)**
- Number of students that grow food at home / in their community

Cooking / preserving:

- Percentage of students that learn to preserve food to increase its shelf life
- Amount of food that students preserve at school and at home

Personal Consumption Waste:

- **ENV 1.3 - Amount of food waste produced by students at school**
- Amount of food waste produced by food service staff
- Amount of food packaging waste produced by students
- **ENV 1.4 - Amount of food packaging waste produced by food service staff**
- Percentage of students that learn how to compost
- Number of schools that compost

# Appendix A: Environment

Other Environmental Action:

- Carbon footprint of the school community
- Percentage of schools that make use of reusable plateware
- Number of actions led by students that reduce environmental impacts
- Number of activities that students engage in outside of school hours related to sustainable food (e.g. jobs, hobbies, learning, recreation, purchasing)
- Number and quality of stories where students have translated what they have learned into tangible actions of environmental stewardship

## ★ ENV Outcome #2 Members of the school community purchase more sustainably produced foods

### INDICATOR IDEAS

Institutional support:

- **ENV 2.1 - Existence and quality of procurement policies for sustainably produced food**
- Amount of financial investment by schools, school boards / districts, provinces, territories, municipalities and other institutions in programs and training opportunities that support sustainable procurement in schools
- Number of school boards or schools that implement one or more programs or initiatives to support procurement of food that is sustainably produced
- Presence of a locally appropriate sustainable food purchasing strategy / plan

Community collaboration Indicators:

- Number of contracts that have been established between sustainable food providers and schools

School / student purchases:

- Food miles of the food purchased by the school
- **ENV 2.2 - Percentage of the school's food budget spent on sustainably produced food**
- Number of students that ask for more sustainably produced food to be served at school
- Percentage of meals or snacks made with sustainably produced food and served at school

Family purchases:

- Number of schools that host fundraisers that provide sustainably produced food
- Number of schools that are an access point for Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) or other local food boxes

# **Appendix B:** Process to Develop the Framework

**THE PROCESS TO DEVELOP THIS EVALUATION FRAMEWORK** was launched at F2CC's May 2019 National Farm to School Conference and ended in April 2021. The bulk of the work to develop the framework took place from August 2020 - March 2021 using a modified Delphi method process.

**The Delphi method is an iterative process that engages knowledgeable participants in reaching agreement on a common question. Several rounds of surveys are sent to participants to answer anonymously. Participant responses are aggregated and the results are reported back to the group after each round.**

The framework's bilingual Delphi method process began by inviting individuals from a wide variety of sectors, including academics, government representatives, public health professionals, teachers and administrators, local food providers, community partners, and other representatives that are involved in farm to school or related initiatives across the country, to self-select to participate in the process. Participants were assured that their comments would be kept confidential and that they could participate in any stage of the process that they liked. To register for the process participants were asked to fill out a simple registration survey.

Those who registered were then invited to contribute to 3 surveys and 4 thematic virtual discussions over the 8-month period:

- The Round 1 survey was open for 3 weeks in August 2020. This round asked participants to generate ideas about **what farm to school outcomes they felt would be valuable to measure**. Participants were given draft outcome language and were invited to recommend changes to the outcome statements. Once the survey round closed the framework team revised the draft outcome statements to reflect the comments that were offered by the 36 participants.

- The Round 2 survey was open for 3 weeks in September and October 2020. This round asked participants to **recommend changes to the revised outcomes and to generate ideas of indicators that could be used to measure priority outcomes**. Once the survey round closed the framework team again worked with the comments, made changes to the draft outcome statements and drafted a list of indicators. The Round 2 survey had 31 survey responses.

- In October and November 2020 thematic discussions were held to discuss the emerging outcomes and indicators in each of the 4 impact areas - Public Health, Education, Community Economic Development and the Environment. Participants worked in small facilitated groups to **suggest changes to the outcomes and indicators and to identify which indicators should be identified as priorities for measurement**. Following the discussions the framework team, including the facilitators from the virtual discussions, revised the outcome and indicator statements and identified priority indicators. The virtual discussions had 51 participants.

- The Round 3 survey was open for 3 weeks in February 2021. This survey asked participants to **suggest any final language changes to the outcome or priority indicator statements, to select their top priority indicators that they would like to see consistently measured, and to identify any measurement tools and evaluation studies** that they knew about that could inform future evaluation work. The evaluation team then revised the framework and separated out the priority indicators. The Round 3 survey had 27 participants.

