



NEW BRUNSWICK Farm to School Guide

NOVEMBER 2017

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- Farm to Cafeteria Canada: Farm to School Storybook and Fact Sheets
- Farm to School BC: A Fresh Crunch in School Lunch
- United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service-The
- USDA Farm to School Planning Toolkit
- Colorado Farm to School: Toolkit for Marketing Your Farm to School Program
- Vermont FEED: Farm to School Planning Toolkit

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COVER PHOTOS CREDIT:
(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT)
ÉCOLE ABBEY-LANDRY, MEMRAMCOOK, NB
PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK
ÉCOLE DES PIONNIERS, QUISPAMIS, NB
CAMBRIDGE-NARROWS COMMUNITY SCHOOL, CAMBRIDGE-NARROWS, NB
PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK
(MIDDLE) ÉCOLE DES PIONNIERS, QUISPAMIS, NB
(BACK COVER) SALISBURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, SALISBURY, NB



TABLE OF CONTENTS

History of Farm To School in Canada & New Brunswick	4
Farm to School Basics	5
Farm to School Models	6
Why Farm to School?	7
What are the Benefits of Farm to School?	8
Farm to School Implementation Overview	9
Building Your Team	11
Planning Your Program	13
Farm To School – In the Cafeteria	17
Sea To School in New Brunswick	21
Salad Bars 101	23
Prepare your Kitchen!	27
Farm To School – In the Classroom	33
Outdoor Learning & the School Garden	37
Farm To School – In the Community	39
Assessing & Celebrating your Program	43
Sustaining your Program	45

HISTORY OF FARM TO SCHOOL IN CANADA & NEW BRUNSWICK

FARM TO SCHOOL ACTIVITY HAS BEEN UNDERWAY IN CANADIAN SCHOOLS since the early 1800s when the first schools were built. One of the earliest records of a Farm to School program in NB can be found in Riverside- Albert as agriculture and school gardening programs were offered at Riverside Consolidated School. The vegetable garden in the school yard of this century-old heritage building is still feeding students today.

In the mid-2000s, Farm to School took root in Canada. Educators, food service workers, farmers and food suppliers began to see their work in a connected way with a common aim: to get more healthy local foods in the minds and onto the plates of students. Together they set out to transform regional and school food systems to help achieve that aim. Provincial Farm to School networks soon emerged, linking together hubs of activity across Canada.

In 2011, these provincial networks joined together to form a national Farm to School network. This national network is championed by Farm to Cafeteria Canada (see sidebar).

New Brunswick saw an increase in Farm to School activities, with le Le Réseau des cafétérias communautaires and Cé d’ici making great strides to get more sustainable, local food into the minds and onto the plates of students. In 2014, Farm to Cafeteria Canada partnered with the New Brunswick Food Security Action Network to advance the Farm to School momentum already underway in the province. Seven unique Farm to School pilot programs were funded at École Notre-Dame, Salisbury Elementary School, Bernice MacNaughton High School, École Clément-Cormier, École Communautaire la Rivière, Cambridge-Narrows Community School, and Centreville Community School.

In May of 2016, a provincial Farm to School Learning Lab took place in Fredericton to discuss how to scale up Farm to School activities in New Brunswick. Shortly after, the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture, and Fisheries took on the lead role with Farm to Cafeteria Canada, championing Farm to School activities in NB with their New Brunswick Local Food & Beverages Strategy.

With many initiatives and ideas taking root across New Brunswick and Canada, community champions are looking to get more healthy, local and sustainable food as well as food-based education into their schools. We hope this guide supports all of our New Brunswick champions in their Farm to School efforts.



FARM TO CAFETERIA CANADA

Proud to lead the national Farm to School movement

Farm to Cafeteria Canada (F2CC) is a pan-Canadian organization that educates, builds capacity, strengthens partnerships, and influences policy to bring local, healthy, and sustainable foods into all public institutions. Farm to School, Farm to Campus, and Farm to Healthcare are all a part of the national farm to cafeteria dialogue. F2CC is amplifying efforts right across Canada to realize vibrant and sustainable regional food systems that support the health of people, place and planet. Farm to Cafeteria Canada is the lead national agency in Canada that is championing the establishment, evaluation, and linking of Farm to School activity from coast to coast to coast.

Farm to Cafeteria Canada:
www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca

FARM TO SCHOOL BASICS

What is Farm to School?

FARM TO SCHOOL (F2S) brings healthy, local food into schools, and provides students with hands-on learning opportunities that foster food literacy, all while strengthening the local food system and enhancing school and community connectedness. Farm to School empowers New Brunswick students and school communities to make informed food choices while contributing to vibrant, sustainable, economically viable regional food systems that support the health of people, place and planet. Farm to School looks different in each school throughout New Brunswick and new models are continually emerging based on the creativity and existing partnerships in school communities.

While schools may be at differing stages of implementation, Farm to School programs aspire to include the following elements:

Healthy, Local Food:

Schools procure local New Brunswick food in many ways, including directly from farms or schoolyard farms, through food distributors, or by harvesting wild or traditional foods. When local food arrives in schools it may be served in a salad bar, hot lunch program, tasting activity, fundraiser, or community celebration.

Hands-On Learning:

Food literacy is a critically important component 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 New Brunswick farms, forests, and shores.



School and Community Connectedness:

Farm to School is built upon strong relationships. Schools establish relationships with farmers, community members, and supportive organizations, tapping into local knowledge, passion, skills, and resources. Students connect deeply with their school and the wider community.

activities related to food literacy, procurement change, or community connections. Many schools begin their journey by growing food. Once foods are grown and staff observe the student enthusiasm for “fresh from the earth” foods, garden activities often progress to cooking and tasting activities.

There are many entry points into Farm to School. As the following diagram shows, schools may start with



SALISBURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, SALISBURY, NB

FARM TO SCHOOL MODELS

WHILE FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS SHARE A COMMON GOAL and common set of objectives, the way the programs are operationalized can be as varied as seeds in a garden. Many different models exist - each arguably a promising practice. Typically, models vary in the way food is distributed from farm to fork and the way the food is served at the school. Here are a few examples:

Schoolyard Farm

If closing the distance between farm and fork is a primary objective, building a farm right on the school grounds may be the optimal farm to school program. It reduces the distance food travels from farm to plate (reducing CO2 emissions), ensures children have the freshest, tastiest foods possible, and acts as a living classroom inspiring future generations of farmers.

Farm to Caterer to School

If your school does not have the space for a kitchen, consider the Farm to caterer to School model. In this model foods are delivered to a central kitchen where they are diced and sliced and delivered to one or more schools.

Forest to School and Sea to School

In these models “local food” literally means seafood, game and “wild” foods, schools are connected with fishermen, elders and experts who can harvest and prepare traditional foods safely.

Farm to School Salad Bar

Probably the most popular food service model - fresh local foods are delivered to the school and prepared onsite and served in a portable salad bar unit.

Farm to School Hot Lunch Program

Schools that have more extensive and inspected cooking facilities can safely prepare hot meals, integrating as much local and sustainably produced food as possible. Meals can include soups, pastas, frittatas, and more.

Farm to School Snack Program

Sometimes even the simplest programs can have a big impact. Apples, pears, snap peas, and cherry tomatoes can be distributed with little processing. Often, this can lead into a more comprehensive program like Farm to School Salad Bar or Farm to School Hot Lunch program.

THE EVIDENCE IS IN! WHEN A FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM IS OFFERED: *

- ✓ Students eat more servings of fruits and vegetables (on average .99 - 1.3 more servings).
- ✓ Students are willing to try new and healthy food, and choose healthier options in the school cafeteria and at home.
- ✓ Students are more knowledgeable about their food and the food system.
- ✓ Food service staff have increased morale and knowledge about local foods.
- ✓ Each new farm to school job contributes to the creation of 1.67 additional jobs.
- ✓ \$2.16 economic activity generated for every \$1 spent.

*This data has been drawn from “The Benefits of Farm to School “(2014), The US National Farm to School Network www.farmtoschool.org

WHY FARM TO SCHOOL?

Students Win:

Farm to School provides students access to nutritious, high quality, local food so they are ready to learn and grow.



