

Garden State

on Your Plate



A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO BRINGING CHEFS, FARMERS
AND DELICIOUS, FARM-FRESH FOOD TO SCHOOLS

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on Your Plate

*a step-by-step guide to bringing chefs, farmers
and delicious, farm-fresh food to schools*

WRITTEN AND COMPILED BY KARLA COOK AND FRAN MCMANUS
FOR THE PRINCETON SCHOOL GARDENS COOPERATIVE



EXPLORING NJ PRODUCE ON THE FARM



IN THE GARDEN



IN THE KITCHEN



AND AT THE TABLE

About Princeton School Gardens Cooperative, Inc.

The Princeton School Gardens Cooperative, Inc. fosters garden- and food-based education in the classroom, cafeteria and community. The group formed in 2005 and received its 501(c)3 status in 2009.

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Garden State on Your Plate

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The Color System in our Table of Contents:

The content of this manual is divided into the 3 categories:

QUICK START

DRILL DOWN

OUR STORY.

The table of contents is color coded to identify all articles within each category. You can jump to specific articles just by clicking on the name.



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FOREWORD

As autumn curls into winter and schools across the state adjust to the new year, an opportunity to savor this *Garden State on Your Plate (GSOYP)* manual and to endorse its mission and creators is a gift. As a farm to school advocate, I've watched the members of the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative expand their reach, adjust to realities in their community and consistently pay homage to the farmers, chefs, students, teachers, schools and community members who make up this effort.

This is an undertaking of passion. It started with an idea and it became a reality as verified by the story in these pages. It was created for a community that wants a healthy future for children and it is a testament to the importance of community for this work. The tag line for the New Jersey Farm to School Network is "It's all about the food". But with *Garden State on Your Plate*, it isn't just about the food. It is about the people who grow, make, move, sell, cook and eat that food, both adults and children—and how taking on this work is a binding, nourishing and enriching effort for all involved.

Take what you can from this and create a GSOYP in your community. I have no doubt...it will be worth it.

Beth Feehan
Director
[NJ Farm to School Network](#)



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Garden State on Your Plate program is the creation of a community that gathers around good food and it is enriched by each person who participates. Thank you; we are grateful for the lessons we have learned and the friendships that thrive.

Please forgive us if we miss your name (and let us know; this manual lives on the web and can be updated!).

Thank you to our chefs and assistants, restaurateurs, farmers and producers, teachers, principals and to Judy Wilson, superintendent of Princeton Public Schools, Cherry Sprague, the district's science supervisor and to Stu Orefice, dining services director at Princeton University and a Princeton School Gardens Cooperative board member. Your first answer to us is "Yes!" and it has powered us through many a scoop of soup. Thank you, Fran McManus, for your steadfastness and good cheer and your deep belief in what we do.

Thank you to Dorothy Mullen, to Diane Landis and to Lee Yonish, whose work built the foundation of the PSGC and its programs. Thank you to Amy Mayer, a community leader and board member who guides the gardens that were our starting place and remain a chief tool of our education efforts, and to Maurie Cohen, who sees opportunities all 'round. Thank you to Todd Reichart for his ready web support.

We thank Beth Feehan, director of New Jersey Farm to School Network and Jen Carson and Martha Friend for providing feedback and edits on the manual, and for their insight into working joyfully and effectively with children.

As for the creation of this manual, we thank the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which funded the work, Frank Ryle, who provided a sensible project management structure and many hours of consulting, and the family foundation that gave us our start. We are grateful to Raoul and Carlo Momo, to Gab Carbone at the bent spoon, and Whole Earth Center, which has supported the work of the PSGC from the start.

And we thank our families, the members of which displayed exemplary patience when the deadlines were on us, the kitchen was dark and it was past dinnertime.

Karla Cook
Board Chair
Princeton School Gardens Cooperative
October 2012



INTRODUCTION

I am very pleased to see this how-to manual prepared by Princeton School Gardens Cooperative members. This tool serves as a powerful template on how to educate children about New Jersey agriculture while getting them to eat more nutritious fruits and vegetables.

The N.J. Department of Agriculture is encouraged by the interest of so many schools to develop tasting programs such as this, bringing farmers into schools and children out to gardens, farms, farmers markets and restaurants for field trips.

New Jerseyans overwhelmingly appreciate locally grown produce—from Jersey Fresh corn and tomatoes to peaches, blueberries and so many others. Our farmers produce fruits and vegetables which account for more than \$400 million in revenues each year.

Educating children and their parents about food and agriculture increases sales of Jersey Fresh produce and builds our state economy by creating jobs, retaining viable farms and preserving agricultural lands. Programs like Garden State on Your Plate encourage greater understanding about the food we eat and the stewardship of our land and water for our children and future generations.

Douglas H. Fisher
New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture

The Princeton School Gardens Cooperative sprang into being in 2005, with a mission (garden- and food-based education) and a common goal in mind: Establish (or re-establish) edible gardens at all of the district's six public schools. This work was guided by Dorothy Mullen, who co-founded the group with Diane Landis, a United Way veteran and community organizer; Fran McManus, an editor and writer, and Karla Cook, a food journalist.

Using her skill as a Master Gardener and her knowledge as a social worker, Ms. Mullen had created expansive, Eden-like gardens at Riverside Elementary School with the support and carpentry skills of the principal, Bill Cirullo. The gardens quickly became a gathering place for after-school clubs, and also created outdoor classrooms where Ms. Mullen conducted workshops for students, teachers and community members.

The protected courtyard at Johnson Park Elementary School had long been home to a whimsical garden, so the group was able to break ground and build beds at Community Park Elementary and at Littlebrook Elementary in a year or so. Next was John Witherspoon Middle School; and finally, a garden raising that drew some 75 volunteers resulting in 16 raised beds situated and filled at Princeton High School—in one afternoon.

But Ms. Mullen was in the vanguard. She was bringing the produce into the classrooms, cooking simple recipes, serving up soups and salads and stews, clearly linking spade to spork, Garden State to Plate. Every school needed this, too, and this need, juxtaposed against less-than-perfect school meals, became the foundation of a successful grant application to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. That \$30,000 grant funded a successful pilot project at Community Park and Littlebrook elementary schools, and ultimately, this manual.

Many residents of Princeton are demographically advantaged in education and income, removing some of the variables that can challenge a bumpy pilot program. Each co-founder, for example, worked from home, affording an agility in response that parents with full-time, faraway jobs simply couldn't match. Though our school lunches suffered from the low-price mentality (very few fresh green or orange vegetables, refined grains, nuggets-pizza-pasta triumvirate, alarmingly robust a la carte sales) specified in school-board sanctioned requirements, there is a vocal contingent of community members that understands the links between food, health and the world around us.

The Princeton School Gardens Cooperative leveraged this movement and used the schools as a laboratory for the first year, and then, with the help of another grant, moved into a YMCA after-school program for at-risk youth for the second year. This manual distills the lessons we learned, as well as project management skills generously tutored by Frank Ryle, a project manager and the author of *Keeping Score: Project Management for the Pros*, into a toolkit for bringing the best of New Jersey's fresh produce and other products right to the mouths of children in your school—and building your community at the same time.

You provide the chefs and the school. The chefs find the farmers, who bring the ingredients. And then, the hungry hordes (aka elementary school students) find themselves eating braised Swiss chard, Vichyssoise, pea-tendrils salad or polenta with pesto—and asking for seconds.

In this chapter you will read:

- ◆ How the Garden State on Your Plate program came to be
- ◆ How the tastings opened the eyes of a principal
- ◆ Why we advocate using a Project Management approach
- ◆ Why we think that using local produce is best
- ◆ How other school districts are running their tasting programs

from spade to spork



Garden State on Your Plate: *From Proposal to Program*

The invitation to apply for a grant came in July 2009, after several years of ongoing conversations with Steve Downs, now Assistant Vice President, Health, at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Karla Cook met Steve shortly after the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative had formed and the four founding members had settled on the first goal of establishing edible gardens at all six schools in the district.

She pitched him on ideas every few months, but it was the concept that connected community, environment and the schools that resonated for him with the farm to school pilot. He offered refinements and said it was a one-time President's Grant; since she was the default grants writer, she agreed. He said keep it to \$30,000. She said OK.

But the PSGC had created its group and set to work without any boundaries, any structure, any strategic plan, or any other documents in place, so there was little guidance available. Two members sent the draft grant application to the other two founders, who reluctantly gave their OK. In August, 2009, PSGC received permission from Princeton Public Schools to host the pilot—as long as the group followed rules (stay out of the way, etc.). The group was in, and in plenty of time to lay the groundwork for a spring semester kick-off—and catch the Garden State's spectacular spring treats: asparagus, lettuces, strawberries and green peas.

Then came dismaying news. To be eligible for funding, the PSGC needed 501(c)3 status. The coordinator completed the paperwork, and the wait began. But because members weren't sure whether the group would obtain the 501(c)3 status, the group didn't use that time to contemplate logistics of preparing and serving tasting portions of fresh, local foods to 700-something people at two different schools.

In April of 2010, PSGC achieved 501c3 status, and the year-long grant was approved—to begin on July 1, 2010—dovetailing with summer vacation, long-standing plans and all three of the core team leaving town at different times. All vowed to work fast and smart in August for a September launch, when all planned to return to Princeton. And that's what happened. Because the three team members were accustomed to working under rigid deadlines, the first tasting—Chef Gary's Famous Salsa, with Jersey tomatoes from Walter Bonczkiewicz of Village Farms in Lawrenceville, just 5 miles from the schools—went well. But behind the scenes, there was predictable disorder, and team members alternated between being grim, tense and elated.

One school asked to reschedule the introductory dinner for faculty and staff but there were no other free dates, so that event was canceled, removing a

Using This Toolkit:

The content of this manual is divided into the 3 categories below. Each is identified by color-coded bars, bullets, and headline type in the table of contents, chapter openings, and body text.

QUICK START:

For a Quick Start, get your tasting under way using the project management framework from Mr. Ryle's book and quick-start sidebars, charts and posters.

DRILL DOWN:

Drill into the hyperlinks and resources for more comprehensive understanding and to create a rooted movement.

OUR STORY:

Read about the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative's own experience to build on our successes—and avoid our mistakes.

Garden State on Your Plate



key opportunity to inform stakeholders and build enthusiasm and buy-in. At the first tasting, the timing was tighter than the core team members had ever imagined. The crowds of children were wildly enthusiastic, overwhelming

volunteer survey-takers with lengthy opinions on flavors and texture and taste, and some surveys were returned only partially completed. Chef Gary Giberson, comfortable with children, could have easily filled an hour with each lunchtime group, answering and asking questions, but when the whole lunch period was 20 minutes, counting line-standing and seat-taking, the most time available was 5 minutes. But the worst was the feeling of publicity opportunity lost: There were endless, beautiful photo opportunities but the school required that parents, on a sheet at the beginning of the year, complete a form that allows or disallows publication of their children's photographs. And there was no way to tell in advance which children could, or couldn't be photographed.

The videographer, initially excited and contagiously ambitious about the documentary—and very enthusiastic about creating three-minute shorts for the children to see in advance of each tasting—fell ill.

The remaining sessions smoothed out. The core team refined the process, streamlined the steps. Sometimes the video was delivered ahead of time and sometimes it wasn't. The PSGC garnered the support of the Parent-Teacher Organizations at both schools, which eased the search for volunteer helpers. Both schools agreed to copy the two-page fact sheets and one volunteered translation services, so they were available in both English and Spanish. The team learned to feed the faculty and staff early and often. It scrapped the food-waste monitoring and simplified the survey sheet. The lack of photo permissions persisted as an impediment to telling the most compelling story

About Garden State on Your Plate

Schools:

Community Park Elementary
Littlebrook Elementary
Princeton Young Achievers
After-school Program

Chefs:

Christopher Albrecht
Scott Anderson
Gab Carbone
Davide Ercolano
Gary Giberson
Rob Harbison
Alex Levine
Stu Orefice
Craig Shelton
Linda Twining

Farmers:

Walter Bonczkiewicz
Matt Conner
Jess Niederer
Mary Ann Thompson
Kevin and Bob Flaim
Susan and Ted Blew
Bruce Cobb
Ed Lidzbarski

Students Served:

720

Produce Featured:

Apples

Beets
Corn
Cranberries
Kale
Pea Shoots
Spinach
Sweet Potatoes
Swiss Chard
Tomatoes

Grants:

Concordia: \$3,300
Robert Wood Johnson: \$30,000

about the project. The PSGC had a great response to the scholarship offer for teachers wishing to attend the NOFA-NJ conference. Field trips to farms and local businesses (including an artisan ice cream shop whose owners specialize in treats made with local and organic ingredients) were embraced by both schools. Because the Garden State on Your Plate was up and running at Community Park Elementary School, U.S. Rep. Rush Holt chose it as the site to announce passage of legislation that included [farm-to-school funding](#), a cause that he had championed, the [Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010](#). His presence brought [news coverage](#) to the school, as well as testimonials for the Garden State on Your Plate program from him, from farmer participants, from the NJ Department of Agriculture and from Judy Wilson, the Princeton Public Schools superintendent.

The coordinator resigned in mid-spring to concentrate on another project she had been coordinating concurrently, the tastings were completed in June and

next up was the report due to RWJF. But by that time, the new coordinator, a data cruncher, made short work of the analysis. And a videographer/director agreed to assist our original videographer in moving the documentary along.

Despite the hurdles that appeared in front of the program at its beginning, the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative managed to meet, and in some cases exceed, eight of the 12 goals set. Tastings did serve those 720 students and their parents—and teachers and staff at two elementary schools—eight, not 10, times. Surveys showed that a majority of students—from kindergartners to adolescents—were eager to sample the food. Some items were more popular than others, such as sweet potato chips, which, at one school, were tried by 97 percent of the students. But less popular or even never-tried foods were also tested, such as raw cranberries: in one school, 86 percent of the children sampled them.

A Project Management Approach

As the deadline for this manual was approaching, Ms. McManus and Ms. Cook, as co-authors, were mired in indecision. How to wrestle the subject into communicable form? Start with the goal or the need? Write one flowing narrative or myriad little pieces? Then Ms. McManus attended a talk by the author Frank Ryle, who travels the globe, teaching the very thing we needed: project management. Mr. Ryle agreed to meet with the writers about the manual, and before the end of the first meeting, both were feeling good about the manual again, and he had volunteered to see the entire project through.

Over a series of 1½ hour meetings that often stretched into 3 hours, Mr. Ryle took the writers through the process of clear thinking about the manual, in the process illuminating the path not taken when the core team was creating the tastings program, and even before that, when the group originally was formed.

Though neither writer has yet developed world-class skills on this new approach, Mr. Ryle's teaching has the ring of truth and when followed rigorously, will likely prevent the most onerous obstacles (miscommunications, to start) from appearing. His steps and supporting work guide this toolkit and are taken from his book, [Keeping Score: Project Management for the Pros](#), and adapted for a tastings program.

Even more to the team's delight were the children's comments. During a tasting dedicated to spinach, one entire table of students agreed that the cream of spinach soup was "even better than all the ice cream in the world." And the soup was hot, served on an unseasonably hot day. At another tasting, a parent volunteer was told that the beet soup "is extraordinary." At the tasting dedicated to corn, a child proclaimed about the polenta, "This is my new favorite food." Finally, at a later tasting, after slurping up raw pea tendrils salad from his small sample cup, a student announced, "I want a big portion of this as my lunch!"

Deepening the bonds between the schools, the community and the farmers was the real sleeper hit of this project. Garden State on Your Plate brought farmers into schools, and children to farms, to farmers' markets and to restaurant kitchens for field trips. The program connected chefs to chefs, chefs to teachers, chefs to contract food service employees, farmers to parents, a politician to students—people to each other.

But it was the response of the children, parents, faculty and staff to this program that made clear the power of creating community around good food. Children came home, asking for braised Swiss chard or polenta with pesto, and demanding beets for dinner. Parents showed up to help with tastings, and then volunteered

their expertise—Maggie Furniss, a watercolor artist in Princeton, has created 12 paintings from the schools' edible gardens as the basis of a Garden State On Your Plate garden calendar and food guide, still waiting to be created.

The tasting program has put into motion several advances. Some of the 15 chefs at Princeton University, led by participating chef Stu Orefice, Director of Dining Services, signed on to the Let's Move Chefs into Schools campaign, which fights childhood obesity. Chef Orefice persuaded Chartwells, the food service purveyor for the schools, to allow a guest chef to cook a meal for Princeton High School as a pilot.

Alex Levine, chef at Whole Earth Center, reported that he found a routine with the tastings and he would like to expand them to include the remaining two schools and bring the original schools' tastings "to the next level." Chef Gary Giberson of Sustainable Fare and Chef Davide Ercolano, both at the Lawrenceville School, are interested in exploring middle school cooking class opportunities. And Chris Albrecht, executive chef at Eno Terra and also a member of [Let's Move Chefs to Schools](#), is ready to teach the finer points of cuisine to employees of the current food service purveyor—and they say that they are ready to learn.

QUICK START



CHEF GARY GIBERSON OF SUSTAINABLE FARE AND LAWRENCEVILLE SCHOOL

Through the tastings project, the PSGC connected to Maurie Cohen, a professor of environmental science at NJIT, and through him and his research into sustainable consumption, began building bridges to the middle school. That connection resulted in an end-of-school lunch hosted by Chef Albrecht at Eno Terra, attended by Jason Burr, principal at John Witherspoon Middle School, Chef Orefice of Princeton University, Ms. McManus and Ms. Cook, where the group discussed opportunities for teaching food literacy classes (cooking, gardening, media literacy, etc.) in the school's unused teaching kitchens.

Also, through the tastings, a small group of food professionals in town has formed to discuss the possibility of creating a community kitchen and cooking school—a kind of nucleus for the good food movement.

The Princeton School Gardens Cooperative finished the Garden State on Your Plate program year with a surplus of funds; it requested and was granted by RWJF the time and funds to create and produce this manual—and to extend the program into the next year at the two schools. Combined with other funds provided by a family foundation, the PSGC also launched another Garden State on Your Plate pilot in a smaller venue—an after-school YMCA-based program for at-risk children. In this venture, chefs and farmers luxuriated in full hour sessions with the children for conversations, demonstrations, food preparation and tastings.



SWEET POTATO PUREE TOPPED WITH A LITTLE NJ MAPLE SYRUP



TO SEE A VIDEO THAT OUTLINES THE GOALS AND CHALLENGES OF GARDEN STATE ON YOUR PLATE, CLICK ON THE LOGO ABOVE OR GO TO YOU TUBE AND SEARCH FOR PSGCOOP.

OUR STORY

Sharon's Story

If there is a single, defining triumph of the Garden State on Your Plate program — this notion that if our group could just bring chefs and farmers into the school cafeterias, they would come together and create something both nutritious and delicious and they would change people's lives in the process — it would have to be the experience of Sharon Goldman, one of the two principals who welcomed our pilot program at their elementary schools.

Sharon, a petite woman from a family of educators, has a quiet and unassuming manner and kind brown eyes. She had been warming to school food efforts over the nine years that one of the parents had been involved. In the years since that 2005 garden-raising, a group of teachers had come to see the space as an extension of their classrooms and taught lessons there that dovetailed with the New Jersey State Standards. The garden had become a part of what the K-5 students had come to expect in Spanish, Art, Health and Science classes, among others.

On that day, Sharon moved through the cacophony of students, bending to connect with one child, and then another. Eventually, she made her way to the tastings table, where glove-clad volunteers were filling sample cups with tastes of three dishes: chilled beet-orange soup, roasted beets and nearly translucent rounds of raw beets. Runners left with trays of samples and returned the empties at a steady clip. Alex Levine, chef of the day from Princeton's



CHEF CHRISTOPHER ALBRECHT TALKS WITH SHARON GOLDMAN ABOUT PREPARING NJ SWEET POTATOES

Whole Earth Center, was dressed in checked pants and clogs that identify him to his profession — and made him easy to spot among the swarm of children. The line for seconds was growing and we were working against a 20-minute lunch period, start to finish, so Sharon stepped to the side and said hello.

We greeted her and offered her a taste of the beets. After a slight hesitation, she took the sample cup of cooked red and golden beets, and the one holding the raw rounds as well. She took a breath and put a sliver of cooked beet in her mouth. Not bad, she admitted. She reached into the other cup and drew out a beautiful disk of raw beet, took a bite—and grinned. Then she ate the rest.

At the end of the program's first year, Sharon readily agreed to participating in a [panel discussion](#) about the program and there, spoke movingly of its benefits to the school and the children.

The Garden State on Your Plate project, and all of the groundwork we had laid through the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative - and preceding that group - had inspired her. She addressed the children at each of the tastings, reminded them of the format and flavors they had experienced at earlier sessions, welcomed the chefs and farmers from our own and neighboring communities — even linked the school's edible gardens to the food the children were devouring and in a couple of sentences, took the concept from spade to spork.

Feedback on Garden State on Your Plate

Our program garnered rave reviews—even beyond the beet incident. Here's a sampling:

JUDY WILSON, Princeton Public Schools Superintendent

Judy Wilson said she especially appreciated the comprehensiveness of the program. “First was the program’s integration with the curriculum and support of the curriculum. Second, I loved the children’s expressions when the chefs were in the cafeteria, and the children were tasting Swiss chard, or kale, for the first time. So many children wouldn’t have had that experience without this organized program. I also think it brought community connections—to businesses, institutions, Robert Wood Johnson, that all came together in this tight partnership to bring more than awareness to the children, to help them think about personal choices and lifestyle.

“From a faculty angle, Garden State on Your Plate literally and figuratively expanded the classroom. Here we were able to be outside and have tactile experiences, use observational skills, inquiry skills and then, the joy in final products. When I think about the chefs who visited us with such energy, and the way they were able to engage the students with their questions, and the kids’ initial reactions to foods, suppositions with taste and what those foods would be used for. They brought a facet to the kids’ understanding of what it takes for food to be grown, shipped, prepared, promoted.”

JEN CARSON, Parent, Professional Baker and Former Elementary School Teacher

“I love the program. The kids look forward to it, even though it’s rushed. It’s very important. If you had someone as animated as Chris (Albrecht) or Alex (Levine) go out to the school garden with the group, pick the vegetable, talk about the herb that’s in the ground - that’s so moving. There are a lot of great discoveries for any chef to make. It’s contagious, when a kid sees an adult so fascinated and excited about an ingredient, it’s going to make them excited. It’s going to make them want to take care of it. My son, Sean, he’s 13—took a tour at Canal Farm with Chris. Chris is so animated—he’s picking herbs and having kids taste them. Sean came home and said, ‘I want to grow Thai basil.’ The chefs and farmers, they don’t know the impact they have on each and every kid.”

“A lot of parents told me that their kids came home and said, ‘We need to buy kale, cause I know how to cook it.’ Parents and kids are intimidated by certain vegetables, so that’s the most important part of this program: It takes the school into the home and it takes healthy eating into the home.

“The anti-smoking campaign goes through kids, who nag the parents to quit smoking. Maybe parents were forced to eat mushy vegetables as kids. Now their kids see these things prepared well, and they have the tools to do it. It’s reviving vegetable eating.”

STU OREFICE, Dining Services Director, Princeton University

“The Garden State on Your Plate program is great for the community. And it’s a great way for the university to give back. Our chefs get a lot out of it, and it spreads the word on sustainability. Part of our program is educating folks in the area, and I included the tastings program

in the Princeton University sustainability report. Shana Weber [PU sustainability coordinator] likes it. And there’s great resource in our association: ‘Oh, Princeton did it? It must be good’. We’re in for next year. Let us know when you need us!”

MARTHA FRIEND, Science Teacher, Littlebrook Elementary School

“The Garden State on Your Plate program was nothing but positive. I hope the data showed what we saw and heard back from parents, and teachers—that there was a two-fold benefit: a willingness to try new fruits and vegetables and newfound understanding about where those foods were coming from. And because it happened more than a few times, teachers saw what it could be and were thrilled to see that it could continue to happen. Tastings, only one or two times isn’t enough.