The priority indicators were finalized based on the Round 3 survey feedback, the input of advisors, and the key criteria developed for the US Evaluation Framework:

- Should be reliable and consistent over space and time
- Verifiable and replicable
- Make use of available data / be easily measured
- Measure what is important to stakeholders
- Be diverse enough to meet the requirements of different users
- Be limited in number

# **Appendix B:** Process to Develop the Framework

The process to develop an evaluation framework has been guided by an Advisory Committee made up of individuals from different sectors and lenses. These individuals have helped to clarify project goals and outcomes, overarching principles, key audiences, key impact areas to base the framework on, criteria for selecting indicators and measures, and other guidelines to direct the project work.

Additional advisors with specific expertise were asked to review specific outcome or indicator language, the quality of indicators, and other decisions made throughout the process of developing the framework.

Over the course of the 8-month process, an estimated 140 individuals from across the country and from across different sectors informed the framework.

Throughout the process we have done our best to make sure that the resulting framework is usable by practitioners, informed by diverse perspectives, measures what matters, and has been informed by those who make up the users of this framework. We are looking forward to the next phases as we develop further tools and toolkits, examples, training opportunities and research opportunities to help advance this important work.

**The full set of survey and discussion guides as well as reports from the different rounds of the Delphi method process are available on the Evaluation Framework website at http://www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca/our-work/farm-to-school-canada/evaluation-framework/.**

# **Appendix C:** Considerations that Informed the Framework

- This framework has been **modelled off of the US'** Evaluation for Transformation: A Cross-Sectoral Evaluation Framework for Farm to School. We have structured the indicators and outcomes using the 4 specific impact areas in the US framework: Public Health, Education, Environment, and Community Economic Development.

- The outcomes that are included in this framework were developed by participants in response to the question "**What short or medium-term outcomes would be valuable for farm to school programs across Canada to measure?**" (Short / medium term means change that can be seen immediately or within the next 5 years). A short description of the process to inform the framework is provided in Appendix B.

- Some of the outcomes and indicators articulated in the framework relate to **multiple impact areas**. To eliminate duplication the outcomes have been made as distinct as possible from each other and each outcome is situated within only one impact area.

- We have tried to make sure that the framework reflects **regional and contextual diversity** and we will continue to consider this diversity as we develop measurement tools and additional resources. For example, our definition of "local food providers" includes farmers as well as fishers, harvesters, gatherers as well as local processors and retailers. (See our Glossary for the full set of definitions.)

- This framework articulates what to measure. Our next steps will include working to identify how users can consistently, appropriately and, as easily as possible, measure the priority outcomes and indicators.

- Some participants have asked how we can **attribute certain changes (i.e. outcomes) to farm to school**, e.g. improved academic performance. Research has shown that all of the outcomes articulated in the framework can be impacted by farm to school programs and measured. This, as is the case with any initiative that aims to measure broad systemic change, will be an ongoing and challenging question to keep in mind.

- Many participants and advisors have agreed that the indicators should be as **easy to measure as possible**. This aim has informed which indicators have been identified as priorities.

- The **Social Determinants of Health (SDoH)** are the social and economic factors that can influence our health, such as income, education, employment and experiences of discrimination, racism and historical trauma. They remind us that individual health and wellbeing are impacted by a wide variety of external factors. The **socio-ecological model** of health also helps us understand that individual student behaviour is affected by and can affect their family, community, and region as well as broader societal culture.

  This framework has worked to find a balance between recognizing that school-level change is influenced by a much broader societal context, and also that what students learn can impact their families and communities, while keeping the scope of the framework manageable. The indicators mainly focus on direct impacts seen within schools during the school day. However, some priority indicators measure institutional policies or community-level economic impacts. Appendix A includes indicators that measure family action or activities at home but they are not priority indicators because they can be difficult to measure and measuring them can cause unintended consequences such as shaming families for behaviours that are beyond their control. If you do look to measure family-level indicators, please consider how to do so appropriately. For all indicators it is important to keep in mind that many socio-economic and systemic factors are at play.

# **Appendix D:** Limitations of the Framework

- This evaluation framework has been developed using a very western approach. It prioritizes indicators that are as simple and measurable as possible in an effort to document the outcomes of farm to school programs. It is important to recognize that deep change and food system transformation cannot be fully measured using simple indicators. However, we hope that measuring these indicators will contribute some valuable understanding of how farm to school programs create change within school communities. We acknowledge the value and cultural relevance of storytelling as a means to document and communicate the deeper impacts of farm to school programs. To complement the more quantitative metrics stated in this framework we will continue to encourage storytelling as a method to record and share the deeper impacts of this work.

- Approximately 140 participants provided substantial comments and insights to inform the development of the framework. These participants came from across sectors and regions of Canada. However, these participants did self-select to participate and undoubtedly many voices are missing. This framework is considered a work in progress and we encourage those who do not feel that their voices are reflected here to adapt the framework to their own needs and to get in touch to inform future stages in this process.

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www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca/evaluation-framework