ÉCOLE DES PIONNIERS, QUISPANIS, NB

Farmers Win:

Farm to school provides farmers opportunities to educate and connect with students in their community and can serve as a new market opportunity.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK

Communities Win:

Buying from local producers and processors helps stimulate the local economy, while engaging community members helps to foster deep community connections.



FARM TO SCHOOL NB LEARNING LAB, 2015

What are the Benefits of Farm to School?

Farm to School programs have the potential to address key priorities within the education, health, agricultural, environmental and economic sectors:

Education:

- ✓ Develops opportunities for flexible, place-based learning.
- ✓ Assists schools in taking a whole school approach to food.
- ✓ Creates more green, sustainable schools.
- ✓ Promotes school and community connectedness.

Health:

- ✓ Promotes healthy eating habits, including increased consumption of vegetables and fruit.
- ✓ Promotes a positive relationship with food.
- ✓ Addresses issues of inequity in access to healthy food.
- ✓ Improves food knowledge and skills (food literacy).

Agriculture:

- ✓ Develops local markets for farmers.
- ✓ Inspires the next generation of farmers.
- ✓ Links schools to regional food systems.
- ✓ Creates new models and structures for regional food distribution.

Environment:

- ✓ Reduces food miles.
- ✓ Provides opportunities to grow a new generation of environmentally conscious citizens with a stronger connection to the land and water.

Economy:

- ✓ Contributes to the local economy.
- ✓ Creates new jobs.



CAMBRIDGE-NARROWS COMMUNITY SCHOOL, CAMBRIDGE-NARROWS, NB

FARM TO SCHOOL IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW





BUILDING YOUR TEAM

BUILDING YOUR FARM TO SCHOOL TEAM is a critical first step in the planning process and essential to the long-term success of your program. It's an opportunity to create allies, bring in knowledge and expertise beyond what exists within your core group, and recruit some boots on the ground for planning and implementing your Farm to School program, and fundraising to sustain it.

Your Core Team

A core group of 3-10 individuals, established early on, can help create the program vision, goals, and objectives and team roles. Core team members manage, administer, and coordinate the program. As the program unfolds, additional partners are engaged to form an ever-widening web of support. Core team members often include:

- ✓ **A key school champion.** A principal or a teacher. The school champion must be someone who has the authority to make the changes to school programming, environment, and/or policy to support the program.
- ✓ **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.
- ✓ **School food service representatives.** If your Farm to School program will be running within existing school food service operations, it will be integral to have a food service staff member part of your core team.
- ✓ **Farmer(s) and Fishermen** to provide the food for the program and/or on-farm/ in-class educational opportunities.
- ✓ **Parent(s).** It's essential that parents shape the program that will be feeding their children.
- ✓ **Volunteers** to help run the program on a daily basis. These could students or parents. They are great champions as well as volunteers.
- ✓ **Partners from the community** who have a vested interest in Farm to School (consider your community dietitian, a chef from a local restaurant, the coordinator of a local community garden or food box program etc.).

Growing your team

In addition to your core team, many other individuals can play important roles in the initial development, ongoing operation, and annual evaluation/planning of the program. Consider inviting the following people to your planning meetings:

Students	Help with menu development; program promotion; growing, preparing and serving food; and conducting satisfaction surveys with peers.
Public Health Inspector	Help you to create a safe food environment.
Parents	Assist in coordinating Farm to School programs. Help to determine price of meal and find sources of funding to subsidize costs of meals.
Community Elders	Provide insight and knowledge around traditional First Nations food systems.
Community Dietitians	Help plan and review menus and recipes. Great source for educational resources, tools, and support.
Community School Coordinators	Help to find funding to support the program, especially to ensure all students can participate.
Equipment Manufacturers	Help design a food preparation and salad bar space that meets your specifications (area, budget, capacity, renovation needs).
Contracted Food Service Staff	Support menu planning, preparation and serving of meals and salad bar.
Distributors, Processors and Retailers	May supplement food that cannot be sourced from farmers.
Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries	Provide support with agricultural education and sourcing local farms.
Neighbouring schools and school districts.	Can team up to buy larger quantities and share lessons learned.
Local chefs	Help with menu planning, provide food service training to volunteers, students and food-service staff.
Gardeners or Gardening Groups	Help with growing vegetables, fruits, and herbs in the garden and greenhouse.
University Students & Professors	Help with all elements of program planning and evaluation.



CENTREVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL, CENTREVILLE, NB



PHOTO COURTESY OF PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK

The Importance of Engaging Farmers & Fishermen

Ideally, a farmer or fishermen should be on your core team. Engaging them as early as possible enables that person to shape the program.

The quantities required by most Farm to School programs are relatively small for farmers and fishermen so it is important to recognize that the social benefit from taking part in Farm to School may be greater than the economic benefit. Discuss opportunities such as creating a generation of young farmers, reconnecting people to food and the land, and creating stronger connections between farmers/fishermen and people in the community.

Farmers/ fishermen provide the following expertise:

- Provide a list of foods that can be produced for the school.
- Provide an estimate of how much food can be provided.
- Give a sense of what different foods are available and when.
- Insight on how to team up with other local food producers to increase access to available local products.
- Revision of menus and recipes. Their input will help to broaden your menu items and recipes by incorporating more local products.

Farmers/fishermen can also provide the following educational opportunities for students:

- ✓ Field trips to the farm or sea.
- ✓ Taste tests or samples of local food.
- ✓ Farmers/fishermen can join students for lunch and talk about the local food.
- ✓ Deliver interactive presentations (in the classroom or in an assembly) teaching students about agriculture and fisheries.
- ✓ Set up a table/booth at school wellness fair or family nights.
- ✓ Run a pen-pal program between your students and farmer.



ÉCOLE DES PIONNIERS, QUISPANIS, NB

PLANNING YOUR PROGRAM

Involve Parents and Students Right from the Start!

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO DO when beginning a Farm to School program is to involve parents and students right from the start. Listen carefully to what parents and students are interested in. They are your most important stakeholders!

Learn what Farm to School elements, if any, interest parents and students. Are they more interested in starting a school garden? Or are they eager to partner with a local farmer to get healthy local food on the school menu?

A single parent or student champion is an asset, but you need the insight from the larger group of parents and students when determining your goals.

If there is no interest from parents and students, you may need to start small and increase awareness and build excitement.

Remember Small is Beautiful

Farm to School programs can be very different from school to school. In the early stages of starting your program, there are a few key things to keep in mind: Start small, take your time, and start with what you have.

Start small and build your program gradually: Farm to School requires new equipment, coordination, and above all building relationships with farmers/fishermen 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!

IN THE INITIAL PLANNING STAGES, BE PREPARED TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

When you are introducing anything new, whether it is to your students, families, farmers/fishermen, 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 a Farm to School program?**
- **What are the benefits of a Farm to School program?**
- **Why focus on local foods?**
- **How will the program work in our school?**
- **How are farmers or fishermen involved?**
- **What foods will be served?**
- **How much will the program cost?**
- **Who will pay for this new program?**

Some of the answers can be found in this guide, however many of the questions will need to be explored and answered as a group.

During your first planning meetings

1. Establish your team’s VISION for a thriving farm to school program

In taking on a Farm to School program, your core team must decide what you are trying to accomplish. Creating a collective vision statement helps to ensure everyone has a voice in visualizing what you’re all working towards.



ACTIVITY: At your first meeting, have everyone write down what a thriving Farm to School program would look like in your school. What would it look like if resources weren’t limited? Feel free to dream big here. Themes that emerge will help to form your vision statement, set goals, and identify your program’s activities.


2. Identify what model works for your school

At your first meeting, discuss the many models of Farm to School to see which one might be right for you. You could also bring in a speaker from a neighbouring community that has a Farm to School program to share their story.

3. Identify Your Assets & Needs

Next, identify what resources you already have. A mapping exercise is a great way to break the ice and help everyone contribute. Some questions you might want to ask are:

- What local food is currently being consumed at our school?
- Are there any Farm to School activities already in place in our classrooms, cafeteria, and community?
- Who do we currently partner with to offer school food? Who are potential other partners?
- What local farms and fishermen can provide food from between September and June?
- Are there other gardens, orchards, greenhouses, and community gardens in our area that can provide fresh produce?
- Are there funding opportunities in the community to help support a Farm to School program?
- What is needed to bring more local food to the cafeteria?
- What is needed to help increase food education in the classroom?
- What is needed to sustain a Farm to School program in our school?
- What is needed to increase community support for a Farm to School program?