“The field trips were phenomenal, but the reality of those logistics is huge. And parts of the program will sustain, like the cooking station; teachers don’t have the resources.”

ANNIE KOSEK, Principal, Littlebrook Elementary School

“Everyone loved the tastings and found them to be valuable. Feedback from parents was good, too. Hopefully, we will have a newly designed garden education program this coming year and the tastings can be an extension of that learning, although even as a stand-alone, the tastings are very meaningful.” The peripherals—the fact sheets, the vocabulary posters, the fun facts posters, the scholarships for teachers, were all good and gave the teachers some talking points, as did the videos, she wrote in an email.

VERA MAYNARD, Nurse and Health Teacher, Community Park Elementary School

“I really liked the video as a preview - the students need to know a little bit about what was coming. We showed it during lunchtime the day before, and that was nice. We liked the background with the farms, where the food came from, how they harvested it, knowing about whatever they were going to be eating. The kids loved when the farmers came in. Farmer Jess had a video, so she showed them about her farm and told them about

it, then gave them spinach. The children just loved it. The kids made thank yous; they picked out the little things. Some said your dog is really cute. A lot of kids tasted things they wouldn’t have normally eaten.”

She said the other teachers enjoyed the program as well. “There was no work on their part as far as showing the films. If anything they got an extra class when the farmers came in.



PRINCIPAL ANNIE KOSEK HELPS SERVE SWEET POTATO FOCACCIA

Some teachers incorporated the gardens in the lessons. If more knew how to use the garden, they would have incorporated it.” She is considering rearranging her lessons to better coordinate food/nutrition classes with the garden season, while still adhering to required standards.

The field trips to Griggstown Quail Farm and Market, Eno Terra Restaurant and Canal Farm, and The Bent Spoon ice cream store, were hits with the children and the teachers, and the scholarship provided to her for a NOFA-NJ conference, she said, changed her eating habits.

ADAM BLEJWAS, Spanish Teacher and Garden Committee Member, Community Park Elementary School

“I liked the tastings I was able to go to because the foods were so simple. What you brought to the children was so dressed down—in its raw element, in both senses of the word.”

RAOUL MOMO, Co-owner, Terra Momo Restaurants

“There’s such a disconnect for kids on where their food comes from. Chris (Albrecht) gets requests all the time. If he’s going to put time into the community, the Garden State on Your Plate program hits the essence of what we’re all about. The restaurant suffers for a little bit, but that’s OK. It’s all about routine for these schools and this is a way to get into their program. When that happens, there are a lot of benefits.”

STEVE DOWNS, Assistant Vice President, Health, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

“The program turned each of the events into something really fun and special—and then, to go beyond that and have the connection into the home: ‘What did you do at school?’ ‘We had a chef. And here’s something we brought from there.’ That has potential to have a ripple. And I love the way we took advantage of the local resources. There was a strong sense that you had pulled a network together. You got local chefs, you got lots of

parents; you really had people who wanted to be a part of it, people who cared. You made it easy for people to participate and were welcoming. Too often there are projects where, ‘This is our thing, rather than, ‘Hey you want to jump on board? You’re on board!’”

WENDY KACZERSKI, Parent and Grants Officer, Concordia Foundation

“The program is great, and there has been wonderful feedback from parents, teachers and funders. The earlier you start making kids aware of the connection between what’s on their plate and where it comes from, the better.”

STEPHANIE CHORNEY, Parent, Pediatrician, PTO President at Community Park Elementary School

“The Garden State on Your Plate program is great. I’m happy to see it continue at our school. Having the chef and the farmer together is great for adults and kids. The cafeteria is a natural place to have tastings, since it provides a direct link to school meals. Health classes are also a nice option for these tasting collaborations to highlight healthy living with healthy food options.”

ANN VERSHBOW, YMCA and Princeton Young Achievers

“It was wonderful. Exposing this group of kids to the array of people, the personalities of chefs and farmers was a big part of it. Even guys bringing plants - I had no idea kale got so big! The bee guy was really good. He knew how to talk to kids, and the real hive was so exciting. I learned all sorts of things and I think other adults did too. And the level of commitment and excitement in the work came through. Everyone who was doing something with the kids was obviously having fun and were also very knowledgeable. We learned about the kids—it got them talking. One had a font of knowledge in his head we never knew!”

DRILL DOWN

Why Garden State on Your Plate Focuses on Local Farms and Produce

One of the main goals of Garden State on Your Plate is to promote the benefits that local farms and farm products bring to the community. Here are some ways in which local farms that are managed using eco-friendly practices can contribute to the environmental, economic, social and culinary well-being of residents in the Garden State:

Flavor: The produce trade that supplies most of our nation’s food markets, restaurants and institutional kitchens is an international industry in which fruits and vegetables may spend a week or more in transit between the field and the market. In order to make that journey, produce must be tough enough to withstand handling and the passage of time without getting damaged or spoiled. That toughness may come from harvesting fruit before it is ripe or through the selection of produce varieties that have been bred to perform well in large-scale, long-distance distribution programs. In contrast, when there is only a short distance between the field and the point of sale, a farmer can harvest produce at or close to the moment of ripeness that yields maximum flavor. And they can get their produce into the hands of the buyer quickly so that it can be eaten before its flavor and texture deteriorate.



FARMER MATT CONVER OF CHERRY GROVE ORGANIC FARM IN LAWRENCEVILLE

Quality: All produce items are subject to deterioration due to time, distance, temperature, and handling. Locally grown produce has a shorter distance to market and, apart from storage crops like potatoes and apples, farmers who sell direct aim to harvest only what they can sell within the next few days. This means that local produce generally is fresher than the long-distance food in the supermarket. And fresher means less nutrient loss, more flavor, better texture, and less waste.

Variety: To be viable in the large-scale, long-distance food marketplace, produce must withstand handling and time required to move thousands of miles between the field and the supermarket. As a result, the American food system is built on a small number of varieties of each produce type—varieties that fit the requirements for long-distance transport and large-scale sales.

What We Mean By Local

Although we sometimes supplement our produce for our tastings with products from farms in eastern Pennsylvania, we use “grown in New Jersey” as our criteria for local.

There is no official, legal definition for local. When you see local on a store sign or restaurant menu, be sure to ask the owner how far farm products can travel and still be labeled as local.



FARMER ED LIDZBARSKI OF E.R. AND SON ORGANIC FARM IN COLTS NECK

Preserve a working landscape: Well-managed farms add to the scenic beauty of the landscape while making productive use of land. This is especially important in New Jersey where land is at a premium and there is constant pressure to build on farmland. Farmers are less likely to sell their land for

development when it is providing them with a good financial return. Purchasing their products helps make their farms viable while preserving our agricultural landscape.

Local economics: Visit a local farm that grows a variety of crops and you will see a hive of human activity. That's because [local farms that sell to the local market provide jobs](#). For example, a [2010 study by the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture](#) at Iowa State University found that converting soy and corn acreage into fruit and vegetable production would have a significant local economic impact as well as creating more than 9,300 jobs—as opposed to the 2,578 jobs created by corn and soybean production. Selling half of those fruits and vegetables through local farmer-owned stores, the study reports, would create an additional 9,652 jobs. In 2 studies, community

economist Michael Shuman reported that if [purchasing of locally grown food reached 25 percent in northeast Ohio](#), it would create 27,000 new jobs and increase annual regional output (the local gross domestic product) by \$4.2 billion. A [25 percent increase in Boulder County](#) would produce 1,700 new jobs and \$137 million in annual economic output.

Some farmers are also very creative about producing or purchasing a range of value-added products to sell to their customers—such as flour milled from locally grown grain, jams made from local fruit, cheese from local milk, and beeswax products made from local hives. This creates opportunities for other entrepreneurs to start small food businesses that process and distribute local farm products, which also keeps more money circulating in the local economy.

[According to the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union](#), less than 20 percent of the price you pay for food in the grocery store goes back to the farmer. [The USDA puts the farmer's share of the food dollar](#) at between 11.6 and 15.8 cents and the marketing share at 84.2 cents. When you buy local, you help the farmer's bottom line by allowing them to capture a higher percentage of the food dollar than they would if they sold into a national distribution stream. That gives farmers more money to spend in their local economy, which helps other businesses to also thrive.

Diversity: Diversity adds strength and resiliency to a diet, a community and an ecosystem. When you support local farms with your food dollars, you help to keep farming as a viable part of your region's mix of businesses. When you buy from local farmers who manage their land using organic practices or integrated pest management, you help them to support the rich, diverse biological life on their farm. When you seek out farms that grow a variety of heirloom crops or raise old breeds of cattle, sheep, pigs and poultry, you reward those farmers for helping to preserve genetic diversity in food crops and livestock. That genetic diversity provides protection against collapse in our food crops because of disease and it preserves genetic material that may be essential to breeding new crops that can better adapt to changing climate conditions.

Food Security and Safety: If we lose our local farms we diminish our ability to feed ourselves. And we increase the distance that food has to travel and the number of hands that it passes through, which increases the risk of intentional or unintentional contamination. When you know your farmer, you can ask about their farm management philosophy including pesticide use, planting of genetically modified crops, and use of hormones and antibiotics on

poultry and livestock. This makes it easier for you to avoid inputs that you want to keep out of your diet.

Education: Farmers are a great local resource for educational workshops and advice on planting and maintaining a school garden. Field trips to the farm are fun and educational.

Choice: Thriving local farms provide us with a much greater selection of fruits, vegetables, and meats than our local grocery store. And they give us an alternative to the industrial food system that has led to so much consolidation in the production, distribution, and sale of food.

Environment: Well-managed farms produce valuable ecological services for their community. These include protecting streams from runoff, recharging ground water, building topsoil, reducing erosion, and providing habitat for wildlife.



FARMER BRUCE COBB OF ARC GREENHOUSES IN SHILOH

Other Models for Tasting Programs

Many innovative farm-to-table tasting programs are under way around the country. The programs listed below are just a taste of what is going on in this growing movement to introduce school children to the flavor and value of local produce. We encourage you to take some time exploring these websites. On them you will find ideas for lesson content, funding models, sponsorship sources, and community partnerships.

Added Value Farm-based Learning Programs

Added Value in Brooklyn offers farm-based learning programs for students of all ages. Through its programs, New York school children learn to grow, harvest and cook fresh produce. Added Value also offers farm field trips for elementary school children and service-learning visits for middle school and high school students. Read more about its programs at [Added Value's website](#).

Cooking Up Change: Students Transforming the Future of School Food

Each year, teams of high school culinary arts students from around the country come to Washington, DC, to compete with each other to determine which team can create the most delicious school lunch that incorporates locally raised ingredients. The lunches must meet national nutrition standards for school lunches and be prepared

within tight budget constraints. Cooking Up Change is a project of Chicago-based Healthy Foods Campaign, which hosts its own [Cooking Up Change contest amongst 15 Chicago high schools with culinary arts programs](#). The winning recipe from the Chicago contest is served in Chicago schools over the course of the next year and the winning team goes to Washington, DC to compete in the national competition. The winning recipe at the national competition is prepared again a day or two later and served to Congress. Learn more about Cooking Up Change on the [Healthy Schools Campaign's website](#).

Cooking with Kids

Cooking with Kids is a food education program that works with pre-K through 6th grade students in Santa Fe. It offers cooking classes and tasting classes based on using locally grown produce. In its Super Chefs program, area chefs are paired with local schools where they give hands-on cooking classes with the older children. Its Farmers in the Schools program pairs up farmers to schools where the farmers participate in cooking classes and share their knowledge about growing food and about eating locally and seasonally. Cooking with Kids offers free downloadable tasting lessons and recipes on the [Cooking with Kids website](#). For a more in-depth look at how tasting classes are conducted, Cooking with Kids also sells a DVD entitled *Cooking with Kids Fruit and Vegetable Tasting: A Step by Step Guide*.



JOHN EMMONS, SCIENCE TEACHER AT COMMUNITY PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, JOINS IN A LUNCHTIME TASTING

Days of Taste

Days of Taste is the in-school tasting program of the American Institute of Wine and Food. Modeled after the French program, *Journée de Gout*, Days of Taste brings local produce and local chefs into fourth- and fifth-grade classrooms to provide cooking lessons and tastings. The focus of this program, which began in 1995, is on the taste experience and on making the farm to table connection. For more information, check the [Days of Taste website](#).

Early Sprouts: Gardening and Nutrition Experiences for the Young Child

Early Sprouts is a 24-week curriculum that introduces preschoolers to the seed to table experience of six vegetables—carrots, tomatoes, green beans, bell peppers, chard, and butternut squash. Developed at the Keene State College Childhood Development Center, the lessons include sensory exploration, cooking and tastings. At the end of each week, children take home a recipe

and ingredients to recreate a classroom dish with their family. To learn more and to order the *Early Sprouts* guide and *Early Sprouts* cookbook, visit the [Early Sprouts website](#).

Eat to Learn Taste Off Competition

Sherwood Elementary School was the site of a Taste Off Competition that offered 400 elementary school students a taste of eight different fresh produce items. The students visited eight tasting stations, getting a piece of produce at each station as well as a punch on their personal tasting punch card. Each child then rated his/her most and least favorite produce item on a wall chart. The wall chart and punch cards were used as the basis of analysis by the children of taste preferences by produce item, gender, and class. Read about the competition on the [Food with Kid Appeal blog](#).

Edible Schoolyard Project

Along with its innovative gardening and cooking programs at the Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School in Berkeley, Edible Schoolyard maintains a lively, informative website that is a gathering place for information about edible education programs from around the world. The goal of the Edible Schoolyard Project is to share lesson plans and best practices for edible education and to build a collective voice for change. To learn more, visit the [Edible Schoolyard Project's website](#).



ADAM BLEJWAS, SPANISH TEACHER AT COMMUNITY PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, WORKS IN THE SCHOOL GARDEN



CRANBERRY RELISH PREPARED BY CHEF ROB HARBISON OF PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Food is Elementary

The Food Studies Institute trains individuals to become certified Food Educators. The three-day training course focuses on the Institute's Food is Elementary program—a 28-unit curriculum that teaches children about food, nutrition and culture. Once certified, educators can then teach the Food is Elementary curriculum in their own schools. This curriculum uses non-local foods as well as local. Learn more on the [Food Studies Institute's website](#).

Fresh from the Farm

Fresh from the Farm is a fee-for-service program of Seven Generations Ahead, an Illinois-based non-profit that promotes ecological sustainability and healthy communities. Fresh from the Farm is an 8-week program that focuses on a different local produce item each week. The program is taught to kindergartners through 8th grade and includes tours of local organic farms, classroom tastings and lessons, cooking demonstrations by chefs, farmer visits to classrooms and parent education about healthy food preparation. Fresh from the Farm has two implementation models: Direct

implementation in which Seven Generations Ahead sends trained educators in to teach the Fresh From the Farm curriculum. Or indirect in which Seven Generations Ahead trains teachers and other members of the school community to teach the Fresh from the Farm curriculum. Read more on the [Seven Generations Ahead website](#).

From Our Farms: Teaching Kids about Food, Nutrition and the Farm

From Our Farms is an activity-based education program that focuses on New Jersey-raised fruits, vegetables, and dairy cows. Through hands-on activities and worksheets, children ages 3 to 8

learn how foods are grown, which New Jersey farms provide specific food items, how to buy and prepare those items, and how each item is part of a good diet. Prepared by the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Gloucester County, From Our Farms has lessons for in-school and after-school programs. It also provides family learning boxes that are available at libraries throughout Gloucester County. Learning boxes are designed to guide at-home family-oriented explorations of local produce and dairy products. Sample worksheets and an order form for the From Our Farms curriculum are available on the [From Our Farms website](#).

The Good Food Project

The Good Food Project brings fresh produce into schools for in-class tastings. The tastings focus on the multi-sensory experience and on encouraging children to find words to describe the taste and texture of produce. The Good Food Project is also working with a Chicago-area high school to change the food culture through expanded produce tastings and an in-school farmers market. Read more on the [Good Food Project website](#).

Greenmarket Youth Education Project

Greenmarket NYC offers three programs that introduce New York school children to local farms and foods. School Tours at Greenmarkets offers grade-appropriate tours of its 50+ markets. These tours include tastings and conversations with the farmers. The children receive take-home recipes and activities. Meet Your Farmer Classroom Visits are designed to complement the School Tours. Farmers visit New York City classrooms to talk about their daily farm work throughout the year, the products they raise and the role that the market has in bringing fresh food to city residents. The children taste products from the farm and have a conversation with the farmer. Greenmarket's newest program is its Seed to Plate Curriculum. The program includes lessons, farm market visits, classroom visits by farmers and chefs, film screenings, tastings and cooking classes. Read more on the [Grow NYC website](#).

Growing Minds Farm to School

Growing Minds is a program of the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project. Growing Minds connects farmers and farm products to local schools. It also helps to establish school gardens and connect them to the classroom. Growing Minds offers garden and produce lesson plans that integrate reading, art, science, activities and tasting exercises. The lessons are free and available on the [Growing Minds website](#).

Harvest Challenge Competition

Every autumn, student teams from high schools in Vernon County, Wisconsin, prepare and serve their version of a healthy school lunch to a panel of judges. Along with appealing to the judges' taste buds, the teams must meet certain criteria: They must include locally raised ingredients, meet the National School Lunch Program's nutritional guidelines and the cost must be less than \$1 per meal. Each high school's team works with a local chef to design its meal, which is presented at an annual Harvest Challenge Competition. Selected students and community members attending the Harvest Challenge can also vote for their favorite meal. The Harvest Challenge gives students the

opportunity to learn about nutrition, local agriculture and the culinary arts. It also demonstrates the potential to create healthful, tasty school lunches using local farm products. Read more about the Harvest Challenge on the [Valley Stewardship Network's website](#).

Harvest of the Month

Harvest of the Month, a program of the California Department of Public Health's Network for a Healthy California, is a comprehensive, easy-to-use program designed to increase fruit and vegetable consumption. Harvest of the Month provides materials and resources for conducting monthly in-school produce tastings focused on a single in-season produce item. Harvest of the Month provides a collection of materials in English and Spanish focused on each featured produce item. These materials include newsletters for educators, community members, and families as well as menu slicks for use by food service. Although these materials are California-focused they provide lots of useful information and inspiration for programs in other parts for the country. Download worksheets on the [Harvest of the Month website](#). Its website also has training materials for running a Harvest of the Month program and other resources such as the adorable [Farm to Table Adventure booklet](#) by PowerPlay.

Harvest of the Month Tasting Kits

The Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) has taken the Harvest of the Month program one step further. The CAFF provides a subscription-based monthly tasting program that delivers tasting kits to participating classrooms. Each kit includes enough of the featured produce item for a full class tasting and an educational packet that contains information about the farm that provided the produce, recipes, and crop information including a newsletter created by Harvest of the Month. Read more about how the program works on the [CAFF website](#).

Larchmont Schools' Edible Schoolyard Harvest of the Month Program

The Larchmont Schools' Edible Schoolyard has a Harvest of the Month program that follows a produce item from the garden to the classroom to the cafeteria. Children harvest various varieties of the produce item of the month from their school garden, identify the parts of the plant, bring the produce into the kitchen classroom where they discuss the recipe and use worksheets and writing exercises to explore this item further. They then prepare a simple recipe, taste and come up with words to describe the taste, texture, aroma and sound of the produce. Read more on the [Edible Schoolyard's website](#).

Milwaukee-area Tastings

Milwaukee Public Radio ran a segment describing three in-school tasting programs. These included the Elmbrook School District vegetable of the month program that offers kids free sample cups of a vegetable that they can pick up when they get their lunch. The Middleton/Cross Plains School District offers veggie trays once or twice a week that offer a regular tasting of fresh produce from a local farm that is also incorporated into a cafeteria dish. A program that connects farmers with schools resulted in a Madison elementary school science teacher collaborating with a local farmer to create farm-based lessons for her 3rd through 5th graders. The curriculum includes a visit to the farm and a visit by the farmer to the classroom that includes a tasting. Read a transcript of the show on [Milwaukee Public Radio's website](#).

Oregon Harvest for Schools

The Oregon Department of Education is encouraging schools to feature an Oregon-grown produce item on their menu each month. It also has materials that help to motivate students and their families to eat more locally grown produce. Download posters, menus, and newsletters on the [Oregon Department of Education's website](#).

REAP Farm to School Program

Research, Education, Action, and Policy (REAP) Food Group has a multi-part program that connects Madison (Wisconsin) students with local farms. Its Classroom Snack program provides a weekly classroom snack of locally sourced produce to 10 elementary schools. The produce is prepped by a team of volunteers and is provided at an affordable price. Accompanying each snack is a Snack Bite—a one-page information sheet about the produce item or the farmer. REAP also runs a Chef in the Classroom program that brings local chefs into middle school and high school classrooms to teach children how to cook with locally sourced ingredients. REAP's Classroom Education program provides in-class education about local food and farming. For these classes REAP pairs up an AmeriCorps volunteer with a teacher to teach a multi-sensory approach to food. Learn more on [REAP's website](#).

Slow Food Denver Seed to Table Alliance

The Seed to Table Alliance works in the Denver public schools to provide garden assistance and training and in-school cooking and tasting classes. In partnership with other organizations it also helps run the Denver Youth Farmers Market and the Garden to Cafeteria Project. It also encourages school cafeterias to use more local farm products and to cook more from scratch. It offers some very helpful publications on its website about conducting tasting classes. The group is working on a comprehensive Seed to Table Workbook that includes garden-based lessons and cooking and tasting lessons. The guide also has worksheets on produce items. Download its publications and workbook on the [Seed to Table website](#).



CHEF CHRISTOPHER ALBRECHT TALKS WITH STUDENTS DURING A TASTING

Tasting Tables

The Corvallis Environmental Center hosts tasting tables in the Corvallis School District's elementary and middle schools. The tasting tables are set up in the cafeterias during lunchtime so that all students can participate. An Oregon Harvest for Schools newsletter is distributed along with information about where the featured produce item was grown. The [Corvallis Environmental Center's website](#) has information about how to host a tasting table and a template for creating tasting passports so that each child can record the monthly produce item and farm.

Teach to Taste: Real Food in Schools

Teach to Taste is a collaboration between Slow Food Utah and Harmons grocery store. Using a curriculum designed by Slow Food Utah, Harmons' employees visit first grade classes to give children a lesson about a specific produce item (not all local). The lessons are designed to include four visits per class per month but the schools can customize that to fit their schedules. Harmons provides all of the supplies including aprons, food, equipment and copying. Read more about this collaboration on [Slow Food Utah's website](#).

Vermont FEED (Food Education Every Day) Partnership

Vermont FEED is a farm-to-school collaboration of Food Works, Shelburne Farms and the Vermont chapter of the Northeast Organic Farming Association. Its focus is on connecting local farms with the cafeteria, the classroom and the community. They offer farm to school consulting services, planning and training as well as curriculum development to weave food and farming into classroom lessons. And it has created a collection of very helpful guides on in-school tastings and creating successful farm to cafeteria programs. Links to its free publications as well as other guides can be found on the [VT FEED website](#).

Willamette Farm to School Education

The Willamette Farm and Food Coalition (WFFC) and the FOOD for Lane County Youth Farm has a comprehensive farm to table education program for the Springfield (Oregon) School District. Its program includes an introductory lesson on where food comes from followed by a farm field trip. The farm trip is then reinforced by a cafeteria tasting table stocked with items from the farm and a harvest meal that is prepared by the children using produce from the farm they visited. The cafeterias in the Springfield Public Schools also have a Harvest of the Month program that features an Oregon-grown produce item in all of the district's cafeterias each Friday throughout the school year. Learn more on the [WFFC website](#).

prelude

establish a strong foundation

What does your school need? What are your skills? Where is your interest? If food, agriculture, nutrition, wellness, pleasure, health, environment, education, **systems thinking**, taxes, public policy, the local economy and community are some of the answers, then Garden State on Your Plate tastings may be a way for you to take a leadership role.

