



Farm to School Evaluation Framework

Process to Develop an Evaluation Framework for Farm to School for Canada

Discussion Guide: Environment

November 19, 2020

Farm to Cafeteria Canada and its partners are developing an Evaluation Framework for Farm to School in Canada. We are using a modified Delphi method consisting of 3 rounds of surveys and virtual conversations to work towards identifying priority outcomes and indicators that would be valuable to measure to demonstrate the impacts of farm to school in Canada. More about this process is available at <http://www.farmtcafeteriacanada.ca/our-work/farm-to-school-canada/evaluation-framework/>

To prepare for the virtual discussion on the Environment

- 1) Review what is meant by Farm to School
- 2) Think about the following overarching question (even write your reflections down if you can):
“What short or medium-term Environmental outcomes would be valuable for farm to school programs across Canada to measure?” ** Think about what evidence you might want to show, communicate or understand about farm to school programs so that you can provide or gain support for them.
- 3) Review this discussion guide, particularly the questions for discussion.

Definitions

Outcome: A change that we want to see happen as a result of farm to school activities
(e.g. **Members of the school community have more access to local food**)

Indicator: A way of measuring whether that change has happened
(e.g. **Number of days during the school year where local food is served**)

Short to medium-term: Change can be seen immediately or within the next 5 years

Proposed Outcomes and Possible Indicators - Environment

Proposed List of Environment Outcomes - Quick Summary:

- Members of the school community learn and apply food skills that contribute to environmental stewardship
- Members of the school community have more access to sustainably produced foods
- Members of the school community appreciate nature more and develop eco-friendly attitudes
- Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in environmentally sustainable food system practices

Questions for discussion (that arose in Round 2):

- Should we include language about climate change in any of the indicators?
- What community collaborations / relationships should we include in any of the outcomes?
- What other institutional support (policy / program / infrastructure / training / investment) indicators should we include in any of the outcomes?
- How else could we include concepts of food sovereignty in the indicators?
- Do we need to include more language anywhere about critical food literacy - i.e. learning about / asking critical questions about our global food system or different types of food systems?
- Which of the proposed indicators would you most like to see measured (and why)? And what tools could we use to measure them?



Proposed List of Environment Outcomes and Possible Indicators - Full List:

Proposed Outcome: Members of the school community learn and apply food skills that contribute to environmental stewardship

Possible indicators:

What is taught:

- Number of courses that teach students how to apply food skills that contribute to environmental stewardship
- Amount that traditional Indigenous food system practices are acknowledged and taught in appropriate ways

Growing:

- Number of students that learn to grow and harvest food
- Number of students that grow food at home

Cooking / preserving:

- Number of students that learn to preserve food to increase its shelf life
- Amount of food that students preserve at school and at home
- Number of students that know how to prepare healthy meals and snacks

- Number of students that report that they prepare healthy meals and snacks at home

Waste:

- Amount of food waste produced by students
- Amount of food waste produced by food service staff
- Amount of food waste that students bring home from school
- Amount of food packaging waste produced by students
- Amount of food packaging waste produced by food service staff
- Number of students that learn how to compost
- Number of schools that compost

Other:

- Carbon footprint of the school community
- Food miles of the food purchased by the school
- Amount that schools make use of reusable plateware
- Number of students that lead food initiatives that reduce environmental impacts

Proposed Outcome: Members of the school community have more access to sustainably produced foods

Possible indicators:

Purchases / growing:

- Amount (# and %) of sustainably produced food purchased by the school
- Amount of money spent by the school on sustainably produced food
- Reported ease of purchase of sustainably produced food by staff responsible for purchasing
- Amount of food grown by the school garden and served at school

Serving food at school:

- Number of days where sustainably produced food is served in school
- Number of meals or snacks of sustainably produced food served to students and staff
- Amount by weight (# and %) of sustainably produced food served to students and staff
- Variety of sustainably produced foods that are served at school

Providing access to families:

- Number of F2S fundraisers providing sustainably produced food
- Number of schools that are an access point for CSAs or other local food boxes

Institutional support:

- Number of institutional policies that include local and sustainable food procurement targets for schools.
- Number or % of institutional funds allocated to sustainable practices and the procurement of sustainable foods by schools.

Proposed Outcome: Members of the school community appreciate nature more and develop eco-friendly attitudes

Possible indicators:

- Amount that students experience outdoor learning
- Amount that students report that they want to be in contact with nature
- Student report how much connection and gratitude they feel for the land and what it offers (concept is based on traditional teachings)

Proposed Outcome: Members of the school community have more knowledge of and interest in environmentally sustainable food system practices

Possible indicators:

What is offered:

- # of events and activities that raise awareness about environmentally sustainable food system practices
- Amount that traditional Indigenous food system practices are acknowledged and taught in appropriate ways
- Amount that students enroll in courses that teach about the connections between food system practices, human health and the environment (e.g. the benefits of supporting pollinators)

Knowledge:

- Amount that members of the school community are able to identify/describe environmentally sustainable food system practices
- Amount that members of the school community are able to describe food sovereignty
- Amount that students can describe the advantages / disadvantages of different food systems for the health of people and planet
- Amount that members of the school community are able to describe the connections between food system practices, human health, the environment, race, justice, the climate, other related issues, and the impacts of their own personal choices.

Interest / Preference:

- Student perceptions of the importance of sustainable food practices
- School staff perceptions of the importance of sustainable food practices
- Amount that students express a preference for sustainably produced foods at home and at school
- Students' accountability towards the environment

Action:

- Amount (# and %) of sustainably produced food consumed by students
- Number of students that purchase sustainably produced food at school
- Frequency that students ask for more sustainably produced food to be served at school (or # of students that ask)
- Frequency that students ask for or purchase more sustainably produced food at home
- Amount of sustainably produced food purchased by families

- Number of student activities outside of school hours related to sustainable food (e.g. jobs, hobbies, learning, recreation, purchasing)
- Amount that students engage in more environmentally sustainable food initiatives and practices