 **HELPFUL RESOURCE:** Check out Vermont FEED’s assessment rubric. The rubric can help inform action planning and identify next steps forward. <https://vtfeed.org/farm-school-planning-toolkit>

4. Prioritize one or two attainable goals to get started.

Once you’ve established your assets and needs, you may discover some attainable goals for your school. For each goal, determine what needs to be done, who will take the lead and who will be involved, your timeline, and resources needed.

Some examples of goals may include:

- ✓ Identify menu items that you would like to transition to local products.
- ✓ Find a farmer/fishermen, or distributor to connect you to local items.
- ✓ Plan a local meal event featuring local produce.
- ✓ Determine training needs to assist food service staff with incorporating farm fresh items in meals.
- ✓ Bring a school garden planning team together.
- ✓ Identify curricular opportunities to connect to a school garden.
- ✓ Bring a chef into the classroom or into the cafeteria to train students, parents, teachers, food service staff, and volunteers involved in school meals.
- ✓ Plan a farm field trip.
- ✓ Bring together leads from neighbouring schools to develop a Farm to School vision for your area.

5. Identify Partners

Now that you have a few goals to work towards, it’s integral that you work with the right people who will help advance your goals. Plan who needs to be involved and at what point you’ll need to pull them in.



6. Learn about different Farm to School programs and strategies – explore resources and ideas

To help you achieve your goals, be sure to explore the abundance of toolkits, planning resources, and networks of people across New Brunswick, Canada, and the United States involved in Farm to School. Learn from their knowledge and resources! Visit the website of the [Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture, and Fisheries](#), [Farm to Cafeteria Canada](#), the [US National Farm to School Network](#), and [Vermont FEED](#) to help inform your planning process.



FARM TO SCHOOL – IN THE CAFETERIA

EACH SCHOOL OR DISTRICT MAY DEFINE “local” or “regional” differently, but **“local” is often defined as foods grown, harvested, and processed as close to the school as possible.** Involving food service staff, local growers, food distributors, and others in helping you define local will ensure that the definition suits your needs.

Sourcing & Buying Local Food

Here are a few key milestones in the path to get local into the kitchen:

- ✓ Know what local foods are available and when they are available.
- ✓ Know which farmers/fishermen 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 be needed to fill the salad bar each week.
- ✓ Work within your existing food contract to source local.
- ✓ Develop an agreement with one or more farmers/fishermen.
- ✓ Order the foods.
- ✓ Meet regularly with the farmer/fishermen to review the process.

1. Determine what local foods are available close to your school

Before schools and districts can start purchasing local foods from farmers & fishermen, they must determine what foods are grown, harvested, and processed locally in their region and when those foods are available.

- What can be grown or caught this year?
- What’s available during the winter months?
- What foods will be ready when?
- What could be added for next school year?
- What will the school need to supplement with other sources?

To find out what’s available locally, try looking for seasonality charts online, talking to farmers & fishermen at a farmers’ market, or calling your local farmer or fishermen.

Tips for connecting with your local farmer or fishermen

- Most farmers are happy to chat by phone or via e-mail, especially in the evenings.
- It can be quite difficult to leave the farm during the growing season so offering to come out to the farm is a great initial step to creating a relationship.
- Fall and early winter are ideal times to have these discussions, before farmers place their seed orders.
- Securing more than one farmer can help to reduce supplier stress, increase variety, and ensure long-term supply of local food.
- 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.

Who can help you find local farmers and fishermen in New Brunswick?

- Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture, and Fisheries
- Agriculture Alliance of New Brunswick
- Atlantic Canadian Organic Regional Network
- National Farmers’ Union of New Brunswick
- Conservation Council of New Brunswick
- The Really Local Harvest/La Récolte de Chez Nous
- Local Food Distributors
- Schools coordinating existing Farm to School programs – check out the School Food Map on Farm to Cafeteria Canada’s website.

2. Work Within your Existing Food Contract to Source Local

Many schools have existing contracts with food service providers. In this case, it's important to let them know that sourcing local food is important to your staff and students. Engage the foodservice staff to explore answers to the following questions.

- How do we currently purchase foods, both local and non-local?
- What local food items are currently available through our contracted suppliers?
- Can the current foodservices track and share how much local food is being purchased?

If a school is exploring new food service contracts, this presents a great opportunity for schools to include guidelines around local foods in future Request for Proposals (RFPs). For example, schools can ask food service providers to source a specific % of local food, track the procurement of local food, and highlight the use of local ingredients on the menu.

3. Establish an Agreement Between your School and Farmer

An agreement between a school and farmer is a promise 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 farmer seek something more formal and on paper.

Several face-to-face meetings between the farmer and Coordinator may be necessary before an agreement can be signed. Coordinators may want to visit the farm 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 in-season and when it will be delivered.
- Amount and price of standing order items.
- Delivery schedule: time of day, frequency, and location.
- Packing requirements: standard box, bulk, etc.
- Processes for meeting health and safety standards.
- Cost per unit, payment terms, payment process.

Distribution: Schools often expect farmers to make a delivery on a set date. Keep in mind that this could require a special trip to town for the farmer which may not be viable in terms of cost or time allocation. Work with your farmer to understand their schedule and see if you can piggyback on delivery dates that are already in place.

Payments schedules: Farmers who sell directly to their customers are often used to being paid immediately. If this is doable, great. If not, talk to your farmer about what payment schedules are like in your school so that there are no false expectations.

Menu Planning

Once you know what local foods are available, it's time to start creating menus and recipes that achieve the goals and objective of your farm to school program! Local foods can be highlighted in existing cafeteria menu items or displayed prominently in a salad bar!

1. Start with the local foods you have! Adjust your menu according to seasons to incorporate more local produce. Schools may wish to just focus on substituting a handful of local ingredients that are abundant (e.g., potatoes, carrots, apples, onions, etc.) as a start off point.

2. Determine what students will eat.

- **Survey parents and students** to see what they will actually pay for! Figure out what meals are students favourite, and substitute local ingredients wherever possible.
- **Pair up with your culinary arts class** to make up various recipes for the cafeteria and salad bar. (e.g., dressings, sauces or soups).
- **Recipe contests:** Have your students take part in recipe development through recipe contests. This will give your students a sense of empowerment of their food and become more excited about the farm to school foods they are consuming!

3. Consult with local chefs, cooks, dietitians, and skilled individuals to help you plan your menu based on what students will eat and what parents will pay for.

4. Budget & Forecast. When deciding what local foods to incorporate into your menu, you need to ask:

- How will the incorporation of local items affect our budget?
- Are the local foods we want to purchase more or less expensive than what we currently buy?
- Will they take more or less staff time or training to prepare?
- Do we have a budget for regular taste tests?
- What's the maximum price parents and students are willing to pay?
- What price do we want to offer the meals at?
- How many students do we expect to participate?
- How much food do we need?

PROMOTING LOCAL FOODS ON THE MENU

1. Have an official Farm to School launch every year! Invite students, faculty, parents, and farmers/fishermen to join. Offer samples, go with a theme, talk about the local foods that are on the menu, play food related games, and celebrate!

2. Use fun and colourful signage near the food and menu that helps to identify which ingredients are local!

3. Spread the word! Announce your local featured food items over the school intercom, on the school bulletin board, on Facebook/Twitter, and in the newsletter).

4. Offer Taste Tests. Implement a taste testing program in your school in order to broaden student experiences with a variety of foods and involve students and staff in school food change.

5. Harvest of the month: Highlight one local ingredient every month. Your school may choose to use the ingredient once or they may choose to prepare it several different ways throughout the month to showcase how it may be used in different recipes. Example: Squash can be roasted, boiled & mashed or made into a soup. Have teachers involved, by asking them to include the Harvest of the Month ingredient in lesson plans.

6. Weekly Farm Feature: Contact your local farmer and see what produce they would like to feature that week. Add colorful signage near the food. Describe the food, the farmer who produced it, its nutritional content, and the distance the food traveled to get to the school. Have teachers involved, by asking them to include the weekly farm feature in lesson plans.



SEA TO SCHOOL IN NEW BRUNSWICK

NEW BRUNSWICK SCHOOLS have a unique opportunity to feature local Atlantic seafood in the cafeteria, in the classroom and in the community! However many schools have expressed that they are serving little or no fish at all.