If you are one person—parent, teacher, chef, principal, farmer—looking to change the food sensibilities at your school, begin by gathering two or three team members who share the passion and whose skills complement your own. Seek fellow team members with enthusiasm, willingness and availability.

If your internal team is already created, note strengths and weaknesses of each person, particularly if this is a volunteer effort. People do their best work when they are doing what they love and when they are serving a greater good.

“This guide will help you move from the great idea of tastings in the school, through execution to results,” said Frank Ryle, author of *Keeping Score: Project Management for the Pros*. “The simple step-by-step approach reduces the management burden, freeing you to concentrate on the children and other stakeholders, increasing the probability of success.”

If the team is too small, be on the watch for burnout and volunteer fatigue. If possible, add needed skills to the core team, and use Mr. Ryle’s 10-Step Project Management framework, as well as tips from this manual, as a guideline to building the core team that can administer the Garden State on Your Plate tastings program—and more.

In this chapter you will read about:

- ◆ Structuring your group for maximum usefulness
- ◆ Considering a 501c3
- ◆ Making your team effective
- ◆ Building a great team



Building a Great Core Team

The quality of your tastings and in-class activities will be greatly improved if you have a strong, cohesive team working on organization and implementation. Every team member brings different skills, perspectives, and attitudes. Your challenge is to build a team in which those differences combine and complement each other to create collective greatness.

Here is some advice from [Inc. Magazine](#) on how to build a great team:

Pick one key attribute that you want every member of your team to have. This is the one most important skill or quality that will form the foundation of your team. It might be a set of skills that you want all team members to have (for example, professional-level cooking skills) or it might be a way of relating to others that all team members exhibit (for example, ability to communicate effectively with both children and adults).

Pick one key attribute that you absolutely do not want on your team. Define that one deal-breaker quality that will disqualify anyone—no matter how skilled, knowledgeable, or well connected that person may be—as a candidate for your team (for example, naysaying).

Find your point of compromise. If you decided that your must-have attribute is professional cooking skills, you may find that you cannot fill your entire team with people who possess those skills. Determine the minimum number of team members who must possess those skills for the team to work. Beyond that number you can bring in members with other needed skills.

Bring in members to round out your team. Once you have the required number of members who have the key attribute that defines your core, fill out the team with members who have crucial complementary skills. If you are careful, you'll end up with a dynamic, energetic, comprehensive team that produces great work while having fun.

6 personality types every new venture needs, according to [Fast Company magazine](#)

The Dreamer thinks big and sees possibilities where others do not.

The Manager figures out how to get beyond the dreaming stage and make things happen.

The Builder understands the vision of your organization or project and how to make it real.

The Workhorse does what it takes to make your program work.

The Penny Pincher makes sure that the money for a project is spent efficiently and effectively.

The Social Butterfly keeps your team connected, communicating, and having fun.

Making Your Core Team Effective

So, you've got your team together. Now what? Here are some ideas for keeping an effective team together:

It's all about relationships. Make the time for all team members to get to know the skills and motivations of each team member. Why are they working on this project? What skills, connections, and knowledge do they bring to the program?

Have clear goals for your group. If you do not clearly define the goals of your group, your team members will each have their own version of how they explain your project to those outside the group. Make sure that everyone on your team understands the goals and can articulate them.

Get a commitment. Joining a committee or team is easy. Being engaged in the goals of the group and doing the work that is needed to achieve those goals is not. To get things done without losing half your team along the way, you need to get buy-in from all team members. So, when you invite someone onto your team, get confirmation that this person is committed to the goals of the group and to helping achieve them.

Expect everyone to be true to his word. Reliability from each team member is crucial to getting work done and to maintaining team morale. Make clear to everyone that they are accountable. Accountability begins with only committing to those tasks that one will be able to complete. If you commit to a task and a problem occurs that delays or derails you, let others know immediately.

Be specific when you make requests. When requests for work are made they should be specific about the scope, desired outcome, and the schedule. Vague requests often end up not getting done well or on schedule. Make sure that the person who is being asked to do the work gives a clear confirmation to the team that he or she is saying yes to the task (not "I will try to." or "I'll do my best") and yes to the deadline.

Aim for clarity. While no one likes meetings that drag on forever, try to avoid having people walk away from the table feeling that a topic has not been sufficiently

vetted or clarified. Encourage team members to voice their concerns constructively and to ask questions that help to clarify why a decision or action is being either accepted or rejected.

Lay some ground rules. There are lots of different ways to conduct a meeting. Choose a format—it can be formal or informal—that suits your group as well as a process for raising issues, making decisions, and ensuring that everyone has a chance to speak. Decide on a day and time that you will meet each week or month. And make clear rules about privacy and confidentiality of discussions at your meetings.

Have an agenda for each meeting. Effective meetings begin with a clearly stated purpose and proposed outcome. Ask for agenda items well in advance of the meeting. Create an agenda with each topic of discussion broken out and given a set amount of time. When unrelated items come up at a meeting, make note of them but stick with your agenda. If there is time, get back to those items at the end of the meeting. If not, put them on the agenda for the next meeting. If an item raised is urgent and important, schedule a follow-up meeting to address it.

Divide the work. When you invite members onto your team, make sure they know that you are a working team and that everyone is expected to take on tasks. Divide tasks based on the skills of team members. In the meeting minutes, make a record of who has taken on which tasks.

Create an atmosphere of trust and respect. Productive meetings—and cohesive groups—begin with the underlying assumption amongst all members that all team members are well-intentioned, committed to the goals of the organization, and want the best for the group. Team members should feel safe expressing their views and voicing their concerns without fear of ridicule or retaliation. Factions within the group that withhold information from other members are also unacceptable.

Make conflict productive. If there is never any conflict at your meetings, then it is likely that members are unwilling or unable to speak their minds. Disagreements and respectful debates are a constructive and essential part of group process. Well-managed conflict helps the group to test assumptions and to understand other perspectives on an issue.

Have clear rules about discussion outside of the meetings. Make sure that there is an understanding by all members of your team that you are all responsible for the public face of the group. No matter how heated a debate gets, members should feel free to speak openly without fear that their words will be repeated outside of the meeting. Once the group decides on an issue, carrying your grievances or unhappiness on the decision out to the public is unprofessional. So, too, is gossip. Make it clear that if you have an issue with a fellow team member, you should take your issue directly to that person.

Place a high value on communication. Work hard to maintain honest, open, civil, and inclusive communication within your group. And check in periodically to be sure that everyone feels that communication is open and clear. This will help you to avoid problems and defections. And it will make your team more productive and focused on success.



FARMER JESS NIEDERER OF CHICKADEE CREEK FARM IN PENNINGTON EXAMINES A SAMPLE OF SOIL

Organizing the Core Team as a Nonprofit

Decide on your organizational structure. Is there a PTA/PTO at your school that can administrate a recurring event with members who will pitch in? Is there enough buy-in with the teachers and administration that an outside group is not needed? Is there an existing non-profit group in your town that is willing to take on this project?

If not, will you organize formally?

The Princeton School Gardens Cooperative incorporated as a New Jersey nonprofit corporation and filed for status as a charitable organization under 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code so that it could qualify for foundation funding.

Other benefits of operating as a nonprofit charitable organization for tastings and educational work of this kind are the tax deduction to private donors and being exempt from paying sales tax, says Amy Mayer, a lawyer and PSGC board member.

For an FAQ about starting a nonprofit, click [here](#). To get started on understanding the application process for becoming a 501(c)3, click [here](#).

DRILL DOWN

The Pros and Cons of Organizational Structures

In-school tastings can be conducted by one parent, a team of 15 volunteers or any size group in-between. When you explore different models from around the country, you will find that some tasting programs are run by volunteers while others are grant-funded or fee-based programs run by non-profit organizations. While there is not one right way to structure a tasting program, there are advantages and disadvantages to different types of structures:

Parent or parent group: Many tasting programs are started by parents who want to see better quality food served in their local school. Having a group of parents run a tasting program has some big advantages. Parents bring passion to farm-to-school programs. Because they volunteer their time and don't have administrative expenses, a parent-run tasting program can be quite inexpensive. Parents usually know at least some of the school administrators and teachers. And parents can be flexible about when and how they conduct tastings. On the down side, parents may lose interest in running tasting programs after their own children move on to another school, and may have scheduling conflicts, making them unable to jump out at a moment's notice, or fill in in case of another's absence. Parent groups may also have fewer connections to those working in the food/agriculture trouble getting sponsorship to help pay for their program.

PTO: Working under the umbrella of the PTO can be very helpful in getting a tasting program established. [The principal and administration is used to with working with the PTO](#), whose

members are well-versed in how to work with—and within—the school. PTOs are also able to raise funds and to accept donations. On the down side, your PTO may not be interested in conducting tastings or in creating farm-to-school programs.

501C-3 non-profit status: Creating a non-profit organization to plan, fund and run tasting programs provides stability and consistency—making it easier to maintain programs over the long haul. Non-profits are able to get funding and donations to cover the cost of tasting programs. And they are able to create mutually beneficial, strategic partnerships with local businesses and other non-profits. Along with creating a dynamic tasting program, these partnerships can be the foundation of a strong and vibrant local food community that collaborates on a variety of food-, farm- and garden-related projects. The drawback to creating a non-profit is that it [requires organization](#) and work. Non-profits are difficult to set up and [require management](#) and [compliance](#) that may be beyond your means or interest.

Volunteers vs. paid workers:

Having a great crew of volunteers is vital to conducting a successful school-wide tasting program. However, PSGC experience shows that paying participating professionals—such as chefs, farmers, food artisans and garden instructors—ensures program quality and continuity. Paying instructors enables us to be specific about what we require in terms of content and performance. It also establishes that we value those professionals who dedicate their time and resources to bringing good food to our community.

step 1

state your goal

For a successful tasting, goals must be specific, measurable, agreed upon, realistic and time based—in other words, *SMART*. A well-defined goal fosters understanding for anyone with a basic knowledge of the project, according to Project SMART.

Making a goal measurable helps team members to know if it is obtainable, the distance between now and completion, and, in fact, when it has been reached. Agreement beforehand with all stakeholders (in this case, the team members) avoids conflict later.

Realistic goals are those that are framed within the physical, financial and cultural parameters of your school, and within the knowledge and time available. Setting a time frame helps move the entire tastings project along at a steady pace.

The reward for having achieved the goal—children’s palate education and connection to food and farming professionals through a set of tastings—must be of value to the individuals on the team, said Mr. Ryle.

“If you don’t know where you are going then any road (or fool) will get you there,” he said. “Clear goals allow the team to form cohesive bonds around the tastings and maintain a focus during the journey. They also have the added benefit of reducing potential conflict.”

To ensure that all team members are in accord, write a one-page project charter and document agreement.

In this chapter you will read about:

- ◆ Getting to know your school
- ◆ Assessing food literacy at your school
- ◆ A charter template for the tastings
- ◆ Our proposal



Get to Know Your School

The tastings you offer, the recipes you send home and the cooking and shopping advice you give should reflect the ethnic and economic diversity of your school. If you present options and information that are beyond the scope of your community or are at odds with their traditions and beliefs and culture, your program will not succeed in creating long-lasting change.

Diversity presents opportunities to introduce new flavors and explore new preparation techniques for locally raised ingredients. Take some time to get to know the ethnic and economic breakdown of your school and use that information to help you develop your program.

- Talk with your chefs about using ingredients and techniques that demonstrate the cuisines of some of the nations represented in your school.
- Choose simple preparations that can be easily replicated at home and don't include ingredients that are avoided by a significant number of students.
- Choose a diverse population of chefs and farmers so that children see many different role models.
- Even if highlighting the value of organic and sustainable farming practices is a key part of your program, don't be judgmental or dogmatic when advising students and parents on the type of produce to buy. The prices for some organic foods place them out of reach for many families. Rather than asking families to exclude conventionally grown produce from their diets, emphasize the benefits of consuming fresh fruits and vegetables and suggest that they be organic whenever possible.



TABLES SET FOR LUNCHTIME TASTING AT COMMUNITY PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Assessing Food Literacy in Your School

Before you start planning your tasting program, find out if there are already food education programs in place that you can build on. You want to determine what facilities exist in your school, which teachers are already using food and nutrition as part of their teaching, and whether there are any parent-led programs already in place that involve food. This information will enable you to build on existing work and to find partners for your tasting program. It will also reduce the chance of others feeling unappreciated for their efforts.

- Talk with the school principal about opportunities for food education and tastings. Ask how and where you can be of the greatest help in promoting good food and nutrition in the school.
- Talk with the PTO to find out if and how parents are already involved in food and garden education.
- Find out if there are any plans under way to produce a school cookbook as a fundraiser. If so, explore ways to connect the content of the cookbook with in-school tastings and the promotion of local farm products.
- Talk with teachers or district curriculum coordinators about existing curriculum and supplies.
- Talk with the health teacher about how nutrition is taught in the school and whether there is a formal nutrition education curriculum that is used in each grade
- Determine which grades take field trips to supermarkets and which to farms, if any
- Find out if the PTO has a budget for special events like tastings
- Explore whether a tasting program that includes cooking lessons, chef's demos, and farm visits can be established as an enrichment program
- Find out what types of food-related program are in the school:
 - Are there cooking facilities in the classrooms?
 - Which teachers like to cook in class?
 - Is there a school garden?
 - Is there an after-school cooking club?
 - Who runs the cafeteria?
 - Are Modern Living (the successor to Home Economics) classes offered?
- Determine where there are opportunities to introduce fresh, local produce
 - in-class snacks
 - after-school snacks
 - teachers' lounge
 - family night events
 - school picnic
 - cafeteria
 - concessions at sports, music, or theater events
 - club fundraisers

Garden State on Your Plate: Our Proposal

Our group looks to build children’s understanding of food from their mouths out, linking the flavors of produce the children grow in their schoolyard gardens to gastronomic pleasure and robust health, to science and math and the agriculture of our state—and to the world around them. So our first step in our [Farm to School](#) program was getting the food in their mouths (after securing permission from the Princeton School District,) and that was the framework for the grant we submitted to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

To us, the matter is urgent. We understand the backstory of industrially produced processed, packaged items and their deficiencies, nutritional and otherwise. We understand the epidemic of diet-related disease, [the disconnect](#) between children and the source of their food and their place in the larger world, even the separation of pleasure and knowledge from matters of food and the table. We also understand the preconceived notion of the kids’ menu that predominated at our public elementary schools: chicken nuggets, chicken patties, pizza, pizza dippers, pasta with sauce, pasta with cheese, nachos, waffles, pancakes. And we understand the seductive and destructive power of a diet based on refined carbohydrates.

We visualized a way forward. We know there is pleasure in good food, and nurturing and [nourishment](#). Beyond that, there is the [neuroscience](#). Fresh whole food, simply prepared, balanced according to best practices and routinely consumed, [helps children maintain their energy and attention](#) over their days and across their developmental spectrum: [emotional, intellectual, physical, social](#). And increased consumption of fruits and vegetables [lowers the risk](#) of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and some cancers.

We focused on the elementary schools because there was more flexibility in the daily schedule, but also because the edible gardens we established/ supported at each of the schoolyards had become a natural part of the school culture and provided a natural launch. We also wanted to begin with the youngest children, since humans form taste preferences [early](#), especially in the case of the sugar/fat/salt palate. Because children need repeated exposure to new foods before they accept them, and it helps to separate those introductions from the actual meal, we saw that our eight-session program could habituate the children to tasting new foods, and though the tastings were served up in the cafeteria at lunchtime, they were served and presented separate from actual lunch items.

We proposed bringing parents into schools to participate in the tastings, not only because we needed all hands on deck, but also to have many witnesses see the children try whole, fresh food. Our plan also depended on educating the parent helpers. If they saw the appeal of these simple recipes (printed on

handouts for every child to take home), we expected they would be inspired to buy beets, kale, Swiss chard, cranberries, honey—all grown or produced within an hour or two of our community. And then, we imagined, the families could discuss their adventures with food at the [family dinner table](#).

We also looked to boost the agricultural and culinary arts. Like the rest of the country, New Jersey is in the grip of a stubborn recession; unemployment, at [9.6 percent](#), is higher than the national average. Our farmers, agricultural workers, restaurateurs and chefs are in the business of nurturing us, and strengthening the market for their work makes for healthier, resilient communities. The program we envisioned displayed prospective careers in the food, agriculture and hospitality sector, and also would forge a connection between the all players in the program, the schools and the NJ Department of Agriculture.

Our Farm to School pilot program, as conceived, was to directly reach 720 students and their parents, plus all school employees at two of the town’s four elementary schools—Community Park and Littlebrook.

We proposed hiring four local chefs (Chris Albrecht, Eno Terra Restaurant, Kingston; Alex Levine, Whole Earth Center, Princeton; Stu Orefice, director of dining services, Princeton University; and Gary Giberson, Sustainable Fare LLC,) to supply fresh produce, then conduct monthly cooking/tasting sessions at lunchtime in the two elementary school cafeterias over 10 months.

Further, we planned to

- Provide plate waste tracking to evaluate success,
- Fund farmers’ visits to schools in support of related curricula,
- Provide regular communication to parents to invite participation at lunch events,

- Supply recipes using fresh produce and photos of farms/foods as nutrition education,
- Work with Chartwells to integrate the most popular recipes into the National School Lunch Program (and its equivalent at the middle and high schools),
- Facilitate related class field trips to —farms, orchards, commercial kitchens, farmers’ market, grocers,
- Provide ongoing tweets, a blog, press releases, video, photos and a short documentary including triumphs and challenges for those hoping to start their own project,
- Make available supporting resources—films, books, etc.—about food and health, agriculture and the local economy,
- Take steps to institutionalize the Princeton Board of Education’s commitment to the state-mandated District Wellness policy,
- Build support for the program in advance with a harvest dinner for faculty/school board/ administration/local officials and NJ department of agriculture officials.



SAMPLE CUPS OF COOKED BEETS

Garden State on Your Plate

If the PSGC were looking to begin a tastings program in 2013, our members would craft a one-page document similar to this:

Spring Tastings Program at Community Park Elementary School

Goal: Set up a Garden State on Your Plate tastings program for spring 2013 for Community Park Elementary School. This five-session program builds on existing efforts of teachers throughout the school who have found inspiration in the edible gardens on campus, as well as those who have used slow cookers and induction burners to do some food preparation and tastings in the classroom. Additionally, this program builds on the existing curriculum, which connects the regular consumption of fresh produce, whole grains and some lean meats to the likelihood of better lifelong health. Siting the program in the cafeteria helps children and school staff make a clear connection from the Garden State to their plate.

Reward: Tastings will provide palate education for children, school staff and parents; will link the same groups to the sources of their food and the professionals who grow, produce and cook it; bring parents together around the community of good food, deepening connections; support the local economy and encourage local buying; and give teachers from all academic disciplines entry points into making the [NJ Core Standards curriculum](#) come alive for students.

Rewards: Each constituency provides its own rewards—some immediate and some delayed. Children devour the produce. Chefs feel appreciated and their employers are seen as community participants. Farmers meet prospective customers. With each tasting, teachers are supported with vocabulary, history, economics, nutrition, social studies, science, cooking and agricultural segues that can be used in the classroom. Our core team is rewarded with increased credibility for its work within the school and in the community, enhanced fund-raising ability for subsequent projects, and ease of approval for bigger ideas coming along.

Are there constraints on funding? We estimate that a tasting for 360 children costs \$5,950. Here's the cost breakdown: Ingredients: \$1,000. Chefs: \$1,250. Farmers: \$750. Development and advance work: posters and fact sheets: \$450. Videography/photo slide show: \$2,500. We anticipate soliciting funding from local foundations and/or from local businesses, food-based or otherwise and look to the administration or the PTO to match some portion of the funding.

Timing can be anytime during the school year, but consistency of experience over time helps children and teachers find deeper meaning and use for the program. A fall 2013 tastings program can work equally well. Even a mid-winter tastings program, say, November to April, can work if chefs use a combination of storage crops and processed items (ground corn for polenta, cheeses, processed tomatoes, pastas made from NJ wheat, storage apples, etc.)

We will use five chefs:

- Alex Levine, [Whole Earth Center](#), Princeton
- Christopher Albrecht, [Terra Momo Restaurant Group](#), Kingston
- Stu Orefice, [Princeton University](#), Princeton
- Linda Twining, [Twin Hens](#), Princeton
- Gab Carbone, [bent spoon](#), Princeton

and five farms:

- Pier Guidi, [Bamboo Hollow Apiaries](#), Hillsborough
- Jess Niederer, [Chickadee Creek Farm](#), Pennington
- Bruce Cobb, [Arc Greenhouses](#), Shiloh
- Chris Turse, [Double Brook Farm](#), Hopewell
- David Zaback, [Z Food Farm](#), Lawrence Township

and five NJ farm products—here are some possibilities

- February: storage garlic, overwintered kale
- March: storage apples
- April: parsnips, pea greens, rhubarb
- May: chard, new potatoes, scallions, spinach, lettuce, asparagus
- June: beets, broccoli, carrots, cabbage

We will provide:

- Hallway posters about each crop for display up to two weeks before each tasting.
- Fact sheet for copying at school for each child to take home to parents one week in advance of each tasting.
- A YouTube slide show or video of farmer, farm, chef and recipe for teachers, children, parents and administrators to view one week in advance of each tasting.

We will need:

- Eight parent volunteers to prepare, serve and clean up during and after the tastings.



CHEF RICK PIANCONE OF PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

step 2

identify and analyze stakeholders

A stakeholder is anyone affected by the outcome of your tasting, anyone who has influence or power over the delivery or outcome of the tastings, and anyone who has an interest or concern about the process or delivery of the tastings.

“Missing a stakeholder, particularly a key stakeholder, can lead to project failure,” said Mr. Ryle. “This step is extremely important; any errors are magnified by its early position in the 10-step approach. A minor deviation here can lead to a lot of rework and frustration later.”

For in-school tastings, primary stakeholders are students, teachers, administrators, parents, chefs/restaurateurs and farmers. Imagining the second concentric circle, there are local media and interested community partners (maybe a market that sells the farmer’s produce, or the public library, if it conducts cooking classes, or even a kitchen appliance store that is looking to support an education effort around food). “Missing or overlooking a key stakeholder during the preparation could lead to failure,” Mr. Ryle said.

Analyze stakeholders for their power to reward or penalize, or for their knowledge, or for their associated power (the husband of the Princeton Public Schools superintendent, who loved the gardens at Riverside Elementary, for example). Who needs to be kept satisfied? Who needs to be managed closely? Who needs to be monitored? Who needs to be kept informed?

This analysis helps to clarify requirements of the stakeholders (to hold children’s interest, not impede lunchtime traffic in the cafeteria, give credit to sponsoring restaurants or institutions, etc.), helps the team to develop a communications strategy and helps identify potential allies and the uninterested. Compile a list of stakeholders.

In this chapter you will read about:

- ◇ People to keep in the loop
- ◇ Community partners

Key People to Keep in the Loop

It is difficult to set aside time to keep key people updated on the progress of your tasting program. But consider it time well spent. Regular updates keep key people engaged in your project, make people feel included, and help ensure that there are no misunderstandings about the scope and makeup of your program. Keep the updates brief and upbeat. Include a photograph or two to make people feel more engaged—just make sure you send low resolution files so they don't overwhelm people's in-boxes.

There are different ways to get the news out. Some people, such as funders and principals, should get direct, personal e-mails. Volunteers who helped in a tasting can be thanked in group e-mails. Parents, the school community, and the larger community can be updated via Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, an on-line newsletter, a listserv, or Google Group.

Here are key people who should get regular updates about the program:

- Funders
- Business Sponsors
- School Officials: Superintendent, School Board members
- Principals
- Chefs: participating chefs and chefs you are courting for future tastings
- Restaurant owners (if they are not the chef)
- Farmers
- Food service workers
- Volunteers
- Team members
- Media contacts
- Teachers who have expressed interest in your program
- Parents who have expressed interest in your program
- Community members who have expressed interest in your program

Community Partners and the Roles They Play

Your tasting program is a wonderful opportunity to build strong and lasting partnerships with members of your local culinary community. By creating an open and inviting program, you can expand the reach of your work to bring delicious, nutritious local food to the children in your community.

Parents play a key role in making the tastings and lessons have a lasting impact. Parents can participate in your program on a range of levels. They can stay informed through fact sheets sent home with their child, provide information and insight about how their child responds to the tastings, come to the tastings to learn about why good food is important, extend the tastings by cooking with their kids at home using materials that you send home and seasonal produce from the market, or getting actively involved by providing feedback on the program. To engage parents in the tasting program, send home ideas and instructions for activities that they can do with their child, offer them ways to get involved in your program, and offer opportunities for them to acquire skills that can help them find and prepare local foods.

Teachers are the key to reinforcing the tasting through multiple learning channels. Food and farming intersect with all academic disciplines and provide many opportunities for providing engaging and practical lessons for children.



CHEF CHRISTOPHER
ALBRECHT AND
FARMERS CHRIS
TURSE AND ANDREW
MARCHESE AT
DOUBLEBROOK
FARM IN HOPEWELL

School Administrators are vital allies in creating and expanding your in-school programs. They can smooth the way for food-based programs in the cafeteria and around the school. If you want them on your team, deliver a professional, well-run program that enhances learning and that respects their priorities of delivering quality, safety, and substance.

Food service employees are actively engaged in our Garden State on Your Plate tastings, which turn the cafeteria into a classroom. Although they are not involved in the prep or the serving, they taste, comment and talk with the chefs about food preparation. And they see firsthand how excited kids are about fresh produce that is simply prepared. In school districts that have in-house food service rather than contracted purveyors, there are further opportunities to include the cafeteria staff, aka lunch teachers, in the tastings and to reinforce the tastings by offering the sampled produce item at future lunches.

Chefs make it all happen! They are undaunted by the prospect of serving up 350 samples of a dish and can take care of the logistics of sourcing local produce in sufficient quantities. Kids go crazy at the sight of a chef's whites. And chefs are able to talk with the children about why local produce makes eating fruits and vegetables easy and delicious.

Farmers are the link between the tastings and the land. Their participation in tasting and in-class lessons adds depth and interest. Whether they arrive with a full kale plant (roots and all) or a chicken or a demonstration bee hive, they always have great learning tools in tow. They can relate the growing of food to many subject areas. And, because they are intimately familiar with the growth cycles of plants and the factors that positively and negatively impact their growth, they can help connect children and teachers with the many wonders of their school garden. They can also teach children the disappearing art of proper tool usage.

Restaurateurs are among the most important community members to have on your team. They can lend you their chefs for tastings and in-class demos. They can host school field trips and after-school clubs that introduce children to the many career possibilities available in the culinary arts. And they can sponsor your tasting program and host fundraisers for your organization.

Food retailers can help you source local produce and purchase it at a wholesale price. They can provide sponsorship for your tasting program and funding for your organization. In some communities, grocery stores are full partners in in-school tasting programs (see *Other Models* sidebar).

Farmers market managers can hook you up with local farmers—and give you the lowdown on which farmers have the qualities you are looking for including reliability, humor, patience, and an affable nature.

Public libraries and churches are the community centers for many towns. They can serve as a gathering place for talks, films and community meetings about food and farming.

Non-profits that work with youth are perfect partners for tasting programs. They offer the opportunity to conduct tastings and cooking demonstrations in a more relaxed setting than schools. And they are a good place to bring in teenagers to help work with younger children.

Rutgers is New Jersey's land grant college and a world-renowned agricultural research institution. It has myriad resources to encourage children to [set nutrition goals](#), to involve youth in [creating farmers markets](#), and to introduce children to the many [benefits that agriculture brings](#) to the Garden State. The college also has a wide selection of facts sheets on [food and nutrition](#) and on [gardening](#).

Colleges and universities in [your town or region](#) may have culinary students who can help with your program or they may be willing to have their own chefs participate in your tastings. University chefs are a great asset to a tasting program because they know how to feed a lot of kids in a short period of time and they enjoy working with young people.

QUICK START



CHEF ALEX LEVINE
POURS SAMPLES
OF HIS ORANGE
AND BEET SOUP

step 3

gather and analyze requirements

Failure to gather accurate requirements is historically seen as the single biggest failure point in project success, writes Mr. Ryle in *Keeping Score*. Each requirement has a stakeholder and vice versa. Divide them according to the MoSCoW (Must have, Should have, Could have, Won't have).

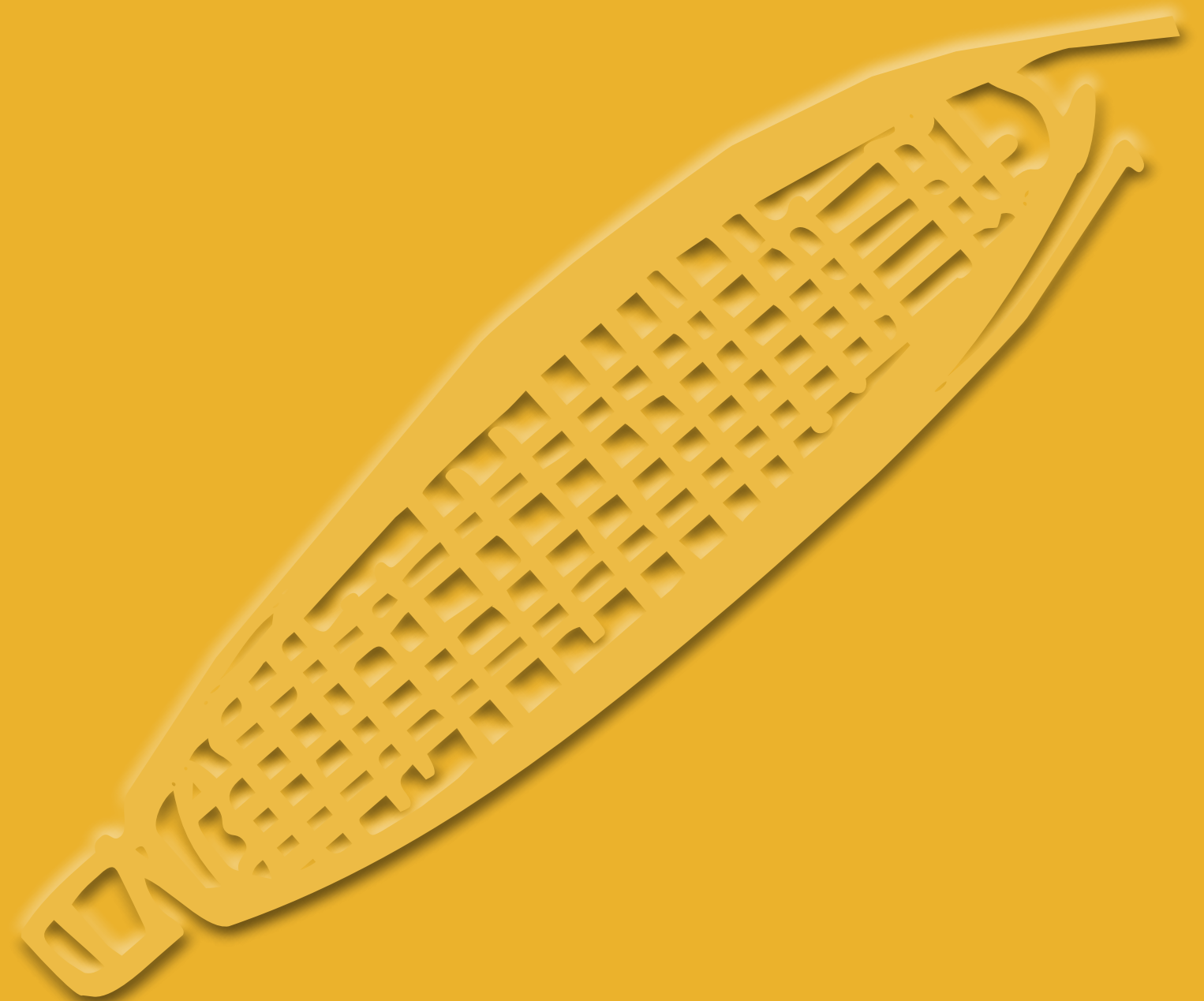
"A requirement is just a desire, need or expectation of a stakeholder—no more no less," he said. We may not be able to satisfy every requirement (and therefore every stakeholder) but we should manage their expectations nonetheless."

First, get permission to conduct your tastings, using your program. For tastings, understand and address the needs and limits of teachers, staff and principal. Understand district priorities by observing and asking questions; understand state curriculum standards by internalizing information from the [NJ Department of Education's website](#), detailing the Common Core State Standards.

Determine the desires of parents, and what the children need.

In this chapter you will learn:

- ◆ What chefs, farmers and other presenters need to know
- ◆ How to create age-appropriate programs
- ◆ How children learn
- ◆ Guide to teaching children
- ◆ The importance of adding tastings to school calendars and organization calendars
- ◆ What the administration needs to know
- ◆ What principals need to know
- ◆ What teachers need to know
- ◆ What parents need to know
- ◆ What the PTO needs to know
- ◆ What tastings volunteers need to know
- ◆ What the media need to know



DETERMINE WHAT STAKEHOLDERS REQUIRE FROM YOUR TASTING PROGRAM

What Chefs, Farmers and Other Presenters Need to Know

The goal, tastings in the school, set and agreed to by the core team in Step 1, is a good place to start for informing chefs, farmers and other presenters. All presenters need clear and specific instructions on what you want them to do and how the content of their lesson will contribute to the success of the Garden State on Your Plate program.

Chefs, farmers and presenters need to know that tastings will contribute to the overall food literacy at the school and will help connect the school garden to health and pleasurable dining. Note that all participating chefs and farmers are invited to every tasting. Encourage chefs and farmers to pay attention to the e-mail updates about each tasting so they can be aware of the produce item, dishes and tasting challenges that each chef presents as well as any lessons learned about how to make the tastings more effective and efficient.

Write a 1-page document that answers the typical questions: who, what, when, where, why and how much.

Who: A few sentences about the core team, its reason for being and how the group already contributes to the school and supports the local food community.

What: Describe the tastings program, supplying the one-page Typical Tastings Schedule. Name the chefs, farmers and produce to be sampled, if possible. Note the scope and focus of the information that you would like the presenter to cover and give each presenter the Drill Down materials on the next few pages as well as the materials on [creating a lesson plan](#) and [maintaining order](#). Note the need to accommodate food allergies and other special needs.

When: List the dates, the timing of the tastings and the time the presenter should arrive at the school. Explain when the farmer and chef will speak to the children, whether before or after the children get their lunches, and when the children will taste (before or after lunch). Explain when advance materials, such as recipes or crop-specific information, will be needed from the chef or farmer. If video is to be shot, explain how much time will be needed for the filming and how far in advance of the tasting the videographer will need to visit the restaurant or farm.

Where: Explain exactly where in the cafeteria, or in the library or classroom the tastings will take place (out of the way of traffic and business as usual). Provide directions to the school and instructions on where to unload and where to park.

Why: Provide links to documents that support this experiential learning and how it will benefit children and other stakeholders.

How much: Explain the costs, the funding and the payment that is available for presenters.

Creating Age-appropriate Programs

When creating lessons and workshops for kids, it is important to take into account the differences in development to determine how best to communicate with children of varying ages.

Unfortunately, when it comes to children, it is difficult—and counterproductive—to generalize. Children do not all learn in the same way or at the same pace. Although a generally accepted understanding of basic developmental stages has guided education for the past fifty years, research shows that, while children are on the same developmental path, they travel at different rates and by different routes.

Below there are some general guidelines about what is appropriate for different age groups. These will help you adapt the content and activities of your tastings and presentations to appeal to different age groups. Recognize though that age can be measured in different ways—chronological, physical, intellectual, emotional, and social—and that the “age” of a child can vary greatly, depending on what you are measuring.

Also, when you present a concept to a child, that child’s ability to grasp the concept is greatly affected by the way in which the concept is presented. An inability to understand or to answer a question may not indicate that the material is inappropriate for that age group. It may be that you need to find a better way to get that idea across or to rephrase the question. To illustrate this idea, author Daniel Willingham gave this example in an article in *American Educator*: If a teacher reading *Make Way for Ducklings* stops to ask the class “what will happen next?” the children may not respond because no one has ever asked them to make a prediction or because they haven’t been able to follow the story or because they don’t know anything about ducks. In other words, they may lack the background knowledge needed to answer the question. They might do better if the information is presented differently, such as asking the children an either-or question—do you think the ducks will go back to the park or stay where they are?

In order to best reach a broad group of children, vary the content of your lessons and experiment with different ways of presenting and solving problems. Keep a record of what works and focus on those lessons, discarding the ones that do not. Talk with others about what has worked for them. Make adjustments to your lessons based on your observations of how the children respond.

General guidelines on how differing age groups think and behave.

Use the list on the following pages to help develop age-appropriate activities and lessons. Remember that some activities, such as harvesting vegetables from the school garden, are appropriate across a broad age range. Others are appropriate to specific age groups.

Grades K-3:

- At this age, children are very self-centered. Lessons must have a clear relationship to them and their realm of experience.
- They are reality-based thinkers who are focused on the here and now. To learn, lessons must connect to concrete, real life situations.
- Some children of this age have a short attention span and do well with activities that last for a half hour or less.
- They learn best when active, so base your lessons around hands-on activities.
- Children at this age don't multitask well. Break your workshop into short, discrete lessons, such as rotating small groups through a series of stations. Have the children work in small groups, rather than individually.

- They are easily motivated and want to please adults. Provide encouragement and focus on cooperation rather than competition. Create activities that allow some success for all participants,
- Most kindergartners and many first graders have better control over large muscles than over small. Plan activities that are not dependent on fine motor skills and plan for messy work spaces.
- Children at this age are curious and often impulsive, so accept a little chaos and be prepared for some unexpected turns.
- With this age group, it is all about process. The end result matters less than the process, which is where most of the learning takes place. Focus your lesson on inquiry and exploration rather than on creating a final product.

- In cooking demonstrations the younger children can help with basic prep such as washing, tearing, and stirring. They can count off ingredients such as 2 carrots or 3 potatoes. They can add pre-measured ingredients to a central bowl and stir or toss to combine. The older children can measure dry ingredients, measure temperature, read and understand simple recipes.

Grades 4 to 6:

- Although the younger children in this group still think very concretely, they begin to understand new ideas if those ideas are related to previous experiences. This age group also begins to think abstractly.
- Active learning is still appropriate for this age group. Develop hands-on, interactive lessons, rather than simply lecturing to them.
- Their attention span has increased, so longer lessons of up to 45 minutes are now appropriate. Keep your instructions simple and brief.
- At this age, children begin to immerse themselves in subjects that grab their interest. They look for their own solutions and answers rather than automatically accepting those offered by adults. Their desire to find their own solutions and work independently needs to be guided and fostered. To be successful, they must have confidence in the subject matter and in themselves.
- For some children in this age group, pleasing adults is just as important as gaining satisfaction from the project itself. Provide encouragement and help them to recognize the progress they are making and the areas in which they excel.

- Acceptance by their peers begins to matter to this age group. Avoid comparing them to one another. Trust must be developed within the group before preteens feel comfortable enough to form their own solutions in a group setting.
- This age group enjoys competition as well as cooperation. Design competitive activities as well as cooperative one. But don't pit boys against girls. And keep in mind that equality and fairness matter at this age.
- Their interests expand beyond themselves to encompass their neighborhood and their community.
- Children of this age may try to get attention by being disruptive to the group.
- Offer a variety of activities and allow them to choose from a short list.
- In cooking chores, children at this age can measure liquid and dry, handle most prep skills including grating, peeling, whisking, and cutting (with close supervision), read and follow a recipe, cook over heat with supervision.



A LITTLEBROOK
STUDENT ENJOYS BEET
AND ORANGE SOUP

How Children Learn

In [How Children Learn](#), a booklet issued by the International Academy of Education, author Stella Vosniadou lists 12 ways in which children learn. These ideas can help you design tastings and food-related workshops that maximize learning and get students fully engaged.

Learning requires active involvement by the learner: Encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning by creating interesting, challenging, hands-on lessons that build on children's innate desire to explore, understand and master new things. Encourage discussion. Get out of the classroom into different environments. Give the students opportunities to make decisions about what they learn and how.

Learning is primarily a social activity and participation in the social life of the school is central for learning to occur. Create opportunities for cooperation and collaboration. Encourage students to express opinions and to evaluate arguments made by others. Create activities and opportunities for students to interact with members of the community.

People learn best when they participate in activities that are perceived to be useful in real life and are culturally relevant. Students will be more responsive to lessons when they understand their usefulness and why the lesson is being taught. Rather than simply lecturing, make your lessons relevant and meaningful by tying them to real life experiences, such as a visit from a farmer or cooking a meal with a chef. Take into account cultural differences among the students when developing lessons.

New knowledge is constructed on what is already understood and believed. When information is completely unfamiliar, it cannot be understood or retained. When developing a lesson, use the students' knowledge as a starting point for introducing new material. First, discuss the content of the lesson with the class to determine if all know and understand the background material on which the lesson is built and to clear up misconceptions.

People learn by employing effective and flexible strategies that help them to understand, reason, memorize and solve problems. How many of us could name the colors of the rainbow without thinking first of ROY G. BIV? Developing strategies for remembering material enhances learning. Help students develop learning strategies that they will eventually use on their own.

Learners must know how to regulate their own learning. To regulate their own learning, students must be able to monitor their learning and to understand and correct the errors that they make. Self-regulation can be encouraged by providing opportunities for students to express and defend what they know and what they believe. And it can be helped by encouraging students to be realistic about where their learning skills are strong and where they are weak.

Sometimes knowledge can stand in the way of learning something new. Students must learn how to solve internal inconsistencies and restructure existing conceptions when necessary. Sometimes what we think is true is not. Rather than simply presenting new material that is counter to what the students believe to be true, take measures to acknowledge and build on their beliefs. Clearly present new material and provide proof through observations and experiments that the old beliefs are wrong. Give the new material the depth and time needed to allow students to restructure their prior misconceptions.



TO TEACH CHILDREN ABOUT SOIL, WE GIVE THEM SAMPLES OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF SOILS TO FEEL. BASED ON THE WORK OF LAURA PARKER, WE ALSO ENCOURAGE THEM TO SMELL SOILS AND TO NOTE THE DIFFERENCES AMONGST THEM.

Learning is better when material is organized around general principles and explanations, rather than when it is based on the memorization of isolated facts and procedures.

While memorization may help you ace a test, the information is easily forgotten. When, however, that information is understood, it is easier to retain and to apply in other situations. To help students to truly understand material, create opportunities for them to discuss the material with others and to explore ways in which that information can be applied. Have them explain a concept in their own words. Ask them to make analogies and to compare and contrast. Teach them to use illustrative examples to demonstrate how a principle can be applied.

Learning becomes more meaningful when the lessons are applied to real-life situations. It is important that students be able to apply concepts and information they learn in school to situations in their lives outside of school. Help them to do this by demonstrating how the information you are giving them can be transferred to real life situations and how that information can be applied to other subject areas. A lesson on making a vinaigrette, for example, enables children to participate in dinner preparations at home. It also gives them a firsthand experience of measuring, emulsification and balancing acid and salt.

Learning is a complex cognitive activity that cannot be rushed. It requires considerable time and periods of practice to start building expertise in an area. Instead of covering lots of topics in your presentation, keep lessons focused. Build in enough time to cover your topic well and incorporate exercises and tasks that encourage active thinking and self-monitoring.

Children learn best when their individual differences are taken into

consideration. Within any group of children, there are significant developmental differences in learning. Take these differences into account when developing tasting lessons and activities. Incorporate a range of materials and activities that draw on a variety of academic and artistic disciplines. Challenge and expand their thinking with thought-provoking questions and opportunities to problem solve. Encourage them to test their hypothesis in different ways. And create opportunities for kids to explore their interests in food and farming by bringing chefs, farmers, and other food professionals into your tastings.

Learning is critically influenced by learner motivation. Teachers can help students become more motivated learners by their behavior and the statements they make. One of the greatest gifts that you can give to a child is to instill in them a love of learning. The goal is a passionate, persistent, goal-oriented pursuit of knowledge that is self-motivated. Although you will most likely only be in the classroom for a short period of time, you can tailor your lessons and interactions in ways that help students become self-motivated. Acknowledge their accomplishments. Attribute their successes to internal factors by using phrases such as "you have good ideas." Assign interesting tasks that challenge their thinking and engage their curiosity. Give them feedback on the strategies they chose and advice on how to improve their approach to problem solving.

Creating a Positive Learning—and Teaching—Experience

Some people are natural teachers. They are at ease with children and are able to interact very easily in a classroom. For most of us, however, a good teaching style develops with time and practice. Below are some guidelines to help you be engaging, purposeful, and prepared in your teaching. This helps to maximize learning and participation and allows you to focus on the children and how they respond to your lesson.

Be yourself. There is no one correct style of teaching and using a forced idea of what a teacher should be will make the workshop stiff and unnatural. Be genuine with the children and design the activities in a way that reflects your unique personal style.

Be enthusiastic and upbeat. The goal of tastings is to get children to try new foods and to use their analytical powers to form their own ideas about what flavors and foods appeal to them. Any parent will tell you that being negative, scolding and forceful about food is the best way to ensure that a child refuses to eat or has a negative reaction to a food. Create a positive experience that children want to be part of.

Participate in the tastings. Taste is a highly personal experience. Each of us brings to the table a unique combination of family and cultural history, genetics and personal experiences that influence the way we respond to food. The beauty is that there are no wrong responses to food. Participate in tastings along with the children and show a willingness to try new foods. Be vocal—and honest—about how you feel about what you taste. If you don't like something, be specific about why and include a positive example of what you do like, such as "I don't like the taste of raw beets because it is too sharp but I love how sweet they become when they are roasted." Then ask the children for their opinion of raw and roasted beets.

Model good behavior. Be respectful toward each child and include all of them in the lesson and activities. Create an atmosphere where children can express their ideas and reactions without being fearful that they will be ridiculed. Listen, be positive and don't be judgmental. And, be complimentary toward the chef, farmer, parent or students that prepared or grew the item you are tasting.



APPLE CUT-OUT SIGNS—WITH FACTS ABOUT APPLES AND NJ AGRICULTURE—ARE HUNG IN THE HALLWAY AND CAFETERIA DURING THE TASTING AND FOR THE WEEK THAT FOLLOWS

Focus on what the children want and need to learn. In any public presentation, it is crucial to tailor your talk to the needs and expectations of the audience. By thinking about who is in your audience and what your audience is expecting to learn, you become more effective as a communicator. The same is true with teaching children. Think about what you want the children to learn, rather than what you want to teach.

Arrive in the classroom prepared. Good preparation and a hands-on, engaging workshop will go a long way toward keeping the children engaged, focused, and happy. Being well prepared will also allow you to be flexible so that you can tailor your presentation to the dynamics of the room—speeding up, slowing down, or skipping over parts in response to the reaction of the children. Having a lesson plan for your workshop (see [Preparing Your Lesson Plan sidebar](#)) will ensure that you don't miss any key points. And having a plan will help you overcome nervousness about speaking in front of children.

Create active and interactive lessons. Children learn through play and hands-on activities. They can listen and learn while their hands are engaged. Be sure to include interactive activities in which the children are active participants. Have them smell, touch, and taste the produce. Involve them in the preparation of tasting samples by letting them, after they have washed their hands, chop (if appropriate), measure, stir, pour, and serve. (Just be sure to check with teachers and staff first to find out what each group of kids is ready and able to do.) Break the lesson into manageable pieces by asking the children to do a little something and then get the next direction.