Sea to School activities can help to connect students to delicious local seafood and help them to understand a key element in our local economy. From taste testing, to field trips to fishing wharfs, to inviting fishermen to come speak, to reading books about the ocean, there are many ways to increase students’ palate for Atlantic fare, increase support our local fishing industry, and help students to envision a career in the fishing industry.

Sea to Schools is also an investment in childhood nutrition. Offering locally-caught seafood increases opportunities for students to access highly nutritious foods. Atlantic seafood is a lean protein source and rich in omega 3-fatty acids, essential for healthy brain development. Sea to School has the potential to instil lifelong habits to eat healthy.

Sea to School in the Cafeteria – getting kids hooked on fish!

Taste tests – Given seafood can be met with uncertainty by students, it’s important to offer delicious samples of seafood. Coming up with clever recipe names and ideas that student will enjoy is important. Here are some ideas for your cafeteria:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Teriyaki Salmon Bites | • Under the Sea Fish Cakes | • Fish n’ Chips (with baked wedges) |
| • Yummy Fish Fingers or “Shark Bites” | • Tuna or Salmon Melts | • Cozy Seafood Chowder |
| | • Fish Tacos | |

Catch of the Month. Highlight one local seafood every month. Your school may chose to use the seafood once or they may chose to prepare it several different ways throughout the month to showcase how it may be used in different recipes. Have teachers involved, by asking them to include the Harvest of the Month ingredient in lesson plans.

Allergy considerations: Seafood allergies are important to consider when running a Sea to School program. A safe school food environment can be maintained when schools follow guidelines outlined in Policy 704.

Sea to School in the Classroom

Ask teachers to get involved, promoting seafood and fisheries in classroom activities, including:

- **Classroom lessons** about fish and seafood. Explore the life cycle of fish and sea animals, discuss food chains, their habitats, local food and the economy, sustainable fisheries management and more.
- **Read books about the sea.**
- **Invite a fishermen to come speak** about their work.
- **Invite not-for-profit organizations and fishermen associations** to come speak about fisheries.
- **Aquaponics** is a unique way to grow food indoors while learning the unique partnership between fish and plants.

Sea to School in the Community

Getting out to the sea is a great way to connect students to the importance of supporting local Atlantic fishing industries.

- **Field trips** to the sea and to fishing wharfs.
- **Boat trips** with fishermen.
- **Fishermen demonstrations.** Ask fishermen to bring smaller pieces of equipment to schools.





CAMBRIDGE-NARROWS COMMUNITY SCHOOL, CAMBRIDGE-NARROWS, NB

SALAD BARS 101

SALAD BARS OFFER STUDENTS not only variety but also choice. Through repeat exposure, encouragement to try unfamiliar foods, and education, children respond by trying new items, incorporating greater variety into their diets, and eating more fruits and vegetables each day.

Start with the local foods you have! Adjust your menu according to seasons to incorporate more local produce. Schools may wish to just focus on substituting a handful of local ingredients that are abundant (e.g., carrots, apples, etc.) as a start off point.

Quantities

How many meals should our school plan to serve? Students are hungry and some of them will want to come back for seconds and thirds. Calculate your number of meals served at every Farm to School day by taking the estimated number of students who will use the salad bar service and multiply that number by one quarter or 1.25. E.g. 120 students X 1.25= 150 meals per Farm to School day.

This calculation is based on an average elementary student's intake. Adjust the intake to reflect the age and intake in your own school. If there are constantly leftovers, adjustments to this amount can be made.

Tips to running a successful salad bar

- 1. How to ask food service staff to prepare foods for the salad bar.** If you have food service staff, discuss how fruit and vegetable prep can be incorporated into their current workload. Often, it's a matter of planning in advance, training, having an extra set of hands (i.e. involving culinary arts students) and seeing the value of having the salad bar. The positive feedback from the students and adults, and the appearance of their salad bars are often a point of pride for staff. If staffing levels don't allow for this type of production, your school may want to explore pre-cut options.
- 2. How to monitor the salad bar.** If you place the salad bar close to the cashier and servers, it will be easier to monitor levels, refill containers, and clean the salad bar. Refilling containers is best accomplished by pre-filling extra salad bar containers before service. Recruit students volunteers to monitor the salad bar, to help inform staff when containers need to be refilled.
- 3. How to avoid food waste.**
 - When you allow students to choose from the salad bar and "self-serve," they are more likely to eat it.
 - Signage can also be added to the salad bar asking students to only take what they will eat, or a picture or sample of a plate demonstrating an appropriate portion.

Standard Salad Bar Unit

One table-top salad bar kit serves approximately 150 children in 20- 30 minutes.

The price of a Salad Bar unit can vary widely. The price for a deluxe all metal plug-in hot and cold unit on wheels can cost as much as \$10,000. We recommend the plastic table top units with metal inserts. Current pricing indicates that a standard table-top unit costs approximately \$1500 plus tax.

A standard salad bar includes:

- 6 vegetables
- 3 fruit
- 1 protein
- 1 grain
- Salad dressings
- Soup normally

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
- 4x Tubs w/Clear Lids
- 2x Stainless Steel Bowls
- 2x Clear Plastic Bowls
- 8x Stainless Steel Spoons
- 16 Stainless Steel Tongs
- 3x Clear Plastic Full Sized Inserts & lids
- 4x Clear Plastic ½ size Inserts & lids
- 4x Clean Plastic ¼ size Inserts & lids
- 3x large Cutting Boards
- 3x Sharp Knives (various sizes)

*The addition of a hearty pot of soup or chilli or stew to the program requires additional equipment.

- Offer taste tests in advance to help students to decide what they do and don't like.
- Having soups on a salad bar is an excellent way to use up ingredients to cut down on food waste!
- Plan your menus to use potential leftovers from the salad bar earlier in the week. This will help reduce waste and food cost.

4. How to get the students through the salad bar in a timely manner.

Unfortunately, short lunch periods do mean that students have little time to serve themselves or to make choices. Until schools are able to extend lunch periods, here are some tips to help students get through the line quickly.

- Train students on how to use the salad bar in advance.
- Train volunteers to help get students through the lines in a timely fashion.
- For younger students, get volunteer adults or older students to assist plating items from the salad bar.
- Double sided salad bars allow for two lines to move through the salad bar.

5. Ensuring you have enough volunteers

- If volunteers are preparing the food, you'll need two volunteers for the first fifty meals and one additional volunteer for every additional group of fifty meals.



ÉCOLE COMMUNAUTAIRE CAMBRIDGE-NARROWS, CAMBRIDGE-NARROWS (N.B.)

- Try and keep the shifts to a maximum of 4 hours and once per week.

6. How to increase student interest in the salad bar

- Have students **create colourful Farm to School posters**.
- **Make the salad bar THE feature** meal one day per week – while offering no other main dishes that day.

- Offer the salad for free for all students once a year- (i.e. during its launch)- involve the whole school.
- **Mix up the colors, textures and shapes!** Remember we eat with our eyes first!
- **Keep containers full** so that they are visually enticing and so that students feel as though they can take as many portions as they want.

- Consider having one or two soup options on hand. Usually one broth and one hearty or puree soup!
- Kids don't always want to eat salads for lunch, especially during cold winter days, so have days where students can **build their own burritos or wraps** using the salad bar to make consuming vegetables more exciting!
- Have students get **creative with promotion** – signage, announcements, contests, or stamp cards.
- Place the salad bar in a **prime location** in the cafeteria, not off to the side.

Remember the mantra, “If they make it, they will eat it.”

7. Ensuring Affordability & Accessibility

Farm to School should be available to every child who wants to participate, regardless of their ability to pay. Where parental contributions are limited, the Farm to School team can help supplement the cost of running the program by fundraising in the community. Speak to parent committees about funding or connect with other funding sources.

Each school is responsible for setting an appropriate charge for the Salad Bar. Most schools charge \$3-\$5/meal. In some schools, they charge a bit more but include a beverage and healthy dessert, which entices more students to buy the meal.

In some schools, a sliding scale is used for ages, serving a smaller plate for younger students and larger for older students.

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.



NORMAN JOHNSTON SECONDARY ALTERNATE PROGRAM, OTTAWA, ON



SARAH CARTEN, VANCOUVER, BC

PREPARE YOUR KITCHEN!