Let students know what to expect. It is very helpful to let children know what is coming so that there is some anticipation and so that they know they are going to get their hands busy. The trick is to give them enough of a preview to get them excited without giving it all away so that they only focus on what they are going to get to do. For example, if you are going

to talk with them about how eggs from pasture-raised chickens make great ice cream and then demonstrate how to make ice cream, give them a little taste of a finished ice cream first. Then take the spoons away (they will be a distraction) and reference back to the ice cream as you go through the talk and demonstration. Also, if you are coming to conduct tastings on a regular schedule, let the children know that "we're coming every Tuesday to talk about food."

Solicit input from the children. Rather than simply lecturing, engage in a discussion with the children. Asking them questions allows you to evaluate their previous knowledge. It also keeps them engaged. Asking for their opinions encourages them to develop their own understanding of—and relationship to—food. And brainstorming about ideas lets them exercise their analytical skills as they come up with their own answers.

Have questions prepared to ask the kids. When you invite a chef or farmer to come and talk about the work they do, ask them to prepare by thinking about what they do on a daily basis and how that relates to a child's everyday life. For example, a farmer could ask "Who has a garden at home? Who has seen a tomato on a plant?" This lets the kids demonstrate what they already know and it starts a conversation.

Make a connection to things they already know. To hold children's attention, a lesson needs to make a really direct connection to their life and to be meaningful to them. When a farmer explains that a farm is like a really big garden it creates a bridge between what the children know and what you want them to learn. A lesson on honey—which you can no longer assume is a common pantry item—might begin with showing the children a box of Honey Nut Cheerios or by drizzling honey from a spoon and asking how it compares to the syrup they have on their pancakes at home.

Be concrete and clear. Don't assume that children know the definition of key words that you use. If their understanding of a word, phrase or concept is crucial to the lesson, make sure that you explain what you mean. For example, not all children will know what the word soil means. If you are giving a lesson on soil, explain to them that soil is another word for dirt. Better yet, show them the items that go into making soil and look at soil to try to find those components.

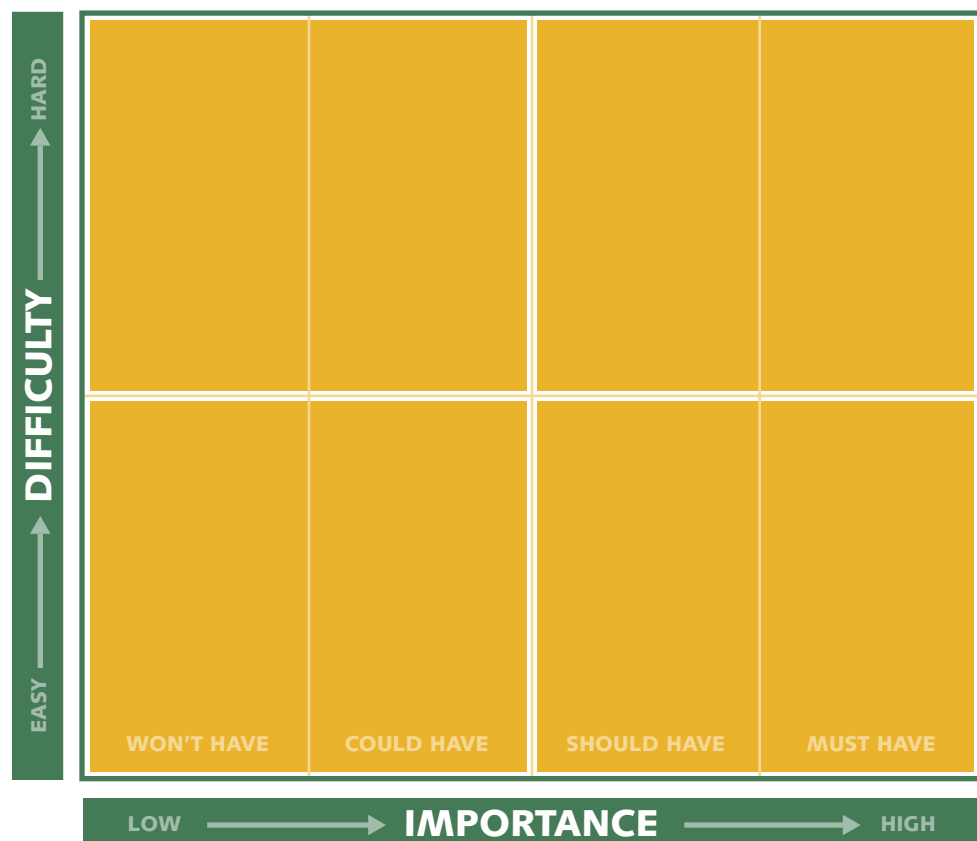
Check in before moving on. Before moving from one concrete, discrete activity to another, check in to be sure that the children remember what you told them. Ask them "before we move on I need to know that you got something from that activity, What can you tell me? I need a word. Who can give me a word that means the same thing as dirt?" Check in constantly but don't expect comprehensive, lengthy responses, If they remember the word "soil," then their brains are engaged. To make it successful for everyone, don't ask who can define the word soil. Make it easy, something that is acceptable for everyone.

Be flexible and be willing to adapt. Although there are basic guidelines about what is of interest to children at certain ages (see [Creating Age-appropriate Programs sidebar](#)), every group of children is different. As you teach, pay attention to how the children respond to the activities and expand on the areas that capture their attention. This will allow you to incorporate their interests and curiosity into your lesson.

Look for indicators of your success. While you cannot expect to get and maintain every single child's attention, you can identify those children who are a challenge to reach and use them as an indicator of your success. If you are able to engage these children, then you can safely assume that you've got the attention of most others, too.

Requirements Assessment and Prioritization

Use this simple matrix to help prioritize your list of stakeholder requirements by level of difficulty and importance. Write each item on a Post-It Note and place it at the right point within the appropriate quadrant. Items at the top right of the upper right quadrant require the greatest attention as they are both the most important and the most difficult items to achieve. Items at the top left of the upper left quadrant are your lowest priority as they are both difficult and of low importance.



What the Administration Needs to Know

The goal, tastings in the school, set and agreed to by the core team in Step 1, is a good place to start for informing school administrators. The superintendent and staff need reassurances that the school day will proceed as usual, despite the Garden State on Your Plate program, and that the tastings will contribute to the overall learning experience at the school. Link the tastings to existing curricula and present them as a solution to time-starved teachers rather than presenting them as a new responsibility that will add work and chores to their day.

Write a 1-page document that answers the typical questions: who, what, when, where, why and how much.

Who: A few sentences about the core team, its reason for being and how the group already contributes to the school.

What: Describe the tastings program. Name the chefs and farmers, if possible. Note the advance materials and opportunities for teachers to tie into NJ curriculum.

When: Explain the parameters of the actual tasting—during lunchtime, monthly, every other month, etc.

Where: Explain where in the cafeteria, or in the library or classroom the tastings will take place.

Why: Provide links to documents that support this experiential learning and how it will benefit children and other stakeholders.

How much: Explain the costs and the funding.

Adding Tastings to School Calendar

There are layers of complexity when considering schedules for tastings.

Farmers, during the growing season, are loath to leave the land and the work—unless it's raining.

Restaurant chefs in New Jersey generally have easier schedules at the beginning of the week; Thursday through Saturday nights are the busiest and prep time will expand to fill most of the days in advance.

Teachers and administrators are booked months in advance with training, field trips, assemblies and other special events, so school schedules can be particularly challenging.

And sometimes, even if the schedule is clear and the tasting is booked, unforeseen events can occur.

Rule of thumb: Give your own core team a lead time of about a month, if possible. Choose two or three dates; triangulate those schedules, get the tastings on the calendar as early as possible, and if the plan falls apart, be flexible and start again—knowing that the produce could change, which could change the farmer.

After several months of scheduling, the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative found that Tuesdays and Wednesdays generally worked best for tastings; so you might begin there.

What Principals Need to Know

The goal, tastings in the school, set and agreed to by the core team in Step 1, is a good place to start for informing school principals. The principal and staff need reassurances that the school day will proceed as usual, despite the Garden State on Your Plate program, that the children in his/her charge are learning without disruption and that the environment for learning remains safe.

Principals need to know that tastings will contribute to the overall learning experience at the school. Link the tastings to existing curricula and present them as a solution to time-starved teachers rather than presenting them as a new responsibility that will add work and chores to their day.

Write a one-page document that answers the typical questions: who, what, when, where, why and how much.

Who: A few sentences about the core team, its reason for being and how the group already contributes to the school.

What: Describe the tastings program, supplying the one-page [Typical Tastings Schedule](#) for amplification. Name the chefs and farmers, if possible. Note the advance materials and opportunities for teachers to tie into NJ curriculum. Note the understanding of food allergies and special needs. Note that photographs of children whose parents have returned the [photo opt out form](#) will not be published, and that the school needs to identify these children to the tastings team in advance of the events.

When: Explain the parameters of the actual tasting. Name the dates. Explain what time the advance team will arrive, what time the chef and farmer will arrive for each session, and the timing of each wave

of children—how the chef and farmer will address the children before or after the children get their lunches, when the children will taste (before or after lunch), and when the tastings team will leave the cafeteria after cleaning up.

Where: Explain exactly where in the cafeteria, or in the library or classroom the tastings will take place (out of the way of traffic and business as usual).

Why: Provide links to documents that support this experiential learning and how it will benefit children and other stakeholders.

How much: Explain the costs and the funding.



BEET CUT-OUT SIGNS—WITH FACTS ABOUT BEETS AND NJ AGRICULTURE—ARE HUNG IN THE HALLWAY AND CAFETERIA DURING THE TASTING AND FOR THE WEEK THAT FOLLOWS

What Teachers Need to Know

The goal, tastings in the school, set and agreed to by the core team in Step 1, is a good place to start for informing teachers. Teachers need reassurances that their teaching time will proceed as usual, despite the Garden State on Your Plate program, that the children in their classes are learning as scheduled to meet NJ state standards of education.

Teachers need to know that tastings will contribute to the overall learning experience at the school. [Link the tastings to existing grade-specific curricula](#) and present them as a solution to time-starved teachers rather than presenting them as a new responsibility that will add work and chores to their day. Note that teachers are invited to every tasting and that Garden State on Your Plate works best when teachers participate and engage children before and afterward.



Write a one-page document that answers the typical questions: who, what, when, where, why and how much.

Who: A few sentences about the core team, its reason for being and how the group already contributes to the school and supports the teachers in their efforts.

What: Describe the tastings program, supplying the one-page [Typical Tastings Schedule](#) for amplification. Name the chefs and farmers, if possible. Note the advance materials and opportunities for teachers to tie into NJ curriculum. Note the understanding of food allergies and special needs. Note that photographs of children whose parents have returned the [photo opt out form](#) will not be published, and that the school needs to identify these children to the tastings team in advance of the events.

When: Explain the parameters of the actual tasting as it affects a single grade level. Name the dates. Explain when the farmer and chef will speak to the children, whether before or after the children get their lunches, when the children will taste (before or after lunch). Explain when any advance materials will be available, either in print or online, and provide links.

Where: Explain exactly where in the cafeteria, or in the library or classroom the tastings will take place (out of the way of traffic and business as usual).

Why: Provide links to documents that support this experiential learning and how it will benefit children and other stakeholders.

How much: Explain the costs and the funding.

What Parents Need to Know

The goal, tastings in the school, set and agreed to by the core team in Step 1, is a good place to start for informing parents. Parents need reassurances that the Garden State on Your Plate tastings will enhance their children's learning and will expand their horizons. They also need to know that they are invited to join their child for the tastings and/or volunteer to assist with the actual event.

Parents need to know that the **tastings will connect the curriculum** with the school cafeteria and with the outside world, and that they can be a part of that. Present the tastings as an opportunity to expand a school lesson into the home, amplifying it.

Write a one-page document that answers the typical questions: who, what, when, where, why and how much. Supply it online or by email to parents. Have it translated to reach non-English speaking parents.

Who: A few sentences about the core team, its reason for being and how the group already contributes to the school and supports the parents in their efforts.

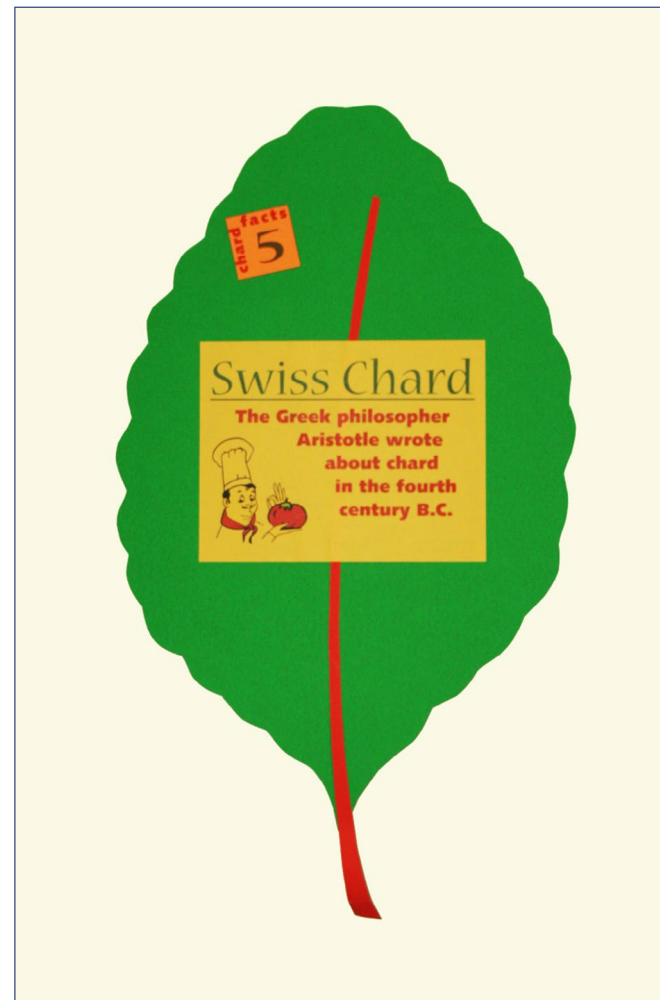
What: Describe the tastings program, supplying the one-page **Typical Tastings Schedule** for amplification. Name the chefs and farmers, if possible. Note the advance materials and opportunities for parents to explore with their children in advance, online, or in print. Note the understanding of food allergies and special needs. Note that photographs of children whose parents have returned the **photo opt out form** will not be published, and that if there is a privacy concern, you can be reached by email or by phone in advance of the events.

When: Explain the parameters of the actual tasting as it affects a single grade level. Name the dates. Explain when the farmer and chef will speak to the children, whether before or after the children get their lunches, when the children will taste (before or after lunch).

Where: Explain exactly where in the cafeteria, or in the library or classroom the tastings will take place (out of the way of traffic and business as usual).

Why: Provide links to documents that support this experiential learning and how it will benefit children and other stakeholders.

How much: Explain the costs and the funding.



CHARD CUT-OUT SIGNS—WITH FACTS ABOUT CHARD AND NJ AGRICULTURE—ARE HUNG IN THE HALLWAY AND CAFETERIA DURING THE TASTING AND FOR THE WEEK THAT FOLLOWS

What the PTO needs to know

The goal, tastings in the school, set and agreed to by the core team in Step 1, is a good place to start for informing parent-teacher organizations/associations. These groups, generally the gateway for non-staff participation in school-based learning, is very valuable in facilitating events such as Garden State on Your Plate tastings.

Invite the PTO officers and members to attend and/or participate in each tasting, and to offer suggestions and comments on how to improve each event. The PTO often works closely alongside teachers and the principal, and will provide thoughtful feedback on ways to **integrate the tastings into the classroom** and the home life of each student.

Explain that the tastings are special events and that you welcome opportunities for partnering with the group, in work and/or funding.

Write a 1-page document that answers the typical questions: who, what, when, where, why and how much. Supply it online or by email to parents. Have it translated to reach non-English speaking parents.

Who: A few sentences about the core team, its reason for being and how the group already contributes to the school and supports the PTO in their efforts.

What: Describe the tastings program, supplying the one-page **Typical Tastings Schedule** for amplification. Name the chefs and farmers, if possible. Note the advance materials and opportunities for parents to explore with their children in advance, online, or in print. Note the understanding of food allergies and special needs. Note that photographs of children whose parents have returned the **photo opt out form** will not be published, and that if the PTO has a privacy concern, you can be reached by email or by phone

in advance of the events.

When: Explain the parameters of the actual tasting as it affects a single grade level. Name the dates. Explain when the farmer and chef will speak to the children, whether before or after the children get their lunches, when the children will taste (before or after lunch).

Where: Explain exactly where in the cafeteria, or in the library or classroom the tastings will take place (out of the way of traffic and business as usual).

Why: Provide links to documents that support this experiential learning and how it will benefit children and other stakeholders, ways that it can be used to support the school's publicity and fund-raising efforts.

How much: Explain the costs (aka benefits to the school) and the funding sources.

What Tasting Day Volunteers Need to Know

The goal, tastings in the school, set and agreed to by the core team in Step 1, is a good place to start for informing volunteers who will be helping with the tastings. All volunteers need clear and specific instructions on what you want them to do and how their work will contribute to the success of the Garden State on Your Plate program. (See [Volunteers at Tastings Checklist](#).)

Volunteers need to know that tastings will contribute to the overall food literacy at the school and will help connect the school garden to health and pleasurable dining. Note that all volunteers are invited to every tasting.

Write a 1-page document that answers the typical questions: who, what, when, where, why and how much.

Who: A few sentences about the core team, its reason for being and how the group already contributes to the school and supports the local food community.

What: Describe the tastings program, supplying the one-page [Typical Tastings Schedule](#). Name the chefs, farmers and produce to be sampled, if possible. Note the need to accommodate food allergies and other special needs.

When: List the dates, the timing of the tastings and the time the volunteers should arrive at the school. Explain when the farmer and chef will speak to the children, whether before or after the children get their lunches, when the children will taste (before or after lunch).

Where: Explain exactly where in the cafeteria, or in the library or classroom the tastings will take place (out of the way of traffic and business as usual). Provide directions to the school and instructions on where to park.

Why: Provide links to documents that support this experiential learning and how it will benefit children and other stakeholders.

How much: Explain the costs and the funding for your program.



CORN CUT-OUT SIGNS—WITH FACTS ABOUT CORN AND NJ AGRICULTURE—ARE HUNG IN THE HALLWAY AND CAFETERIA DURING THE TASTING AND FOR THE WEEK THAT FOLLOWS

What the Media Need to Know

The community media are looking to increase readership and eyes on websites, but they lack resources to do in-depth reporting. Your job is to provide anything and everything they could want.

Two weeks in advance of the first tasting, send by email, directly to a reporter, editor, blogger or social mediaist, a 1-page press release (in major languages)—your name, email and text contact information at the top—that tells a journalist or blogger why the Garden State on Your Plate is worthy of coverage.

1. **It's local.** Tastings are conducted in local schools or institutions (YMCA, etc.), using nearby farmers with fresh, local produce, with recipes made by local chefs.
2. **It's socially resonant.** Most prospective readers are aware of problems with the food system, whether water pollution from over-applied synthetic oil-based fertilizers running into the Mississippi River and creating a Dead Zone at the Gulf of Mexico, the corn-based diet of Americans that is implicated in the epidemic of obesity and diet-related disease, or the social isolation that occurs when kitchens stay cold and barren and people eat from bags, in the car, alone. The tastings program takes a stand against the dominant culture, educating children from their mouths out, about food, pleasure and the network that supports this nurturing of each other.
3. **It is a crowd pleaser.** Cute pictures can dominate the page and bring smiles—and repeat readers—to the newspaper. Readers in the community are happy to read about good news in the community, and efforts by their neighbors, to make a difference.

Answer the typical questions: who, what, when, where, why and how much.

Who: A few sentences about the sponsoring group and/or the core team, its reason for being and a quick list of ways that the group has benefited the school in the past.

What: Describe the tastings program, supplying the one-page [Typical Tastings Schedule](#) for amplification. Name the chefs and farmers, if possible.

When: Explain the parameters of the actual tastings and suggest good times for visiting as a reporter or photographer.

Where: Explain exactly where in the school the tastings will be conducted.

Why: Provide links to documents that support this experiential learning and how it will benefit children and other stakeholders.

How much: Explain the costs and the funding.

As an addendum, note that privacy regulations will limit identification of children and the inclusion of some children in photography or video unless permission is secured separately from the parents.

Subsequent tastings alerts to media can be less formal.

If interest is piqued but the reporter notes time constraints, supply photographs (you do the work to obtain permissions for name publication of children, if appropriate and judged necessary) and an expanded caption text to tell readers about the tasting that occurred.

step 4

create work breakdown structure

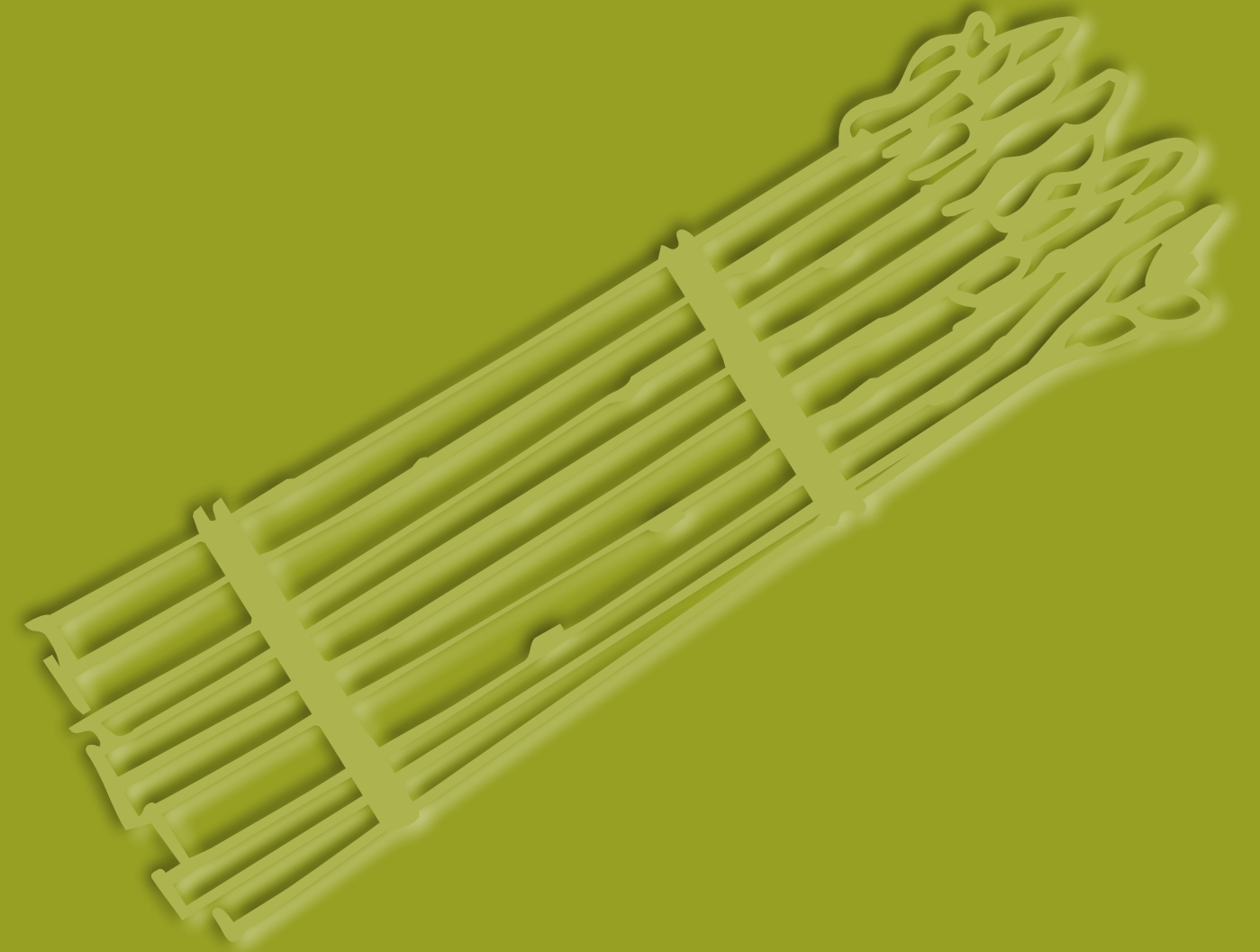
The goals agreed to in Step 1 provide us only with a high-level scope for the project. In order to reach a greater understanding of the volume of work involved in the tastings we need to develop a 'picture' of the work (and only the work) on the tasting project. To reach this clarity, says Mr. Ryle, divide each component of the project into what he calls work packages, and assign responsibility/accountability for each work package to a team member. Each work package is described by a verb/noun: Do/This.

It's crucial to get agreement on the work packages, said Mr. Ryle. "The work packages become the building blocks of the tastings. We can estimate time and cost for each one. We can assign roles and responsibilities and also track progress against each one as well. For many project managers this is the key document of any well-run project."

Maintain a current Work Breakdown Structure, with work packages marked off when completed.

In this chapter, you will learn:

- ◆ How to find, choose and use volunteers
- ◆ How to pitch your project, quickly and succinctly
- ◆ How to scale your tastings to match your budget
- ◆ How lesson plans dovetail with the tastings
- ◆ How to adapt a template to fit your own work structure



CLARIFY AND AGREE ON THE SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

How to Find, Choose and Use Volunteers

A great crew of volunteers goes a long way toward making your tasting program a success. Along with looking for specific qualities in individual volunteers (see [Qualities to Look for in a Great Team Member sidebar](#)), have a strategy for building your pool of quality volunteers.

Define your volunteer positions: Writing a description of the jobs you have for volunteers has several benefits. It forces you to clarify your needs as an organization or group. It gives potential volunteers a clear idea of what opportunities you have. And it helps you identify good volunteer prospects based on the skills you need. Items to have in a job description include: title of the job, description of the project or program, the purpose of the job (why it needs to be done), time commitment required, who the volunteer will work with and report to, the specific tasks required in the job, the skills and knowledge base needed to perform the job, any specific licenses, certification, or coverage required to perform the job, and how the job will benefit the volunteer.

Recruit your volunteers: Keep an eye out within the community for people who you think would be an asset to your program. When you identify good candidates, invite them to become part of your program. They may not say yes, but will be flattered that you sought them out. Consider approaching candidates with a specific request for help. That is less intimidating for them and it is an opportunity to see if this person is a good fit.

Craft a recruitment message to advertise your volunteer needs. The message should include a description of the purpose of the job, the work and time requirements, the clientele being served, and who to contact to get involved. There are many ways to get the recruitment message out into the community including: a blurb in the newsletters of local businesses and organizations, a story about your program in the local newspapers, on-line listservs and discussion groups,



FARMER CHRIS TURSE OF DOUBLEBROOK FARM IN HOPEWELL WEARS HIS "EAT MORE KALE" T-SHIRT TO A SCHOOL-WIDE KALE TASTING

word of mouth from current volunteers and others who support the goals of your program, radio interviews about your tasting program, requests to community volunteer organizations, and enlisting the help of well-connected community members.

And be vigilant about making sure that your current volunteers are happy. Their word-of-mouth advertising is your best source of new volunteers and retaining good volunteers is better—and easier—than going out and recruiting new ones.

Reach out beyond your own circles: Join organizations and attend events where you are likely to meet other members of your community who care about providing delicious, healthful, local foods to children.

Know when to say no: Interview all prospective volunteers. This is where you figure out whether or not a potential volunteer is a good fit for the job and the organization. Holding an interview enables you to get a better sense of this person's abilities and interests and the candidate gets a clearer understanding of the requirements of the job and the goals of your program. This will help to ensure that you both understand—and will be happy with—what the other is offering. If you find that a prospective volunteer is not a good fit, it is important to tactfully decline their offer of help.

Induct your volunteers into your organization: Once you have an agreement with someone to be a volunteer, make sure they have all of the information they need to feel that they are part of the group. This includes the names and roles of key members of your team, the goals and accomplishments of your organization and the correct contact person for questions and suggestions. Also let them know how they can join the conversation with other group members via Google Group, your newsletter, monthly meetings, Facebook page or whatever other method you use to keep everyone informed.

Know your people: In order to put volunteers into the right jobs, you need to know a bit about their strengths and weaknesses. Use this information to place your volunteers where they are most likely to be successful and to be an asset to your program. This will help you avoid turning an enthusiastic volunteer into a frustrated ex-volunteer.

Have potential volunteers fill out a form that captures their contact information, availability, length of time they are hoping to volunteer (over the next month? year?), and the reason they would like to volunteer with your program. Include a place for them to indicate the type of work they are hoping to do with your tasting program and a place to list the skills they are willing to use in their volunteer efforts,

Be clear about your needs and expectations: When you head into a cafeteria or classroom, your whole team must be aware that you have a job to do and that it needs to be done in a professional manner. Although there is a lot of camaraderie built through bringing local produce and chefs into schools, tastings are not social events. The focus must be on the children and on staging the best event possible.

Make volunteering enjoyable and rewarding: People have lots of reasons for volunteering—a passion for the mission, a desire to give back to the community, a chance to gain new skills, etc.—but don't rely on self-fulfillment to be enough to keep them engaged. If you want people to give up their time to help you with your tasting program then it has to be enjoyable for them and they have to feel appreciated (see [Rewarding Volunteers sidebar](#)). And being generous with your praise is far easier and more rewarding than trying to undo the damage that can be done to your reputation by a disgruntled ex-volunteer.

Pitching Your Project

There are potential supporters for your project all around your community. You never know when the opportunity will arise to pitch your tasting program to a potential funder, volunteer, participant or host organization, so you need to have your pitch polished and ready. We're talking about the elevator pitch—that brief description of your project that can make the difference between “that’s nice” and “tell me more.”

Make it Concise. In 20 to 30 seconds let the person know: who your customer is, the problem they are having, what you do to solve it, the results you bring and why those results matter. For example, here is a rundown on Garden State on Your Plate: We encourage elementary school children to eat more fresh fruits and vegetables by bringing chefs and farmers into the schools. The chefs demonstrate how delicious well-prepared local produce can be. The farmers help children make the connection between what they ate and where and by whom it was grown. These face-to-face connections increase the chances that children will try new produce items. The appealing flavor increases the chances that they will try it when it is offered to them again.

Capture attention: Make your pitch engaging right from the start so that the listener wants to know more. Start with what is intriguing about your program—for example, instead of saying “We run in-school tasting programs for children” you might lead with “We bring chefs and farmers into schools to connect children to the flavor of New Jersey produce and to the people who make it happen.”

Pitch your program, not your ideas: We all have lots of ideas about what we would like to do but this is not the time to throw out a laundry list of future projects. This is the time to introduce yourself and what you do.

Show your enthusiasm: Think about what really excites you about your work and make sure that excitement comes through.

Don't get too technical: Throwing out lots of alarming statistics on agriculture, food, and human health will bury your message.

Practice your pitch: Write your pitch down, practice it, revise it and keep working on it until it flows naturally.

If the person is interested and it is appropriate, pitch what you need: If your pitch leads to a conversation and it is appropriate, let this person know what you need. Make that request relevant to who they are—for example, tell a business owner that you are looking for sponsors or a restaurateur that you are looking for chefs.

Revise your pitch: Pay attention to the response that you get to your pitch and then revise it to make it more powerful and persuasive.



SMELLING ROOTS OF AN ONION SEEDLING

Scaling Tastings to Match the Budget

Judging from the welcome that the Garden State on Your Plate efforts received by the school district administration in Princeton, your own efforts to bring good, fresh food to children are likely to be applauded as well.

Though the PSGC program was funded as a result of combined years' work for the schools, a cultural acceptance for such efforts and support of organizations including the Princeton Environmental Council and Sustainable Princeton, the actual tastings are the heart of the program and in themselves aren't expensive.

The first foray was eight different sessions, two appearances each, for a total of 16 tastings. The second effort was more modest: 5 sessions for each of two after-school programs for at-risk children. With the benefit of experience, costs could be cut even further to accommodate physical, financial and cultural parameters of the hosting institution.

Chefs/Parents: Thanks to the Food Network and other venues, chefs have star power. The PSGC invited four to participate in one fall and one spring tasting each, at two schools, for a total of eight different sessions (and 16 appearances, total). But a collection of parents or school staffers could do the work.

Farmers/Supermarkets: Produce, which PSGC was able to buy from farmers with land near the community, is often available at supermarkets through the Jersey Fresh program. If farmers can't make the trip in for the tasting, oftentimes the produce manager from the market will agree to appear to discuss seasonality, some interesting facts about the food or how it grows, and how to choose it, store it and prepare it for eating. In parallel to this program, the PSGC has had good success in the past with tastings as simple as a variety of apples, honey, cheese, ice cream and chocolate chip cookies.

Fact Sheets/Texting: The PSGC published a **fact sheet** in advance of each of the tastings that included a note to parents, ideas for dinnertime conversation about the tasting, the recipe served to the children, and listings of fun facts to know about its history in the state or in the diet. The schools took on the cost of making copies; templates for such newsletters generally are included in word processing software. But if the costs of copying and newsletter production are prohibitive, a simple email or text to parents will put them on alert that a tasting is ahead, and that they are invited. These fact sheets and/or texts can also function as publicity for the program—send them, as they occur, to bloggers, journalists and even politicians (who are always looking for good news in their territory). And text cute pictures (if permission is secured from parents) of children mid-tasting, to build enthusiasm.

Videos/Google: A good portion of the publicity budget went to pay a videographer who went on location at both the farm and the restaurant/school kitchen to interview the farmer and chef about the produce and the recipe, then created a 3-minute video to be shown in advance of each tasting. This piece, while very effective in building the roar of the crowd in advance of the chef and farmer appearances, could be created with a low-cost app and a series of photographs from Google Earth, free USDA photography and Google Maps juxtaposed with a brief segment of dish assembly. A slide show of the produce with a locator map of the state followed by a set of questions the children could ask themselves at the tasting would work as a short introduction as well.



EXAMINING SOIL SAMPLES

are **simple recipes** for the eight foods our chefs chose for the original tastings.

Library/Shelf: If the budget doesn't allow for purchase of supporting books and DVDs, work with the public library to set up a rotating collection as reference for the school library.

bed kits, pots, soil, seeds, seedlings, mulch, hoses. And the schoolwide benefit is an outdoor classroom. If there's room, the project is fairly simple, write Arden Bucklin-Sporer and Rachel Kathleen Pringle in their book, *How to Grow a School Garden: A Complete Guide for Parents and Teachers*. In New Jersey, our rich resource is in **Dorothy Mullen**, co-founder of the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative and longtime garden educator, who runs workshops for teachers, parents and others interested in the project.

Wellness Policy: A wellness policy is now federally mandated for each school district. Help your school strengthen its policy by reading model policies and advocating for change. Here's one model: the **Berkeley Unified School District Wellness Policy**.

Harvest Dinner/Potluck: Scheduling for our kickoff harvest dinner didn't work out, so the Garden State on Your Plate program began under the radar and even by its conclusion, it felt somewhat unknown. Avoid this mistake and throw a community potluck at the school, or nearby, instead, and invite the politicians and the leaders in the faith-based community. Building awareness will build this program, creating a better future for our children.

Cooking Cart/Slow Cooker: The Garden State on Your Plate program bought little rolling carts supplied with an induction burner and a slow cooker so they could be moved about the school. But slow cookers cost less than \$20, and if each parent chipped in a dollar or two, each class could have one. And parents could contribute their gently used cookware and utensils, as space permits.

Field Trips/Schoolyard Gardens: If the budget is non-existent, field trips are unlikely, but garden stores often will donate supplies for modest gardens: raised

Cafeteria/Commons: The PSGC found it most efficient to conduct tastings in the cafeteria, but because the school outsources meals to a food service purveyor, the group needed permission from the purveyor as well as from our administration. Tastings can also be conducted in the classroom, in the library, or around a table in the hall or in the commons area.

Simple/Simplest: If chefs are not part of your picture, think like the best ones and choose a recipe that stars the produce and is very, very simple. If the food is not normally served raw, choose a recipe that can be made in large quantities—a soup or a roasted item. Here

DRILL DOWN

Preparing Your Lesson Plan

Preparation is crucial to running a successful tasting or in-class lesson. By creating a lesson plan you will help ensure that the time you spend with the children is meaningful to them and that the teacher considers you an asset to the classroom.

Ideally, find an educator in your community who is willing to talk through the flow of your lesson plan with you. If you can't find that person, below are some ideas on how to create a lesson plan. Your plan doesn't need to be detailed or elaborate but it does need to be completed in advance.

- Objective:** This—the most important part of the lesson plan—is where you state what you want the children to have learned by the end of the lesson. Be sure to define the learning objective, not the lesson activity. For example “make a kale salad” is an activity; “learn to use a knife correctly” is an objective that can be achieved through making a kale salad. Have one concept or idea that you want to drive home. It can be broad or small. Be sure to talk with your guest chef or farmer about the objective of the lesson and brainstorm about ways to make sure it is achieved.
- Anticipatory Set:** This is where you describe for the children the activity that they will be doing. Your goal is to grab their attention and get them excited about the lesson. In this step, you also want to ascertain how much the children know about the subject. Use that information to make the connection between what you are going to teach them and what they already know. For example, you might start out like this: “Today, we are going to learn about beets. Who here thinks that beets can be grown in NJ? How do they grow? On a tree? On a bush?”
- Activity:** Make your activity as active and interactive as possible. Engage all five senses, if possible. Young children learn by tasting, touching, and smelling—for example, planting seeds, following a recipe to make a beet salad, or tasting raw kale. Children learn by doing—so give instructions and be available for guidance, but let the children do as much of the activity on their own as possible. At the end of the activity, have the children share their reactions and observations.
- Processing:** Link the activity to learning by asking questions about the lesson. The goal is to have the children integrate what they have learned. Your questions should prompt the children to recap the steps they used, identify problems they encountered and how they solved them, and explain the importance of the skill they practiced.
- Conclusion:** End your lesson with a wrap-up discussion. Encourage the children to make observations and conclusions about how their experience connects to other experiences they have had and lessons they have learned. Make sure they understand how this lesson can be used in their lives outside of the classroom.

Garden State on Your Plate Jobs at Tastings

It takes an efficient and effective team to organize school-wide tastings and to keep them flowing smoothly and on schedule. **The core team** organizes and manages the tastings. They provide support for the chef and farmer during the tastings—allowing them to focus their attention on the children. The core team makes sure that the school and parents stay informed and involved. For the pilot stage of Garden State on Your Plate, we had a core team of three people who were involved in all aspects of the tastings—from design to execution to follow-up. Now that the tastings are established and we are not recording children’s reactions, one point person and one back-up person to help at the tastings is sufficient for the core team. **The volunteers** are at the tastings to support the core team and to collect data about the tastings. They also provide valuable feedback about how the tastings are being received by the children and how they can be improved.

Core Team: You don’t need a separate person for each of these jobs. Just make sure that each job is assigned to someone and that it is clear who is taking on each job.

Before the tastings:

Scheduling Coordinator: Meshes schedules of schools and chefs to find dates for tastings. In Garden State on Your Plate, each chef is assigned a month during which he or she leads two tastings—once each at two different schools. Both tasting feature the same produce item and same simple recipes. To set up the schedule, we begin by getting a list of all possible dates from each school. At the same time, we ask the chefs which months are best for each of them. We then assign a chef to each month and send each chefs the dates within that month that the schools are able to host a tasting. When the chefs OK the dates we send that schedule to the schools. When the schools sign off, we send the full final schedule to everyone—chefs, schools, core team members.

Chef Wrangler: Works with chefs to identify the produce item to be featured and the farmer who will supply that item. Then works to get the chefs to settle on a recipe and to design the format of the tasting. This job requires a willingness to prod and plead.

Writer: Supplies text for newsletter, produce facts for newsletter and produce cutouts, and communications with the press.

Photographer: Takes photos of chefs and farmers for newsletter and posters, takes photos at each tasting

Newsletter Producer: Produces the newsletter that goes home with each student a few days before each tasting. Pulls together newsletter content—text and produce facts from writer, recipe from chef, photographs of farmer and chef—and produces final PDF of newsletter that goes to schools for copying. We also produce a Spanish version of each of our newsletters using translations provided by the school.

Graphics Producer: Produces produce cutouts, descriptor posters, and hallway poster announcing each tasting

School Liaison: It is best to have one person be the liaison with the schools, preferably a parent who knows the staff and principal. This person is in charge of getting the school schedule for possible tasting dates and the lunchroom schedule, complete with the number of students in each grade. The school liaison also makes sure that the newsletter is distributed to all of the students and that the descriptor posters are distributed to all of the teachers. Makes sure produce cut-outs get

hung. Tracks down permissions for publicity shots of children during the events.

Volunteer Coordinator: Sends out requests for volunteers, keeps track of how many volunteers sign up, sends schedule to volunteers, sends follow-up e-mail to thank volunteers after the event.

Pre-tasting Coordinator: Creates and coordinates supply list to be sure that all items are covered. Sends information—to do list, supply list, directions, parking instructions, arrival time—to chef and core team in advance of the tasting. This generally is the same person as the Scheduling Coordinator.

At the tastings:

Volunteer Coordinator: Gives instructions and assignments to volunteers

Samples Coordinator: Stationed at table, puts samples into tasting cups, if item is to be heated, makes sure that gets done

General Oversight: Someone has to be in charge of scanning the room at regular intervals to be sure that everything is running smoothly and that the chefs have the support they need

Liaison with School: It is important that the principal, cafeteria staff, office staff, and teachers are as engaged as possible in the tasting. The liaison makes sure that as many school personnel as possible get to taste the dishes being sampled. This person is also available to answer any questions and to explain the logistics and goals of the tasting.

Volunteers: Our volunteers work only during the actual tastings. Their job is to fill sample cups, refill bowls of communal items, distribute samples and reset tables. The volunteers also sit with the children while they are tasting to encourage them to sample the items offered and to talk with them about their reactions to the foods.



A VOLUNTEER HELPS CHEF CHRISTOPHER ALBRECHT FILL SWEET POTATO SAMPLE CUPS

step 5

identify, assess and respond to risks

A risk sounds dangerous, but Mr. Ryle says it is merely a point or topic that is unsettled. He recommends gathering all possible excuses for unfinished work packages early. With that stack of potential problems in hand, balance the possible impacts against the probabilities while establishing the sponsor's tolerance.

Consider response strategies. They include: Accept and develop contingency plans, avoid by changing scope or context, transfer by obtaining insurance or mitigate by reducing probability or impact.

Further, he recommends maintaining a risk register, also called a risk log, that lists these possibilities. "If you only do one step of this 10-step approach then please do this one," said Mr. Ryle. "The identification of risks to any part of the project will uncover your concerns. The analysis of those risks will help you prioritize them, and the response to the top risks will probably require that you carry out more planning."

With tastings, myriad risks come to mind: Liability, food safety rules, food service provider rules, overburdened teachers, skepticism that children will try new foods, time constraints in the school day, entrenched culture, limits of the growing season during the school year, lack of funding, organizational structure that prohibits grant applications, privacy regulations that limit photography publication of children in NJ schools, volunteer burnout, abrupt schedule changes at schools, illness of a core team member or a family member.

Have a Plan B at the ready.

In this chapter, you will learn about:

- ◆ Barriers to success
- ◆ Our opt-out photo permission form
- ◆ Insurance and liability
- ◆ When to plant and harvest
- ◆ NJ food statistics
- ◆ Funding possibilities



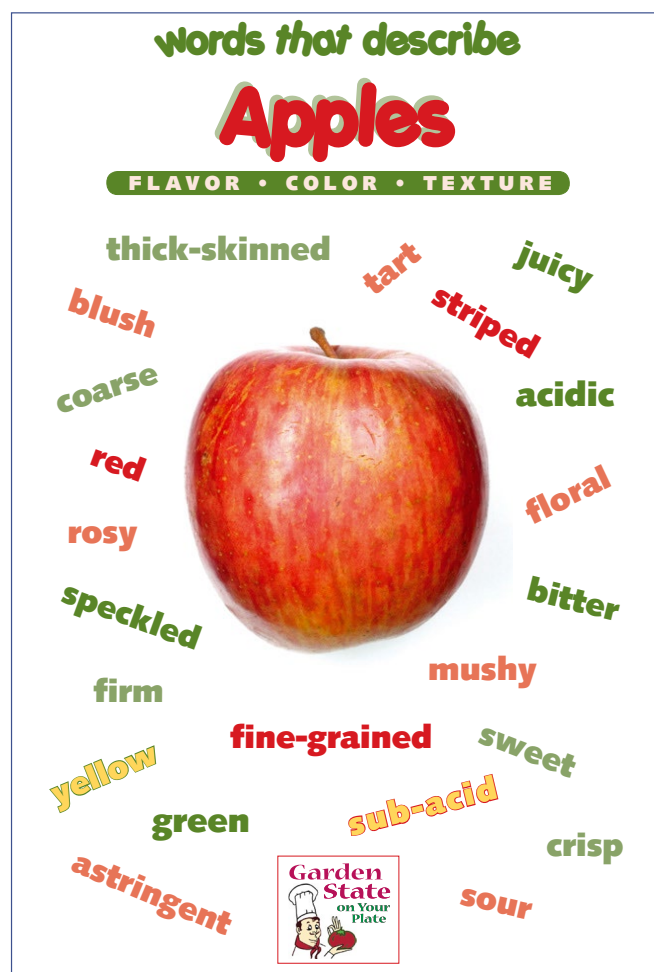
Arguments Against Tastings and How to Counter Them

Skeptics will throw out lots of reasons why introducing children to local produce at school is impractical, imprudent or impossible. Here are some of the objections and how to counter them:

Children don't like vegetables: The objective of Garden State on Your Plate is to introduce children to local produce in a learning environment where they are more predisposed to try something new. We present an analytical aspect to each produce tasting in order to focus the children on their experience and to encourage them to reflect on the taste of the produce. In our experience, children will not only taste produce in this setting but a sizable majority of them (see results from data) will enjoy the produce. Studies show that children need repeated exposure to a food in order to like it. Therefore, our program would be even more successful if the tastings were reinforced by that same produce item being served on subsequent days in the cafeteria, in a family fun night at school and at home.

No time in the cafeteria:

The cafeteria is the best place to conduct in-school tastings when you want to have the entire school participate. Because lunch periods are short and hectic, it requires that you be extremely well organized and mindful of the schedule. On tasting days, recess, which precedes lunch, is cut short by a few minutes so that our chefs and farmers can talk with the children before the tasting. When the children enter the cafeteria, the tables are set up so that they can participate in the tasting and then get their lunches. Children who want seconds are allowed to approach the tasting table once they have finished their lunches.



Having the school lunch schedule and a count of the number of children at each lunch period enables us to have the proper number of samples prepared and set out on time.

No time in the school day: In-classroom or in-garden tastings are a good way to build on the cafeteria tastings. Like the cafeteria, classroom time is extremely limited, so the tasting should tie into the curriculum. Fortunately, food has a real and relevant connection to almost every subject. Talk with the teachers about how to tie your tasting to the lessons that they are teaching. Take responsibility for coming in with a well-prepared and relevant tasting.



Food Safety: The tasting samples for all of our cafeteria tastings are prepared by chefs in their restaurant kitchens. These kitchens are inspected and these chefs have training in food safety and are familiar with moving prepared foods safely for off-site events. On-site we follow the food safety practices listed in the Food Safety sidebar.