Food Safety in the Kitchen

MAINTAINING FOOD SAFETY IS ESSENTIAL to every school food program. Food coming from local farms, and school gardens can be as safe, or even safer than foods coming through conventional channels. With that being said, Farm to School coordinators are encouraged to consult with their local Public Health Inspectors for guidance, ensuring your school food program will follow their requirements.

Most commonly, you will need to provide a complete salad bar operational plan based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point principles (HACCP). In some cases, only a kitchen equipment plan update will be required. Salad bars require the handling of fresh foods, many of which are considered PHFs (potentially hazardous foods) like cut tomatoes, melon, or lettuce, as well as protein sources such as chicken, cottage cheese, eggs, and hummus. With proper planning in partnership with local health authorities, any school can safely operate a self-service salad bar.

The following steps help outline various recommendations to develop your food-safe preparation area:

1. Make a plan for the construction/renovation of the kitchen:

A food resource to review is "*Food Protection – Vital to Your Business*". This resource may be geared toward commercial food premises like restaurants, however this resource provides recommendations and examples that will help you to understand what sort of physical layout and equipment is best suited to this scale of food preparation.

Equipment Needed

When your school decides to implement a farm to school program, it is crucial that your kitchen is fully equipped and prepared to handle the amount of fresh produce coming into your food premises.

Whatever kitchen style your school may have, it should be suitable to ensure safe food handling and preparation. Consider the following questions:

1. Where will the program operate in the school?
2. Where will the food be received, prepared, served and stored?



ÉCOLE COMMUNAUTAIRE CENTREVILLE (N.B.)

3. Where will the children eat their food?
4. How will foods be transported from service area to eating area?
5. What structural modifications are necessary?
6. What equipment is needed?

Kitchen Requirements:

- Adequate refrigeration storage space. Depending on the volume of food product, one large refrigerator may be adequate or two large refrigerators and a cooler may be adequate.
- A cool place like a root cellar is useful to store fruits and vegetables.

- A sink that must have 2-3 compartments to allow for proper washing, rinsing and sanitizing.
- A separate sink designated for hand washing only.
- Stove, not completely necessary, but will certainly help prepare more food items for the salad bar and reduce food waste by making soups, stews or chilli.
- Commercial dishwasher not required, but would help when it comes to feeding a large number of students.

Other basic kitchen needs:

- Measuring cups
- A food processor
- A strainer/colander
- A large salad spinner
- Ice packs
- Thermometers and a probe thermometer
- Tin foil
- Plates and bowls (dishwasher safe)
- Forks, knives, and spoons
- Detergent, Sanitizer, and Liquid Soap
- Sanitizer test strips
- Wash cloths
- Paper towel
- Aprons
- Hats/hair nets
- Rubber gloves

Ensuring your kitchen facility has an adequate amount of storage, i.e., fridges, freezers, shelving unites, cold rooms for whole produce, etc., is key to sustaining a safe Farm to School Program!

2. Get your Farm to School Kitchen Certified!

To get your kitchen certified you must apply for a Food Premises License through the Government of New Brunswick. Most Farm to School Programs require Class 4 certification.

The following attachments must accompany all applications:

1. If a non-profit organization, evidence to support that status. Appropriate registration number, paperwork, etc.

2. A detailed floor plan of the food premises showing location of equipment and process flow patterns.
3. The dates and times of intended operation of the food premises (also indicate locations if a temporary event or mobile canteen/cart).
4. Copies of menus to be used (if applicable).
5. Statement of the applicant’s experience in operating a food premises or other documentation indicating that the applicant has sufficient knowledge or training to operate the food premises in a safe manner. Submit a statement of your experience and any documentation of food safety training attended. (See “Ensure Appropriate Staff Receive FOODSAFE Training” below.)
6. If the premises has a private water supply, a satisfactory water test result for bacteria and inorganic parameters must be submitted. A risk assessment will be completed on your food premises prior to final licensing to determine the minimum water sampling frequency and you will be given a plan to follow.
7. Details of staff training that has been or will be provided. Provide information on any food safety training that staff have attended. Certificates of staff food safety training should available at the food premises if requested.
8. Details of hygienic practices and procedures to be followed by persons working in the food premises and a copy of the applicant’s health policy for staff. For example: details of hand washing expectations of staff (who, what, when, where, how and why), working with cuts, working while ill, when to exclude yourself from work, reporting of illness, etc.. (See “Develop a Sanitation Plan” Below.)
9. Documentation detailing how the premises, equipment and utensils will be kept clean and sanitary, including details on disposal of waste products. Sanitizing procedures must be described in detail. A cleaning schedule must be submitted and should include such details as frequency (daily/monthly/ yearly), methods and individuals responsible to complete the tasks.
10. If the premises is serviced by a private sewage disposal system, indicate the type of sewage disposal system, total number of seats in the food premises, and the total number of staff working on each shift.



11. For Classes 4 and 5, documentation on food handling procedures used by the applicant for potentially hazardous food. This should include thawing methods (if applicable), cooking and holding temperatures, cooling methods, etc.. Sufficient information must be provided to allow for a risk assessment of the process by the public health inspector. (See “Develop a Food Safety Plan” below.)
12. For Class 4, proof of food handler training and certification to satisfy the following: at least one person present at all times in the area of a food premises where food is being prepared and the manager of the food premises must hold a certificate confirming their successful completion of a food handling program. More information on approved food safety training and certification courses in New Brunswick can be found on the Government of New Brunswick’s website.

NOTE: if you are operating a not-for-profit organizations such as a hot lunch program at a school, there may be alternative options for food safety training. Please contact your regional Health Protection office.

3. Develop a Food Safety Plan

A food safety plan is a written guide for food handlers to help ensure that hazardous foods being served are handled appropriately at each stage of preparation.

Low Risk Foods	vs.	Potentially Hazardous Foods
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whole/uncut raw fruit and vegetables• Honey• Jams and jellies• Breads and rolls• Pastries – cakes, muffins, cookies, fruit pies and tarts, but excluding cream-filled		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meat and meat products• Fish, shellfish and seafood products• Poultry• Eggs• Cream-filled pastries and pies• Cut fruits and vegetables
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• pastries and pies and meat-filled pies• Hard candy and fudge• Pickles and relish• Maple products• Apple sauce		

For each potentially high risk food, you must:

1. Identify thawing methods (if applicable).
2. Identify cooking and holding temperatures (i.e., cooking chicken breasts to an internal temperature of 74°C/165°F, and keeping it at a holding temperature over 60°C or less than 4°C).
3. Identify cooling methods.
4. Identify reheating method (if applicable).
5. Develop a HACCP plan that covers salad bar operations.

ADDITIONAL SALAD BAR FOOD SAFETY TIPS

- 1. Salad Bar etiquette** – Students should be taught proper hand washing techniques and how to reduce the transmission of harmful organisms by using utensils, and staying above the sneeze guard. A sign to remind students to wash their hands and use utensils can be placed on the salad bar. Teachers, principals, and volunteers can act as a role model when it comes to proper salad bar etiquette for students. Ensure they are all properly trained before becoming that role model.
- 2. Allergies** – Make sure that each food item is clearly labeled and each container has its own serving utensil. Students with allergies should be made aware that utensils may come into contact with different foods in the salad bar. If they are allergic to a particular food item being featured, it's best if they avoid the salad bar all together and ask a staff member to prepare them a plate in advance.
- 3. Your salad bar should be appropriate height and equipped with adequate sanitary protection**
 - Salad bars should always have a plastic or glass sneeze guard that is positioned appropriately according to height range (i.e., elementary school students would have to have a lower serving surface than high school students)
 - Salad bars must be smooth, durable, and non-absorbent, easily cleaned and able to maintain proper temperatures to ensure food safety.
- 4. Controlling temperatures** – Salad bar temperatures can be monitored and controlled by:
 - The consistent use of temp logs.
 - The use of chilling pans on the bar.
 - Having plenty of ingredient back-ups in case a container has reached an unsafe temperature.
 - Setting up a pattern of rotating out products during meal periods.
 - Educating staff as well as any volunteers or regular lunchroom supervisors (such as vice principals, aides, or teachers) about food safety procedures is an important part to the overall follow through of the salad bar food safety plan.

Sufficient information must be provided to allow for a risk assessment of the process by the public health inspector.

TIP: Remember to always keep HOT foods HOT and COLD foods COLD!

TIP: TEMPERATURE DANGER ZONE: between 4 °C and 60 °C (40 °F to 140 °F)

4. Develop a sanitation plan

A sanitation plan is a written guide for food handlers on the cleaning and maintenance of the facility. This sanitation plan should include the following:

- A cleaning and sanitizing schedule for the equipment and the facility. This can help staff establish proper timeframes and cleaning techniques.
- A list of all the cleaning supplies and chemicals used for each specific task.
- A list of any pesticides used in the facility, along with their specific uses and their storage requirements.

5. Prepare Staff & Volunteers

Ensure staff & volunteers receive food safety training

Food safety certification (or any other equivalent training) ensures those handling food have a suitable level of understanding of the precautions needed to prevent food borne illness.

A number of companies offer online food safety training for any New Brunswickers who may be interested in taking a course. Have your staff sign



up and complete the course as a group or as individuals! Information about these trainings can be found on the Government of New Brunswick's website.

Increase the culinary skills of your staff and volunteers

Introducing new foods and recipes may require additional culinary skills and a little bit of courage! It's important to support your food service staff and volunteers by providing resources and training opportunities to help them increase their confidence in using fresh and local ingredients on the menu.

Reach out to local chefs, cooks, and skilled individuals within your community who could provide culinary training to your food service staff and volunteers.

Additionally, check out the following training videos from Wisconsin:
<http://www.cias.wisc.edu/chopchop/>



FARM TO SCHOOL – IN THE CLASSROOM

FARM TO SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES are an important part of reconnecting children and youth with their food and the land, increasing food literacy, as well as building future generations of citizens that care about farming, fishing, hunting, and gathering local food in New Brunswick.

Why is it Important to Increase Food Literacy?

Food literacy education engages children and youth to learn skills and develop habits that will enable them to make healthy food choices throughout their lives. (Sustain Ontario, 2013)

Food literacy involves understanding:

- Where food comes from;
- The impacts of food on health, the environment and the economy; and
- How to grow, prepare, and prefer healthy, safe and nutritious food.

Being food literate enables people to plan, choose, prepare and eat food to meet nutritional needs as well as consider the external impact of those food choices. Food literacy—like learning to read—is a skill that needs to be taught, developed and nurtured beginning at an early age. (Nourish Nova Scotia, 2015)

Ways to Increase Food Literacy through Farm to School Activities

Farm Visits

Field trips to farms 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. Activities on the farm could include harvesting, milking, weeding, digging, and turning compost.

In the Kitchen

Cooking skills are an essential life skill that few children get an opportunity to explore. Learning to read recipes, listening to instructions, working together as a team, preparing meals, and sitting down at a table and eat together are all great skills that contribute to the wellbeing of children. Exploring the use of local foods in Culinary Arts classes, after-school cooking classes, and through student volunteers in the cafeteria kitchen are all great ways in getting kids in the kitchen!

In the Garden

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 Farm to School experience. Students get a lot of satisfaction out of planting, taking care of, and then eating their own food.

For more on school gardens, see the School Garden chapter in this guide.

In the Classroom

Some subjects (such as Science, Social Studies, and Health) may lend themselves to the integration of farm to school concepts more easily than others, however with a little creativity, it's easy to relate Math and Language Arts to food. Those coordinating farm to school efforts can work with teachers and district curriculum developers to determine how and where to begin weaving farm to school lessons into curriculum.

Examples of how food can be integrated across subject areas:

Math:

- Measure growth rates of plants and display results on different types of charts and graphs.
- Discuss recipe measurements and ask students to apply multiplications or fractions to recipes (i.e. $\frac{1}{4}$ or half of a recipe, doubling a recipe, etc. Provide these to the kitchen.

Science:

- Investigate the functions of different plant structures.
- Discuss environmental impact of sourcing local foods.

Art:

- Create beautiful artwork using paints derived from plant pigments or stamps formed from plant parts.

Language Arts:

- Keep daily garden journals documenting observations in the garden such as plant changes, weather conditions and classroom activities.
- Write poems, essays, etc. about local food and food systems.

Health:

- Explore the many edible components of plants, the nutrition of different plants and create delicious recipes to sample.

Social Studies:

- Investigate cultural or ethnic differences in food consumption and gardening practices.



Engaging Teachers and the Vital Role They Play

Teachers are some of your most important influencers and have the ability to grow a generation of local food supporters and they have a unique opportunity to put learning into action. Their support is vital to the success of your program.

Teachers can support your Farm to School activities by:

- ✓ **Teaching about food and the food system in class.** Whether it's an in-depth look at the food system, discussing the health benefits of eating vegetables and fruits, or simply talking about how plants grow, increasing students' food literacy can be done in many ways.
- ✓ **Promoting your schools' Farm to School activities.** Your teachers can help to build excitement about local food on the menu, the school garden, after-school cooking club, and more. Classes can create colourful Farm to School posters, educational promotional materials, and be champions for your program.
- ✓ **Recruiting student and parent volunteers.** Students and parents can help in many ways! They can make Farm to School announcements over the intercom, write articles for the school paper, assist in the serving of food, run taste tests of local food, and more.
- ✓ **Support menu planning & support taste tests.** Teachers can offer insight into what students like to eat and can also support taste tests to learn more.
- ✓ **Volunteer in the cafeteria and at the salad bar.** The smooth operation of a salad bar depends on additional hands.
- ✓ **Take the students outdoor to learn.** Organize field trips to farms, markets, and community and school gardens.
- ✓ **Support Harvest of the Month.** Promote specific local foods each month.
- ✓ **Run a school wide Agricultural Fair** inviting farmers and fishermen to come teach and promote their product.
- ✓ **Allow students to eat in the classroom.** Lunchtime is short. Teachers can support healthy eating by allowing students the time to sit and eat in class.
- ✓ **Prepare learners for careers in food:** The food system covers multiple



The students at Hillcrest are taking part in creating a hydroponic garden that will help provide families in our community with fresh and nutritious produce year round. In this image you can see students are designing how the flood tables will be setup to create an "infinite loop" so the water will circulate the dissolved oxygen and nutrients to the lettuce plants.

academic subjects, including social studies, science, health, English and math. The knowledge, skills and attitudes developed around food system issues can help prepare learners for careers in public health, ecology, policy, nutrition, agriculture, justice, education and a variety of other fields. (Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, 2015)

- ✓ **Advocating for school policy changes.** Teachers can advocate for policy changes that would support Farm to School activities, including local food integration into Policy 711, allowing more time for lunch, and food literacy integration into curriculum.



ÉCOLE DES PIONNIERS, QUISPAMIS, NB

OUTDOOR LEARNING & THE SCHOOL GARDEN

SCHOOL GARDENS NOT ONLY OFFER a burst of colour to your school but they are a perfect way to add a number of education opportunities. Container gardens, raised garden beds, fruit trees, all offer a hands-on, interdisciplinary approach to education for all ages.

Why start a garden plot at your school?

- Increase access to adequate amounts of healthy food for children.
- Gardens provide health, economic, educational, social and environmental benefits to children.
- Provides fresh, healthy, low-cost food that can replace purchased foods.
- Encourages physical activity for all age groups.
- Enables basic gardening skills.
- Help improve mental health for participants as they are interacting with other people, plants and nature.

A few things to consider before starting your Farm to School garden:

- How do you want the garden to be used?
- What types and how much food you hope to produce?
- Remember small is beautiful. It's best the start small garden then built it up over the years!
- Where to locate the garden?
- What type of layout design would you like the garden to be?
- What tools and materials you will need?
- How much funding and staff support the garden program will require?
- What will you do with the harvest products?

Once you have considered all these questions you will be all set to come up an appropriate plan to start your garden!

School gardens should follow the Collective Community Garden model. This model means that “all for one harvest, one harvest for all,” where everyone contributes to their efforts to one large garden. Students will participate in decision-making, planting, maintenance and harvesting the garden.