Food Allergies: We talk with our chefs about avoiding common allergens in the dishes they prepare for the Garden State on Your Plate tastings. We also run all recipes by the school nurse so that she can identify any children for whom the dish is not appropriate.

No school during growing season: Although summer vacation coincides with the harvest time of many fresh produce items in New Jersey, there is still a lot of fresh produce being harvested throughout the fall. And there are numerous storage crops, such as apples, potatoes, and sweet potatoes that are available in the winter and spring. For spring tasting, look for local farmers who use hoop houses to grow greens. Contact them in the fall to let them know that you would like to purchase from them in the early spring. Preserved produce such as canned NJ tomatoes and dried cornmeal is also an option.

DESCRIPTOR POSTERS THAT ARE USED IN CLASSROOMS IN SUPPORT OF GARDEN STATE ON YOUR PLATE TASTINGS

PSGC Photo Opt-out Form

You can have the best, most innovative program going, one that supports good whole food, garden- and food-based education, the local economy, and feeds children foods that make them big and strong, but if you don't tell anyone about it, the effect of your program is marginal.

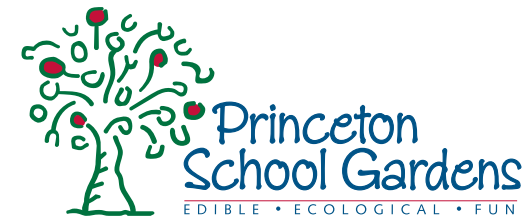
And words are just part of the message. Pictures say it faster.

But privacy regulations require that parents OK the use of their children's images, and because ours is an organization that works with, but is separate from the school, we needed our own photo permissions slip in place before we used any images that showed children who could be identified.

We began by using a form modeled on that of Princeton Public Schools, but low return rates meant that we couldn't use cute pictures and showed us that we needed a better solution. Taking advantage of the latest in [behavioral research](#), we re-wrote the form to require those who didn't give permission to return the form. No action is required of those who do give permission. We submitted the form to Judy Wilson, the district superintendent, and she OK'd it. Make sure that your form is in place well in advance of your tastings.



COMMUNITY PARK
STUDENTS CONDUCT
A VIDEO INTERVIEW
WITH FARMER
TANNWEN MOUNT AND
CHEF ROB HARBISON



Princeton School Gardens Cooperative
211 North Harrison St., Suite A5
Princeton, NJ 08540
info@psgcoop.org

Your child in the garden, at a farm field trip, at a tasting, or cooking in class

The Princeton School Gardens Cooperative (PSGC) is a local non-profit organization that fosters garden- and food-based education in the classroom, cafeteria and community. Our group has established edible gardens at all the public schools in Princeton, has brought chefs and farmers into school cafeterias to serve up tasting portions of local produce, has taught cooking and gardening to the children, and cooked alongside them at after-school programs at the PYA-YMCA, supplying more than \$75,000 in goods and services to Princeton Public Schools.

The initiatives of PSGC are supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Garden Club of Princeton, the Garden Club of America-NJ, Whole Earth Center, small world coffee, bent spoon, Terra Momo Restaurant Group, elements restaurant, Princeton University, Americana Hospitality, Windsor Compost, Belle Mead Co-op, a local foundation, and countless parents, teachers and administrators.

As a way to help others understand the value of this work, with and for your children, we publish photos and video clips of our programs in action and supply them to select sources, including our own website and social media sites, regional media, educational journals and food- or garden-based publications. Those photos and video clips may include your child—unidentified by name.

If you do not permit the use of your child's image in this manner, please complete this form and return it to your child's school or after-school program. If you approve of this use, do not return this form.

Please initial next to EACH line for which you do not give permission:

I/We DO NOT GRANT permission to publish **photos and/or video clips** of my/our child on the:

___ PSGC-sponsored and/or approved public webpage or its social media sites.

I/We DO NOT GRANT permission to publish **photos and/or video clips** of my/our child on:

___ Other PSGC-sponsored and/or approved publications, including but not limited to promotional materials and press releases prepared for regional media, educational journals and food- or garden-based publications.

Name of Student: (please print) _____

School: _____ Grade: _____ Teacher: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian and email address: (please print) _____

Home phone: _____ Cell/text: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

This form approved by Judy Wilson, superintendent of Princeton Public Schools: 08/16/12

Insurance and Liability

In addition to previously cited bumps, the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative members worked the tastings with some trepidation. The core team knew it was participating in a national movement, but PSGC was doing something different. Other schools had true farm to school programs, with school cafeterias buying produce from local farms and then preparing it in the school kitchens to serve up as part of the National School Lunch Program.

But the Princeton Public Schools board, in the early 2000s, had outsourced the NSLP meals and the sale of all packaged and processed snack and dessert items to Chartwells, the public-school arm of the UK-based Compass Group. Repeated requests for school meal improvements since 2003 had yielded little, so PSGC worked separately. Still, with the Garden State on Your Plate program, the group wanted to follow the rules—if only they could be determined.

- Was it OK to serve produce from school gardens, or from local farms?
- Did food prep need to be completed in a licensed and inspected kitchen?
- Each of the participating chefs was working for a restaurant or institution that carried liability insurance. But were all soup-scooping volunteers vulnerable to potential litigation, or were they covered under the district's general policy?

- If the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative hired an independent cook to conduct a tasting, would she/he need liability insurance? If not, how does this differ from those who bring cupcakes, pizza, sandwiches, apple slices, salads, soups and other foods for school-day events?

As for food and food-handling, Janey Thornton, Deputy Under Secretary, Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services for the USDA, when asked about any/all rules and regulations associated with using foods or products from school gardens, local farms, markets or restaurants in classrooms and cafeteria settings, or whether tastings leaders or assistants would be covered under schools' existing insurance policies, directed us to [general recommendations](#), and also a [FAQ](#) on the nation's burgeoning farm to school efforts.

"To my knowledge," she wrote in an email, "there is nothing that covers those topics from the federal level. I can, however, tell you that in Kentucky, IF the individuals you used in your program were paid, they (and their activities) were covered under the same blanket insurance as the rest of the district. Consequently, we didn't let folks volunteer to work behind the serving lines due to danger involving equipment but they could work in the cafeteria itself. Our volunteers who worked in the classrooms were also covered because they weren't using potentially dangerous equipment...I have a feeling coverage might vary dramatically not only state to state but from district to district.

I know this is not the clear-cut answer that you were looking [for] and that's one of the reasons these programs have been so frustrating to many. Common sense may be your best answer!"

The PSGC went with common sense and called Randy Carter, of the Princeton Regional Health Department. He said that foods shall be prepared in a licensed kitchen if they are made for sale to the general public.

Parents, teachers, students, chefs, farmers, gardeners, family or other volunteers are exempt from preparing foods in a licensed kitchen, and from other NJ food handling license requirements if:

- The program is presented as a cooking school or cooking classes;
- No money changes hands for the samples; and,
- All volunteers shall follow basic sanitation rules and those to avoid cross-contamination (see [Food Safety sidebar](#)). Cross-contamination is by poor hand washing practices, equipment, utensils etc. not being sanitized.

Further, a group is permitted to buy foods for the cooking school/tastings and to pay someone only to teach the class or conduct cooking demonstrations - as long as those attending are part of a community group and are invited guests and they are there to learn and to sample.

Bringing the outside public in for the program, even to give food to them, he said, will trigger Chapter 24 Sanitation In Retail Food Establishments, which is a [52-page list of requirements](#) of food handlers for the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services/Consumer and Environmental Health Services.

As for insurance coverage, the PSGC was initially alarmed to hear that all outside educators and experts who come into the school "MUST have their own insurance coverage naming "Princeton Regional Schools" as an additional insured." It did not make sense to us that anyone, including chefs, cooks, gardeners, parents, bakers, etc., who come into the school to do programs, including cooking lessons, demonstrations or tastings, would need to comply with this onerous requirement.

When we continued to ask questions, we came to understand that the situation was less dire, although more complex.

Actually, in our district, the district's own policy covers it for these activities, as long as they are approved, and therefore proof of insurance is not required. According to Jay Lawton, of G.R. Murray Insurance, the insurance carrier for Princeton Regional Schools/Princeton Public Schools, as stated by a spokesperson, Barbara Fitzpatrick: "If the activity is school sponsored/Board approved, then the coverage exists. If it is not, then you must comply with the Use of Facility requirements set forth by the Board of Education [i.e., provide your own insurance naming the school as an additional insured]."

Further defining the term "school sponsored/Board approved," Judy Wilson, superintendent, who approved the tastings program, explained: "If I act under board policy, it is the same as board-approved. If a principal or teacher accepts or invites any one of the group or helpers or programs into schools, that falls under Board policy or program adoption. The work of the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative, when school-focused and OK'd by me, is school sponsored. The Board does not need to approve every facet of work or every event." She continues: "Initial determination for the



SAMPLES OF COOKED BEETS AND BEET-ORANGE SOUP FOR BEET TASTING

district to engage in this work is what matters; then budget support if required and then arrangements for curricular/school time school by school, class by class.”

But, she cautioned, these rules may differ from district to district.

On the other hand, we also learned that, even if the school or district does not require that the organization or individual provide proof of insurance naming the district as an additional insured, individuals or organizations coming into the school should consider whether they have adequate insurance coverage for their own liability exposure.

Some coverage may be afforded to individuals by homeowners insurance policies. Every policy is different, so it is important to read it carefully. For example, a policy may cover for damages arising out of volunteer work for an organized charity, religious or community group, or an incidental business at or away from home. An incidental business is a self-employed business that earns small revenues, such as less than \$15,000 per year and has no employees. The liability coverage provided will be equal to the liability coverage on the policy. Again, this coverage varies by homeowners insurance companies, but may provide some coverage to people coming into the school to do programs.

An organization, such as the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative, can purchase insurance policies to protect its organization and its employees, volunteers and board members. After consultation with insurance experts and deliberation among ourselves, the PSGC ultimately decided to dedicate some of its slim resources to purchasing a liability policy (\$650 a year) and a directors and officers policy (\$600).

DRILL DOWN

Funding Possibilities

Consider funding sources as a series of concentric circles, beginning with the parents themselves, and then radiating outward in the community.

The school district

The food-based businesses—restaurants, grocers, specialty shops

The farmers and/or producers

Local businesses—begin with those that might have a direct connection (garden or hardware stores, nurseries).

Local institutions—hospitals, churches, colleges or universities

QUICK START

New Jersey Food Stats

What Grows in the Garden State?

apples
asparagus
bell peppers
blueberries
cabbage
corn
cranberries
cucumbers
eggplant
endive
lettuce
peaches
spinach
strawberries
snap peas
tomatoes
soybeans
feed/processing corn
wheat

Top NJ Seafood

blue crab
bluefish
clams
flounder
hake
lobster
mackerel
porgies
scallops
squid
swordfish
tilefish
whiting

Top NJ Livestock (after horses)

milk
eggs
beef cattle
calves

Top NJ Processed Foods

Second to pharmaceuticals manufacturing in NJ is food processing.

bakery
beverages
fruits
meats
roasted coffee
sugar products
confectionary products
vegetables

Sources:

[NJ Economy Overview](#)
[NJ Ag in the Classroom](#)
[Stuff About States](#)

Garden State Planting and Harvest Calendar

adapted from *The Victory Garden* book

A chief obstacle to school gardens (the most convenient way to put the Garden State on Your Plate) is the perception that New Jersey's crops are harvested only in the summer, when children are out of school.

This chart proves otherwise.

Month	PLANT	HARVEST	Month	START SEEDLINGS	PLANT	Month	PLANT	HARVEST						
SEPTEMBER	Lettuce	Brussels sprouts	FEBRUARY	Beets	Onions	MAY	Asparagus	Asparagus						
		Collards						Celery	Lettuce	Basil	Lettuce			
		Kale						Leeks	Onions	Beans	Onions			
OCTOBER	Garlic	Pumpkins	MARCH	Broccoli	Leeks	JUNE	Beans	Radishes						
		Squash						Cabbage	Lettuce	Basil	Lettuce			
		Rhubarb						Cauliflower	Cauliflower	Onion sets	Peanuts	Potatoes	Cucumbers	Corn
								Potatoes	Parsley	Peas	Potatoes	Radishes	Kale	Cucumbers
								Radishes	Peas	Radishes	Radishes	Carrots	Lettuce	Eggplants
		Rutabagas						Spinach	Spinach	Spinach	Carrots	Turnips	Leeks	Lettuce
Tomatoes	Turnips	Turnips	Turnips	Squash	Garlic	Okra	Onions							
NOVEMBER	Shallots	Broccoli	APRIL	Basil	Beets	START SEEDLINGS	Brussels sprouts	Beans						
		Brussels sprouts						Cucumbers	Carrots	Beans	Beets	Beets		
		Cabbage						Eggplants	Corn	Carrots	Broccoli	Beans		
		Cauliflower	Melons	Dill	Pumpkins	Cabbage	Cucumbers	Endive	Beets					
		Celery	Okra	Endive	Squash	Carrots	Collards	Corn	Corn					
		Collards	Onions	Jerusalem artichokes	Cauliflower	Parsley	Carrots	Garlic	Garlic					
		Jerusalem artichokes	Peppers	Lettuce		Peas	Cabbages	Melons	Melons					
		Kale	Squash	Lettuce		Peas	Carrots	Onions	Onions					
		Leeks	Tomatoes	Parsnips	Corn	Parsley	Potatoes	Potatoes	Potatoes					
		Lettuce	Swiss chard	Peas	Peas	Peas	Shallots	Squash	Squash					
		Parsnips		Peas	Peas	Squash	Tomatoes	Tomatoes	Tomatoes					
		Peas		Peas	Peas	Swiss chard	Swiss chard							
		Radishes		Radishes	Radishes	Swiss chard								

step 6

create schedule and budget

Begin creating a realistic calendar for the tastings and associated events by overlaying every relevant calendar: School(s), Chefs, Farmers and holiday and/or business, as well as those of core team members. Note conflicts early and determine an alternative course of action.

Working backward from tastings day, plot deadlines for fact sheet delivery, fact sheet composition, fact sheet text deadline, photo deadlines, videography upload, videography editing, videography farm shots and chef shots, etc. When will the chef provide the recipe? When will he/she inform you of the starring produce?

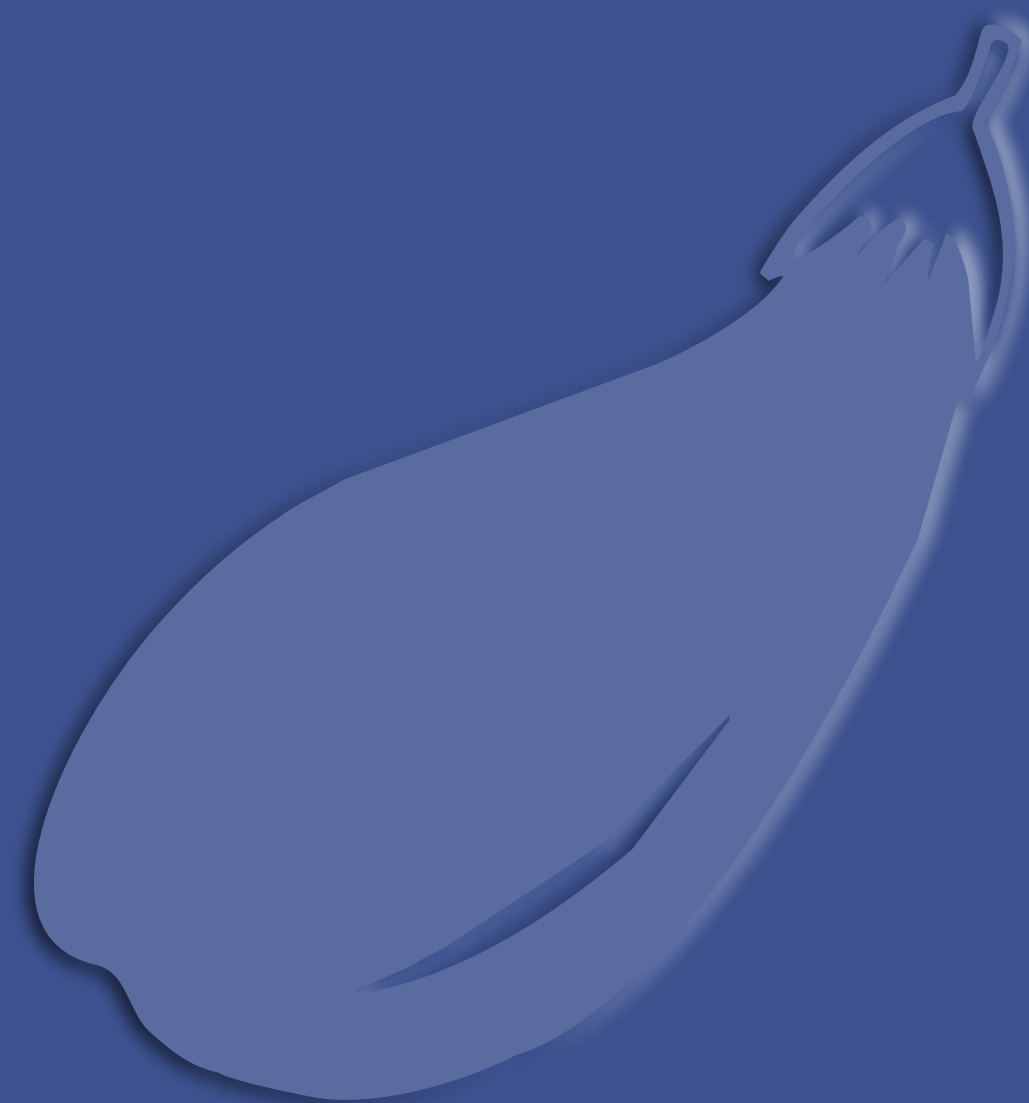
Generate a simple budget: chef pay; produce costs; publicity materials; videography or photography. Keep a running balance sheet.

As for money, Mr. Ryle recommends finding a clever and intuitive way to represent time and cost for the project. The simplest method, he said, is a bar chart (or a [Gantt chart](#)) for the time and an Excel sheet for the costs.

“However,” he said, “your stakeholders may engage more with a short video simulating the steps or simply some lines on a calendar. The budget or costs are mostly unpaid team hours and can be represented by marbles in a jar (one for each hour) or some other physical means.”

What you will learn in this chapter:

- ◆ Factors to consider in planning a timeline
- ◆ The Princeton School Gardens Cooperative tastings timeline
- ◆ Finding local food even as the snow flies
- ◆ How to find locally grown foods
- ◆ Our budget for Garden State on Your Plate



Creating a Timeline for Planning Your Tasting Event

Good planning is essential to creating a smooth-running, minimal-stress event. A well-run tasting means happy students, a grateful principal, and enthusiastic teachers and volunteers—all of which help to ensure the success of your tasting program. Begin planning well ahead of time so that you have a better chance of getting the chefs you want and securing time slots in the school calendar. And remember that effective communication is the key to getting and keeping chefs, farmers, and volunteers—people need to know and understand what you expect of them.

Here is a general timeline for planning a series of school-wide lunchtime tastings similar to Garden State on Your Plate:

6 MONTHS BEFORE YOUR FIRST TASTING:

Create your proposal: Write up a well thought out plan for what you would like to do. Include the goals, frequency, scale, and general logistics of the tastings, where you envision the tastings being conducted (classroom, garden, or cafeteria), and what kind of equipment you will either need or will be bringing into the school for each tastings. Create your budget and figure out how many chefs and volunteers you will need. Identify the sponsors, chefs, and farmers that you want to approach. If you are a 501(c)3 non-profit looking for grant funding for your tastings, you may need a longer lead time depending on the grants you are applying for or you may need to search for foundations that fund

programs in your community that have revolving application deadlines. Unless you are certain that you can get buy-in from these chefs, sponsors, and funders, create a broad list of people to approach, knowing that you will only get agreement from some of them.

Secure permission from the school principal to conduct your tasting program: You must have permission to conduct your tastings before you can



PYA STUDENTS MAKE ICE CREAM BY SHAKING AN ICE CREAM BALL

secure funding and get buy-in from chefs and farmers. Approach your school(s) with your proposal. Along with pitching your program, this is an opportunity to find out about any restrictions around your tastings, whether you need to get parental permission for students to participate, what types of facilities are available for on-site cooking, and how photo permissions are secured.

While you are visiting the school, take a good look at the cafeteria or classroom where the tastings will be conducted. If possible, do this in the company of the principal. Draw a quick diagram to help you plan where your chef station will be set up (near outlets, out of the flow of foot traffic), how supplies will be brought in (is there an exterior door with a driveway outside?), and how you will configure the students (is it a flexible space or are the tables and chairs in set locations?). Find out if it will be possible for your chef to put anything in the refrigerator or on the stove during the tasting. Find out if the school has two portable 6-foot tables that you can use to set up your sampling station.

5 MONTHS BEFORE YOUR FIRST TASTING:

Secure your chefs and sponsors: As soon as you get permission from the school, contact the chefs to ask them if they will participate. Be clear about your goals and what you are asking them to do. Let them know if you are able—or looking for funding—to pay them for their time and/or materials. If you have chosen to go for sponsorship, approach potential sponsors with a well-crafted pitch that identifies the goals of your program and lays out the details such as scope and timing. Include a clear explanation of what you want from the sponsor and how sponsorship of your tastings will benefit their company or organization.

4 MONTHS BEFORE YOUR FIRST TASTING:

Set your schedule: Ask the chefs to let you know the best day(s) of the week for them. If it is a school-wide, lunchtime tasting, let them know the start and finish

times of the lunch periods. If they are classroom tastings, find out what times of day work best for the chefs. Find out if there are times of the year, such as the weeks leading up to major holidays, when they know they will not be available. Ask the school how soon you will be able to get the tastings on the school calendar and what days of the week work best for the school.

Once you gather the timing information from the chefs and the schools, you will have to do some back and forth amongst the chefs and between the chefs and the schools until you get your final schedule worked out. It is nerve-wracking to try to align schedules of multiple chefs with school holidays and other restrictions. Be flexible (it may not work out that you have a tasting every third Tuesday for 6 months running) and be patient. If you plan to begin your tastings at the start of the next school year, try to get your schedule set before summer break begins.

Recruit your volunteer coordinator: Identify and recruit a volunteer coordinator for each school. This should be a parent who is active in the school and who can reach out to a large group of parents to ask them to volunteer on the day of the tasting. Keep this person in the loop as you move forward.

Find a photographer and/or videographer: If you plan to have videos of the farmers and chefs, you need to find a reliable and talented videographer. If you want to produce professional-quality videos, you most likely will have to pay this person. If you don't have a budget for that, find a capable volunteer or ask if there is a video club in the local high school that would be willing to take on this project.

2 MONTHS BEFORE YOUR TASTING:

Ask the chef about preferred produce: Ask the chef for your first tasting to identify the produce item that will be served and the farmer from whom it will be purchased. You must know the produce item and farm before you can begin scheduling the videographer and creating the collateral materials such as the handout,

posters, and cutouts. Because chefs are very busy, this can require multiple phone calls and/or e-mails.

Keep leaning on your chef: As soon as the produce item has been identified, discuss with the chef how the produce item will be presented to the children. For example, Chef Alex Levine served beets in 3 forms—raw, cooked, and in a soup. Ask the chef to get the recipe to you as soon as possible. Getting the recipe may require multiple phone calls and/or e-mails.

Edit the recipe and return it to the chef for approval: The recipe will most likely arrive in need of some edits. Rework the recipe, if needed, for ease of understanding by those who are unfamiliar with cooking or fresh, whole ingredients. Get this out of the way as soon as possible and make sure the chef approves your edits.

Schedule your video shoot: If you are planning to create videos of the chef and farmer to show before the tastings, have your videographer set up a time with the chef and with the farmer to film them at work.