Starting your Garden:

- 1. Collaborate for school garden success:** Get as many people involved in your school garden for ultimate success. School administrators, facility staff, food service staff, students, teachers and the community should be fully involved throughout the planning process. As a team, pull together all resources available to your school and build from there. The collaborative approach will help your school develop a vision to how it will benefit the school, community and students.
- 2. Identify goals and design:** Collectively as a group your team should identify the goals of the garden.
 - a. What purpose will the garden serve (education, food production, etc.)?
 - b. How will students engage with the garden?
 - c. Who will plan and maintain the garden?
 - d. What will happen to the garden when school is not in session?
 - e. Will the garden have a theme?
- 3. Designing the School Garden:** When it comes to the design of the garden, engage your students at every stage of the process. Encourage the students to consider the size of your space, existing features, soil, sunlight, water sources, water drainage, security, safety and plant selection before the planning begins. At this stage, it will be beneficial to your school garden to invite a local farmer or community garden expert to come in to speak with the students to ensure all aspects of gardening are being considered prior to implementation.

4. Securing Funding and Resources:

- Donations
- Grants
- Fundraising Event
- Consider school administrators and parents groups for contributions.
- Search for donations from your local businesses to donate supplies such as shovels, gloves, shovels, plants, gardening tools etc.

5. Plant the garden: Time to put those garden skills to work! This step in the process is the easiest and fun for all ages! Again at this stage you can have your local farmers and gardeners come in to help with decision making when it comes to when and what to plant. When it comes to planting day be sure you contact the local news, radio stations and newspaper to help spread the word about the great work your school is beginning!

6. Maintaining and sustaining your school garden: Don't forget that a garden is a year-round job that students can participate in. It is best to develop a sustainability plan to ensure that your school's garden will last for years to come. Make sure that your teachers are given the appropriate resources around watering, weeding, thinning, mulching, fertilizing composting and more to guarantee a long-lasting garden for you school's community!

7. Most importantly, have fun! Hard work pays off when it comes to harvesting season. Nothing beats the smile on a student's face when they are eating what they had a hand in making!

Food Safety in the Garden

Food from school gardens has the shortest physical distance to travel from harvest to plate, so its safety can be managed directly on sight.

Maintaining Food Safety in the Garden

- Soil:** have a qualified laboratory check for lead and other industrial contaminants in soil. Local Public Health departments are great resources to learn about soil safety. If your soil is contaminated, your school can bring in soil from an outside source and plant in raised beds.
- Location:** Place the garden uphill from potential sources of contamination, away from busy streets, and in areas where wild or domestic animals do not have access to the garden.
- Water:** Municipal water is safe; properly used and cared for rain barrels can also be water sources. Test all wells and ponds before use.
- Equipment safety:** It's best to limit dangerous tools altogether. Train students how to safely use equipment. Keep sharp and dangerous tools and equipment locked away when supervision is not available. Ensure students are wearing proper footwear when working in the garden, especially if large shovels or rakes are being used.
- Cleanliness during harvest:** Encourage proper hand washing techniques and using clean containers when harvesting vegetables and fruit.
- Storing:** Follow the same guidelines for storing school garden produce as other produce and products.



FARM TO SCHOOL – IN THE COMMUNITY

Promoting your Program – with students

- ✓ **Posters** – Have students create colourful Farm to School posters.
- ✓ **Harvest of the Month** – Promote specific local foods each month.
- ✓ **Farm to School events calendar.**
- ✓ **Farm to School bulletin board** – place it in an area where students will see it often and feature photos, farmer stories, provincial map indicating the source of local foods, students' feedback, recipe ideas using locally sourced foods.
- ✓ **Farm to School giveaways** – including magnets, buttons, stickers, and tote bags.
- ✓ **Farm to School PowerPoint presentation** – have it run in the cafeteria showing off your Farm to School activities, local menu items, farmer, garden, etc...
- ✓ **Taste tests** – Conduct taste tests with students.
- ✓ **Farm to School messages** – read them during morning announcements on the day that a Farm to School food is featured.
- ✓ **Take lots of photos** and post them on your school's social media sites. Get students involved and remember to keep a camera in the kitchen at all times.
- ✓ **Student Nutrition Advisory Committee** – form a student led team and have them conduct taste tests, evaluate the menu, and act as ambassadors of your Farm to School program.
- ✓ **Assemblies** – At the beginning of each school year, kick off your F2S program with an assembly. Bring everyone together – faculty, foodservice staff, farmers, administrators, parent volunteers and students – and bring excitement to the program on an annual basis.
- ✓ **Celebrate Farm to School month in October with Farm to Cafeteria Canada.** Celebrate with farm visits, challenges, menu specials, etc.
- ✓ **Locavore Challenge** – run a cooking competition among teams of students using local food ingredients and encouraging students to come up with their own recipes.

Promoting your Program – with parents

- ✓ Include **routine updates in your school newsletter**, or any other promotional materials that reach parents. Provide information about how (and which) local farmers are being utilized to provide new and exciting nutritionally beneficial food items in the school.
- ✓ **Informational table/booth** at school wellness fair or family nights.
- ✓ Print and distribute **F2S fact sheets** from Farm to Cafeteria Canada’s website at Open Houses, Parent Teacher Interview Nights, and other Back to School activities.
- ✓ Update the **district’s website with one or more short Farm to School messages** that describe the program in general.
- ✓ Use the **F2S National Storybook** and **video** to inform teachers, parents, and others in the community about Farm to School programs.
- ✓ Use traditional **print and radio media**, when feasible and affordable. Your community’s local news outlets, plus agriculture-focused outlets, will be apt to pick up different F2S news for their next deadline.
- ✓ **Recipe Challenges** – encourage families to submit recipes that use local ingredients.
- ✓ **Fundraise using local food!** Work with farmers to sell their products to parents instead of selling chocolates or cookie dough.

Engaging Volunteers

Your Farm to School program relies on the energy and passion that volunteers bring to kitchen and classroom. The majority of your volunteers are likely to be parents, teachers, and the students themselves.

Recruiting Volunteers:

- ✓ Develop a one-page information sheet that describes your program, its location and a brief description of volunteer roles. Once you have this, you are ready to start the recruiting process.
- ✓ Involve your principal, administrative staff, and/or teachers.

- ✓ If you are in an elementary or Jr. high school, look to local high schools for volunteers.
- ✓ Consider any School District policies or guidelines regarding volunteers working with school children. Once you have familiarized yourself with the guidelines, reach out to your community.

Ways to Recruit Volunteers:

- ✓ Talk to the Parent School Support Committee at your school.
- ✓ 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 business luncheon.
- ✓ Ask local faith leaders to encourage congregations to volunteer.

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 our children are eating healthy nutritious meals at school.”
- “Support our local farmers and the farming community.”
- “Get food safety 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:

- ✓ Regularly acknowledge their contributions to the program’s successes.
- ✓ Celebrate often!
- ✓ Upon signing up to help you out, ensure volunteers receive the following information:

1. Roles and Responsibilities.

2. Benefits for participating in F2S as a volunteer.

3. Training: Provide volunteers with the training and tools necessary to instil a sense of pride in a job well done. If possible, develop a volunteer manual that gives your volunteers the resources they need to do their job well and safely.

4. 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.



VOLUNTEER ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. MENU & RECIPE PLANNING

- Help plan menus.
- Develop recipes.
- Search for ideas on using local food in new ways.
- Conduct taste tests with students.

2. ORDERING & SHOPPING FOR FOOD

- Identify amount of food needed (based on pre-orders or trends).
- Place food order with farmer, fisherman, grocery store, or distributor.
- Help pick up food or be available to accept delivery.
- Ensure food is stored properly.

3. PREPARING FOODS

- Prepare ingredients for salad bar or main meal.
- Help cook meal.
- Help grow foods in the garden.

4. SUPPORT FOOD SERVICE

- Help students serve themselves.
- Remind students of etiquette and manners.
- Encourage students to try new foods.
- Answer students’ questions.
- Draw attention to local foods on the menu.

5. CLEANING UP

- Wash and put away dishes.
- Clean equipment.

6. EVENTS & FIELD TRIPS

- Plan events and field trips.
- Promote events and field trips.
- Supervise events and field trips.
- Take photos.

7. PROMOTION

- Help with social media, website, and communications.
- Recruit additional volunteers.
- Take photos.

8. FUNDRAISING

- Write grants.
- Approach local businesses for donations.



BERNICE MACNAUGHTON HIGH SCHOOL, MONCTON, NB

ASSESSING & CELEBRATING YOUR PROGRAM

Evaluating your Farm to School Program

LAYING THE FRAMEWORK to properly evaluate your farm to school efforts can help you learn what works, what need to happen to improve your program, and demonstrate your success to funders, parents, administrators, and others.

Ways to evaluate your Farm to School program

Keep track of :

- # of meals served.
- # of children who participate.
- lbs. of produce that was purchased.
- #of farms that participated.
- \$ value of produce purchased.

For a more in-depth look at the impact of running a Farm to School program, consider the following outcomes and evaluation methods.

Student Outcomes

Observe:

- Changes in knowledge of local food and healthy eating.
- Attitudes towards the program.
- Behaviours regarding food choices and nutrition.
- Changes in academic performance, discipline, and activity patterns.
- Changes in access to food.

How:

- Keep food diaries for 3-7 days before the program starts and then after and compare.
- Ask children to recognize different fruits and vegetables.
- Surveys
- Food waste audits.
- Measure changes in Body Mass Index (BMI) *
- Measure changes in scores and attendance at school.
- Pre- and post program/lesson surveys are an easy way to assess knowledge of food, gardening, agriculture, and seasonality.

** Measuring BMI needs to be done carefully, privately, and with consent of parents.*

Teacher Outcomes

Observe:

- Changes in knowledge and attitudes of teachers and school administrators.
- Changes in dietary behaviours.
- Changes in classroom curriculum.

How:

- Surveys
- Subjective observations

Parent Outcomes

Observe:

- The level of interest and support of the program.
- Is the F2S program is making changes in the home in terms of increasing healthy eating?
- Are families growing food at home?
- Are families purchasing more local foods? How much?

How:

- Surveys
- Subjective observations.

Farmer/Fishermen Outcomes

Observe:

- Measure sales to schools.
- Changes in planting patterns.
- Breakthroughs in handling distribution and transportation issues to schools.
- Increase in the number of farms or farmers/fishermen in the region.

How:

- Sales receipts
- Surveys
- Subjective observations
- Local food maps
- Statistics



CENTREVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL, CENTREVILLE, NB

Food Service Outcomes

Observe:

- Amount of local foods served through school meal programs.
- Changes to revenue.
- Changes to food and labour costs?
- Changed to food service staff perspectives, skills, and knowledge.

How:

- Sales receipts & invoices.
- Output/total sales.
- Surveys
- Subjective observations.

Community Outcomes

Observe:

- The total impact of increased local food purchases on the local economy.
- Community engagement.
- Community support.
- Community perceptions of the program.
- Is there a multiplier effect for dollars spent on local foods?

How:

- Outputs/total sales.
 - Subjective observations.
 - Surveys
- * You may want to partner with a University to help measure the total impact in the community (including direct and indirect effects of purchasing more local food.

Telling your story through images & stories

Remember, data tells only one side of the story. Videos and pictures go a long way in telling a story, so make sure to have a camera on hand capturing the beautiful work that is being done. Capture stories and quotes to add additional insight when communicating the impact of your Farm to School efforts.

Plan for Improvement

Farm to School programs don't always yield the intended outcomes. You should be prepared to accept results of your evaluation efforts and to use them to improve your program. You may wish to share outcomes with your school board, parent groups and funders.

Every year, your core team should sit down and assess what's going well, what isn't going well, determine if there are ways to do things better, and decide on a few new goals for the year. **It's a natural part of the process!**

Celebrate your Efforts

Always remember to celebrate your Farm to School efforts! Big or small! Whether you achieved the results you aimed for or learned new lessons along the way.

Here are different ways to celebrate your Farm to School efforts throughout the year:

Salad Bar Launch – Celebrate this momentous day- every year! It's exciting and a lot of work has gone in to get the salad bar running. Invite students, faculty, parents, and farmers/fishermen to join. Offer samples, go with a theme, talk about the local foods that are on the menu, play food related games, and celebrate!

Farm to School Month – Celebrate Farm to School month nationally in October. Celebrate with farm visits, challenges, menu specials, etc. Visit Farm to Cafeteria Canada's website for more information.

Farm to School Assemblies – At the beginning of each school year, kick off your Farm to School program with an assembly. Bring everyone together – faculty, foodservice staff, farmers/ fishermen, parent volunteers and students – and bring excitement to the program on an annual basis

Volunteer Recognition Awards & Parties – It's important to recognize your volunteers and the contribution they make to your program. Present awards and share a local meal together.

Attend conferences and share your story! There are provincial, national, and international conferences that focus on Farm to School. They offer a great opportunity to find partners, allies, resources, and to share and celebrate your story!



SUSTAINING YOUR PROGRAM

THE SUSTAINABILITY of your farm to school program depends on the following critical elements.

1. Does your program have **administrative support**?
2. Is Farm to School weaved into the **school culture**?
3. Are you properly **communicating** your efforts and impact?
4. Do you have **funding** to support your program?

Administrative Support

It's important to explore what support exists at an administrative level and the different ways your school or district will integrate farm to school activities into normal operations.

- Is school administration interested in the creation of a Farm to School program?
- Will administration support staff-wide Farm to School professional development?
- Will administration participate in Farm to School activities?
- How can Farm to School become a permanent part of the curriculum?
- Will a minimum % of local foods be included in request for proposals and contract agreements with foodservice providers?
- Is there policy to support Farm to School activities?
- Is there any monetary support from your school or district to run Farm to School programming? To hire a coordinator? If so, where will these funds come from? Will they be permanent or temporary?
- Will administration act as a resource to other school administrators on how to start and sustain a Farm to School program?

School Culture

Farm to school programs need to be weaved within the culture of the school to thrive. School community members need to feel that farm to school is an integral part of their school and part of “who they are.”

Applying the different principles in this guide will help you to increase a Farm to School culture within your school. Remember to:

- ✓ Maintain interest in Farm to School activities among the school community.
- ✓ Maintain an active Farm to School committee or core team.
- ✓ Continually revisit your Farm to School goals and develop ideas for the future.
- ✓ Provide on-going opportunities for Farm to School professional development.
- ✓ Showcase your farm to school activities provincially and nationally – let Farm to School be a part of who you are.

Communicating your efforts and impact

You will have more support when more people know about your program and know how to get involved. The success and sustainability of your program depends on your ability to communicate with your community. Parents, community organizations, businesses, administrators, government, and funders all need access to information about your Farm to School program so that they can help support it.

Ways to communicate your efforts and the impact of your program:

- ✓ Website
- ✓ Pamphlets and fact sheets.
- ✓ Newsletter
- ✓ Webinars & presentations.
- ✓ Email list
- ✓ Videos
- ✓ Meetings
- ✓ Social media pages and profiles.
- ✓ Report to the community.
- ✓ Strong champions and advocates of your program.
- ✓ Banners and posters.

Funding your program

1. Secure funding to launch your program

For many Farm to School programs, the purchase of kitchen equipment, and services to modify kitchen space are the two largest one-time expenses.

In addition most schools required start up funds to set up coordination, promotional, educational, and evaluation systems. Some schools are able to get the program to a point of self-financing in the first year of operation. Others are dependent on continued fundraising efforts.

2. Diversify your sources of funding to sustain your program

Monetary Donations: Donations can come from a number of sources — parents, community businesses, local service groups such as Rotary, Kiwanis, faith organizations, professional associations, etc. This 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.

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.

Fundraising Events: Events can be a great way to increase awareness around Farm to School while fundraising for the project. Figure out what might work best by connecting with your Parent School Support Council about their fundraising experiences and talk directly to the people you are trying to attract to the event.

Grants: Money may be received from government organizations, foundations, or charitable organizations. Applications are often required and can require 6 months for processing.

3. Put a funding system in place that sustains your farm to school program over the long-term.

What does it take to be self-financing?

- ✓ An equipped kitchen that has been inspected and approved by a Public Health Inspector.
- ✓ A paid coordinator, or a passionate and committed volunteer coordinator.
- ✓ A team of dedicated volunteers in the kitchen on salad bar days.
- ✓ A sufficient number of participants at each service.
- ✓ A willingness and ability of students to pay per meal.
- ✓ A financial system in place to ensure farmers receive a fair price for their food and, families pay for the meals in accordance to means and all children are able to participate regardless of means.

Daily Financing of the Program:

Parental contributions are essential to sustaining the program. Contributions begin with having parents that are able to 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 to limit the need to handle money and food at the same time and lessen the chance of centering out a child 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.