ONE MONTH BEFORE YOUR TASTING:

Send out a reminder e-mail: Remind the chef, farmer, volunteers, and office staff at the school of the date, time, and featured produce item of the upcoming tasting.

Send out notices: Send brief, heads-up notice to the press. If you are inviting the press to attend the event, let them know that. Post information on school calendar and send it for inclusion in the school newsletter. Send the recipe to the school nurse to get feedback on allergens.

Create collateral materials: Write your newsletter and, if planned, get it translated into Spanish or any other secondary language of your school. Create your descriptor poster and send it out for printing. Make your produce cut-outs.

Approve final video: Get this out of the way as early as possible. The earlier you get the video done, the more you'll be able to use it to build interest from the press, school, and volunteers.

Create a plan for tasting day with assigned and defined roles: Write up a plan for your tasting day. Include when the chef is to arrive and where he or she will speak to the children (For GSOYP, the students came into the gym first where the chef talked to the children before they went into the cafeteria). If the farmer will be on-site, include time for her/him to speak to the group and/or converse with the students. Make sure you have someone assigned to the role of photographer, sample maker, sample distributor, set-up, liaison with office about materials, and liaison with guests, teachers, and principal. If you invite the press, assign one person to stay with the reporter. Make sure someone is tasked with serving big portions to the teachers and food service personnel.

Create your supply list: Create a detailed list of everything you will need for your tasting including food, serving equipment and utensils (these will vary depending on what is being served), sampling containers and utensils (these will vary depending on what is being served), information materials such as posters and handouts, etc.

2 WEEKS BEFORE YOUR TASTING:

Send the video or video link to the school: This gives the school time to schedule a screening—or multiple screenings—for the students and teachers. Follow up a few days later to be sure that it is being shown. At one of our schools, it worked well for the librarian to show the video at the start of each class's weekly library time the week before the tasting.

Send press release: Write and send a more detailed press release that includes the specifics of your tasting.

Inform key stakeholders about tastings: Send a notice outlining the content and logistics of the tasting to the principal, sponsors, and other key stakeholders. Include a link to the video.

Finalize logistics: Send the chef (and farmer) directions to the school, what time you want him or her to arrive, and a list of all items needed for the tasting with a notation about which items you will provide and which ones they will provide. Make sure that you get agreement from the chef on what he or she will provide.

Gather your volunteers: Have your volunteer coordinator send an e-mail request for volunteers. Ask for RSVPs.

Send out invitations: If it is allowed by the school, invite your sponsors, town officials, and other guests to attend the tasting. Give them specifics about where to park and how to sign in at the office.

Get handout copied: Send handout to school to be copied and sent home in students' backpacks in advance of tastings.

A WEEK BEFORE YOUR TASTING:

Deliver materials: Deliver descriptor posters to the office for distribution. If the handouts were not copied at the school, deliver them to the office to be handed out to the students.

Go over logistics with school administrative, custodial, kitchen, and cafeteria staff: Find out where to get the portable tables for the sampling station and where to place the sampling station. Get a copy of the lunch schedule that indicates exactly what time each lunch period begins, which grade comes in each time slot, the number of students in each lunch period, and where in the cafeteria they sit. This information will be crucial to the set-up and flow of your tasting so do not neglect to get it. Check for other school events on the day in question, such as field trips, that may cause changes to the regular lunch schedule.

Review tasting: Go over the tasting format and lessons with the chef. Double check the supply list and who is bringing each item.

Send out loudspeaker announcement: Create and send a morning announcement to school to let students know that there will be a tasting.

2 DAYS BEFORE YOUR TASTING:

Decorate the school: Put up produce cutout posters in hallways and/or cafeteria. Set up chef poster in lobby.

Check in with school office: Make sure that handouts and descriptor posters have been distributed and that the video has been shown to students.

THE DAY OF YOUR TASTING: *see Step 8 for a more detailed schedule for tasting day*

1 hour before the tasting: If this is your first tasting at this location, have your core team arrive in plenty of time to get set up and to meet the cafeteria staff. Talk with kitchen and front office staff about the tasting—the chef, what is being served

45 minutes before your tasting: Have the chef (and farmer) arrive and help get set up. Make introductions to the cafeteria staff and principal.

15 minutes before your tasting: Assemble your volunteers to go over logistics, your expectations of them, and food safety protocols. Begin making sample tastings and get samples on the tables for the first group of students.

AFTER YOUR TASTING:

Recap event with your core team: Run over the event and discuss ways to improve the flow, better meet your goals, and better engage teachers and parents.

Thank the volunteers: Ask the volunteer coordinator to send a thank you e-mail to everyone who volunteered at the tasting.

Send a report: Send an e-mail to stakeholders and school officials reporting on how the event went, what was served, and how it was received by students, faculty, and food service. Keep the e-mail upbeat and brief.

Timeline of Garden State on Your Plate

Here is a general timeline for Garden State on Your Plate. *Our tastings are highlighted in red.*

2009

May: Invitation to apply for funding.

May: Secure agreement from chefs on participation.

April 28: Approval of program by district administration.

August 17: Submit grant application.

September 11: Submit application for 501c3 .

September 7: We have named our program: Garden State on Your Plate.

September 7: We meet with our videographer.

September 11: First video short up for review.

September 16: Instructions to chef out for first tasting.

September 16: Videographer, chef set up filming schedule at kitchen and farm.

2010

April 7: Achieve 501c3 status.

July 1: Grant awarded.

July 15: Meet with principals at Littlebrook Elementary (LB) and Community Park Elementary (CP).

July 27: Schools' tasting schedule in place.

July 30: Punch list from coordinator for September.

August 17: Questions still swirling on how tastings will work and who is responsible for what.

September 22: First Garden State on Your Plate Tasting: Village Farms grape tomatoes sampled plain and then with lime and salt and in fresh tomato salsa prepared by Chef Gary Giberson at LB.

September 23: We begin re-thinking the comments grid. Teachers' feedback on video arrives. We choose Evernote as our central location for shared documents such as PDFs of newsletters, contact information for chefs, farmers, and key school personnel, lunch schedules and student counts for each school, and the fall schedule of GSOYP tastings.

September 27: CP PTO sends email to prospective volunteers, inviting them to help with the September 29 tomato tasting with Chef Gary.

September 28: Videographer reworks some parts of DVD and reurns video. We revise tastings logistics based on experience at first tasting. We send out email on logistics and roles to all participants.

September 29: Second tomato tasting.

September 30: Beets are confirmed as the produce item for October tastings.

October 4: The coordinator writes the CP principal, sharing comments from the children and updating her on the next tasting.

October 4: Chefs gather with us for a potluck and debriefing on the first tasting.

October 8: We decide that, for survey purposes, that one volunteer for every six children is ideal.

October 11: The beet handout is prepared.

October 13: Beet DVD is uploaded at 6:44 a.m.

October 13: Cherry Grove Organic Farm Beet tasting with raw beets, cooked beets, and beet and orange soup prepared by Chef Alex Levine.

October 20: Second beet tasting.

November 9: Videographer suggests that we invite the farmer to the next tasting.

November 10: A rising star in the CP PTO, a pediatrician, agrees to lead the tastings volunteers. The school office agrees to supply copies of the Swiss chard fact sheet, the tastings grid and the Spanish language versions of the fact sheet.

November 11: Chickadee Creek Farm Swiss chard tasting with raw Swiss chard sampled plain and then with salt and lemon and sauteed Swiss chard, and sauteed Swiss chard with bacon prepared by Chef Christopher Albrecht.



CHEF LINDA TWINING ASKS STUDENTS TO HELP SEASON SOUP

what Chef Rob likes about cranberries and why he likes Paradise Hill Farm in particular.

November 30: Chef Rob says he will bring cranberry in covered portion cups—a huge time savings as we will also be giving out samples of bent spoon cranberry apple cider sorbet.

November 18: Beth Feehan, the NJ Farm to School director, suggests one of our tastings schools as site for a press event for U.S. Rep. Rush Holt as he highlights his farm to school work, beyond school gardens.

November 18: Our coordinator says we have no volunteers for the next tasting; she has sent out a plea.

November 19: We begin assembling collateral material for December's cranberry tasting.

November 22: We learn that we have only four volunteers for tomorrow's tasting.

November 22: Because cranberry grower is a distance from Princeton, we discuss streamlining the video requirements by using still shots of the farm along with video of Chef Rob Harbison demonstrating the cranberry relish recipe.

November 23: Second chard tasting.

November 23: We begin laying plans for a winter thank you-brainstorming potluck for chefs and volunteers.

November 29: Videographer outlines plan to have Chef Rob narrate how cranberries are grown and their antioxidant properties over existing graphics and photos.

November 29: The videographer is asked to work backward from Tuesday, 10:30 a.m. delivery of video, and reminded that Chef Rob also must explain how he's making the cranberry relish (and how cranberries are used in other foods beyond relish and that kindergartners aren't going to understand what an antioxidant is). Another reminder for the video: the children need to know

November 30: Fact sheet goes out at 8:35 the day before the tasting, too late for copying in advance so the parents would understand they were invited to the event. So we have to re-work the fact sheet without the invitation, making it still later.

December 1: Paradise Hill cranberry tasting with raw cranberries and cranberry relish prepared by Chef Rob and cranberry cider sorbet prepared by Chef Gab Carbone.

December. 1: Princeton University offers to host the winter tastings potluck.

December 2: We learn that LB has a webmaster, and he/she sent out a note asking for volunteers for the tastings. That explains the good turnout. We begin work on scheduling the spring tastings.

December 5: The lack of clear permission to use photos continues to hinder publicity and information for the tastings; the coordinator is asked to work with the principals to craft a permissions slip modeled on the existing PRS permissions slip that allows us to use these images.

December 7: Rush Holt's outreach director sends a note to work out details of press conference. We ask Judy Wilson, superintendent, to extend the invitation to Rush Holt, since his office needs one before the appearance. We draft a sample letter. It is approved.

December 8: [Second cranberry tasting.](#)

December 8: We get the tentative schedule for the Rush Holt event at Community Park School.

December 9: Of several photos taken, we learn that only one is allowed to be published. And Rush Holt has been invited to the actual signing of the bill with President Obama, so he asks to have his appearance moved to Tuesday, Dec. 14.

December 9: We reassure the principal that the Rush Holt event will be short, sweet and minimally invasive, even though it will be during the children's lunch time.

December 13: We send out invites to the Rush Holt event and begin the process of choosing a date for the volunteer appreciation dinner. Our coordinator's children are sick and she can't make it to the Rush Holt event.

December 14: We provide contact information to the Town Topics newspaper for an after-event article on Rush Holt's appearance. We finalize the spring tastings schedule and pass them on to all involved.

December 15: Our press event made the front page of the Trenton Times. The videographer gets busy producing a segment about it.

December 16: We set the volunteer gathering for Feb. 1 at Princeton University, and also begin working out details of scholarship offers to teachers for the NOFA-NJ conference in January at Princeton University.

2011

January 10: Invitation goes out to chefs for appreciation dinner.

January 15: Our tastings program, Garden State on Your Plate, has won a Sustainable Princeton award for 2010.

January 18: [A video about Rush Holt's visit](#) goes up on our own YouTube channel.



CHEF RICK PIANCONE
PASSES OUT SAMPLES
OF NJ HONEY

January 20: Invitations for teachers to apply for the NOFA-NJ conference go to both principals, who agree to pass them along.

January 25: We have scholarship awardees. The NOFA-NJ Conference attendees are:
Ann Peretzman, First Grade Teacher, LB
Holly Javick, Health Teacher and Nurse, LB
Martha Friend, Science Teacher, LB
John Emmons, Science Teacher, CP
Vera Maynard, Health Teacher, Nurse, CP

January 26: Timing set for Farmer Jess Niederer visit.

January 28: We begin working out payment and repayment for scholarships to NOFA-NJ. We also realize that we would like to hear from the recipients after the conference to find out what they learned.

January 31: We discuss postponing the volunteer appreciation dinner; a winter storm is forecast. We order aprons and chef's toques for stuffed animal mascots at both schools so we can advertise the tastings. The first pass at a photo permissions slip is reviewed. We invite one volunteer at each school to be a volunteer point person who would be willing to organize the volunteers for each tasting both beforehand and during the event.

February 1: We cancel the dinner after a survey downtown during a workday looks as if the place is abandoned. Our gardens artist wants to meet after she completes the remaining three illustrations that we have agreed will enrich a NJ garden diary.

February 2: The volunteer appreciation day is rescheduled for Feb. 22.

February 3: Photo permission slips are still a headache; when Farmer Jess visited, permission slips were distributed to each child, and we are again waiting to get word that photos of these children's faces can appear in print.

February 4: We begin working out possible meeting times with teachers and principals to see what they think, so far, of the tastings.

February 9: Farmer Dave is available to visit on Wednesday, 23rd for CP and Monday, 28th for Littlebrook.

February 10: We issue the invitation for the re-scheduled volunteer appreciation dinner.

February 11: We have produce choices for the spring tastings: Chef Chris Albrecht is serving sweet potatoes from Flaim Farm; Chef Gary Giberson is serving kale; Chef Alex Levine is serving spinach (he is making a spinach and strawberry salad). Still waiting to hear from Chef Rob Harbison.

February 15: We send out the Spring Planting, Fall Harvest list, because we have heard again that the growing season doesn't mesh with the school year. ([See our NJ Planting and Harvest Guide](#))

February 22: Appreciation dinner is tonight.

February 23: The appreciation dinner drew a great crowd. And a parent volunteered her data-crunching skills!

March 2: [First spring tasting](#) Flaim Farms —sweet potato chips and sweet potato focaccia with Sweet Sourland Farm maple syrup prepared by Chef Chris Albrecht.

March 3: The lack of photo permissions raise tensions between us, resulting in a couple of unpleasant emails. The tastings invitation for CP is sent out by the new volunteer coordinator there, to 42 people.

Our coordinator resigns, but agrees to continue as the liaison with the schools for Garden State until a coordinator is hired. As requested, we tell the contract food service purveyor, Chartwells, the scheduled vegetables for tastings: sweet potatoes, kale and spinach.

March 7: The CP principal participates in a panel discussion at a school gardens workshop.

March 8: Link to [sweet potato video](#) now up on YouTube.

March 9: [Second sweet potato tasting: Chef Chris makes sweet potato puree drizzled with maple syrup in place of focaccia.](#)

March 11: Chef Rob confirms he is making a recipe with pea tendrils.

March 14: Chef Gary calls three farmers, looking for kale.

March 16: The glimmerings of a second year of the tastings program appear in note from Fran McManus, one of our core group, about an after-school cooking workshop for at-risk children. We hear from our new data cruncher that - **93% of LB students and 84% of CP students were surveyed.** Of those students surveyed at LB, **96% tried the focaccia and 97% tried the chips.** Participation among the six grades was essentially equal. Among CP kids, **71% tried the puree; 54% tried the puree with salt, lemon, syrup; and 80% tried the chips.** Fran nudges on the kale tasting - just three weeks away, suggesting that Chef Gary consider adding an analytical or texture-change aspect to the tasting? Adding vinegar and salt to sauteed kale? Tasting raw kale? Kale chips?

March 17: Kale is promised from Terhune Orchards.

March 22: Kale supply is looking iffy.

March 23: Chef Gary switches to NJ corn meal from Oak Grove Plantation in Pittstown

March 30: Note goes out to prospective volunteers for April 6 tasting at CP.

April 6: First Oak Grove corn tasting with savory creamy polenta and sweet creamy polenta prepared by Chef Gary Giberson.

April 8: Our volunteer data cruncher drafts a parent survey.

April 13: Second corn (polenta) tasting.

April 29: We have a new coordinator, Lee Yonish, the data cruncher. Reminder goes out to chef on pea tendril tasting.

May 1: Pea tendril video is uploaded.

May 3: We meet with the Community Park principal, the health teacher and the science teacher about the tastings and the gardens.

May 4: Arc Greenhouses pea tendril tasting with carrot-apple salad with pea tendrils prepared by Chef Rob Harbison.

May 4: As a result of Chef Rob's pea tendril salad, at least one boy is obsessed with pea tendrils. We learn that he ate 8 servings.

May 11: Second pea tendril tasting.

June 1: ER and Son Organic Farm spinach tasting with cream of spinach soup, raw spinach leaves, and spinach and strawberry salad prepared by Chef Alex Levine.

June 1: The improved spinach video is up. Volunteers are solicited for the last tasting at CP, June 8.

June 8: Second spinach tasting.

June 17: We learn that Miss Tara, the lunch lady at CP, would like to visit each of the chef's kitchens—she thinks she could learn so much.

June 22: The videographer begins setting up interviews for the documentary.

June 30: We re-send the survey to parents through the garden coordinator at CP.

July 6: Lee Yonish notes that, according to her records, we have only spent \$13,048.75 of the \$30K.

July 11: The videographer's deadline of July 21 approaches.

July 12: The photo consent form is under revision. We are urged to convert the file to PDF before emailing it.

July 13: Lee Yonish reports survey results.

July 14: Martha Friend, science teacher at LB says she has many photos from events surrounding the tastings and visitors and will organize them and send them over. Lee Yonish sends over a PDF of a David Bosted piece on benefits of school gardens (with input from Dorothy Mullen).

July 21: We find help for the videographer in Todd Reichart, a local actor and director. He agrees to facilitate the completion of the video to satisfy the RWJF grant.

July 28: We begin thinking about how we might use the rest of the funds of the grant.

July 31: Kitchen carts ordered. Induction cookers ordered. Slow cookers ordered.

August 1: Books purchased as per grant.

August 3: We learn that the video will not be ready, as per requirements of grant. We write to RWJF about it.

August 4: We send to RWJF:

- 1) Final Narrative Report
- 2) Final Financial Report
- 3) Extension Request

Our grant also resulted in one product, a documentary, however there have been delays in the production of the video. We will submit this product as soon as it's available.

September 8: Our extension is approved through March 31, 2012; we are told to feel confident in moving ahead with our activities.

September 18: The PYA-YMCA is interested in hosting a version of Garden State on Your Plate for its at-risk youth.

November 2: We have the link to the final video.

2012

March 6: Double Brook Farm kale tasting with raw kale and Tuscan kale, potato and leek soup prepared by Chef Christopher Albrecht.

March 27: Second kale tasting.

March 27: Double Brook Farm kale workshop at the Princeton Young Achievers after-school program. Students make raw kale salad with Chef Christopher Albrecht.

March 28: Second Double Brook Farm kale workshop at the Princeton Young Achievers after-school program. Students make raw kale salad with Chef Christopher Albrecht and Farmer Chris Turse.

April 17: Terhune Orchards apple tasting with raw apples and apple compote prepared by Chefs Rob Harbison and Rick Piancone.

April 18: Farmer Mike Rassweiler and a chicken of North Slope Farm and Chef Gab Carbone visit the PYA program to talk about why eggs from pasture-raised chickens makes creamy ice cream.

April 24: Second apple tasting

April 25: Farmer Jess Niederer of Chickadee Creek Farm and soil scientist Fred Bowers visit the PYA program to talk about soil and seeds

April 26: Second PYA visit by Farmer Jess and Scientist Fred

May 1: Second PYA visit by Chef Gab and Farmer Mike

May 8: Farmer David Zaback of Z Food Farm and Chef Craig Shelton visit the PYA program to make a spring vichyssoise.

May 9: Beekeeper Pier Guidi and Chef Rick Piancone visit PYA to talk about beekeeping and conduct a honey tasting and tasting of NJ-made ricotta.

May 16: Farmer David Zaback of Z Food Farm and Chef Linda Twining visit the PYA program to sample a spring vichyssoise prepared by Chef Scott Anderson.

May 22: Second PYA visit by Beekeeper Pier and Chef Rick.



CHEF GAB CARBONE DEMONSTRATES HOW TO MAKE ICE CREAM BY SHAKING AN ICE CREAM BALL

How to Find Locally Grown Food for Your Tasting Program

Locating and purchasing enough locally grown produce for a school-wide tasting can be a big challenge—especially during the winter and early spring. This process can be greatly helped by working with chefs who buy locally. They will have connections to local farmers and know the lead time and ordering process needed to ensure that produce is available for the tasting.

For smaller tastings on the classroom level, you will find it easier to locate enough of one type of produce to conduct your tasting. Small quantities can be purchased through on-farm stores, at farm market stalls, and through local retail grocers that carry local produce. You

should expect to pay retail prices for produce purchased in small quantities.

Finding local produce begins with understanding what is in season. You can get that information through the [NJ Department of Agriculture](#), [Rutgers Cooperative Extension](#), and the [New Jersey Farm to School Network](#).

If your chef doesn't have any connections with local farmers, here are some resources for sourcing local produce:

Buy Through Local Produce Wholesalers: For complete list visit [the NJ Farm to School Network's website](#)

Alberts Organics: Large national wholesaler that offers NJ-grown produce

Common Market: Philadelphia-based produce wholesaler that offers produce from southern NJ and PA farms

J. Ambrogi Foods: Wholesaler with local program that purchases and delivers produce throughout New Jersey, Delaware and eastern Pennsylvania.

Zone 7: Specializes in delivering the products of small NJ and PA farms to restaurants and retailers

Buy Direct from Farmers: *Use the resources below to locate farmers in your area. Contact farmers far in advance of your tastings to let them know what you are planning and to find out about the ordering and payment process.*

Fair Food: A Philadelphia-based non-profit that links farmers to markets. Read its blog and sign up for the newsletter, both of which include a list of the farmers whose products are in the Fair Food Farmstand; buy a copy of the group's Local Food Guide for a comprehensive list of local farms and foods

Local Harvest: Use this national search engine to locate farms by distance from your home and by crop or product

New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA): The NJDA's website lists farms by category based on how they sell their products—U-Pick, farmstand, wholesale; the site also lists the location of farmers markets

Northeast Organic Farming Association-New Jersey (NOFA-NJ): NOFA-NJ is devoted to organic and sustainable farming practices; use its web-based guide to search for farms by product, organic status, ZIP code and type of operation; pick up a copy of the annual Farm and Food Guide or download previous editions online

Check with local sources:

Visit your local farmers markets: Ask farmers if you can purchase in bulk for your tastings

Check your local natural foods stores: Ask the produce manager if he or she is willing to place bulk local produce orders for you

Finding NJ Farm Products Out of Season

What do you do when you want to have an in-school tasting and there is a foot of snow on the ground? Look for NJ-grown products that have been preserved, stored or processed. Just be sure to check that the ingredients are grown in New Jersey—not just processed or labeled here.

Here are some ways to get local produce out of season:

Storage crops: Apples, onions, potatoes, sweet potatoes

Greenhouse: Beans, greens, herbs, tomatoes

Canned New Jersey Tomato Products: Crushed tomatoes from [B&G Foods](#) and [Avalone Tomato Products](#), [First Field Jersey Ketchup](#), [Two Guys Jersey Tomato Sauce](#), [Jersey Naturals Mia Cucina Marinara Sauce](#), and [Phillips Farms Jersey Tomato Ketchup](#), Salsa, Chili Sauce and Pasta Sauce

Frozen: [Blueberry Bill's](#) blueberries, [Paradise Hill](#) cranberries, [Flaim Farms](#) zucchini fries and slices, [Flaim Farms](#) eggplant fries and slices, [Seabrook Farms](#) corn, peas, and beans (not all produce packed at Seabrook Farms is grown in NJ)

Dried: Corn meal from [Oak Grove Plantation](#), cranberries from [Paradise Hill Farm](#)

Preserved: [Jersey Jams & Jellies](#), [Circle M Fruit Farms](#) peach salsa and preserves, [First Field Jersey Relish](#), and [Phillips Farms](#) jams, fruit butters and fruit spreads

Cheeses: [Bobolink Dairy](#), [Cherry Grove Farm](#), [Valley Shepherd Creamery](#), [Fulper Farms](#) ricotta, mozzarella and yogurt and [Lebanon Cheese Company](#) ricotta and mozzarella (made from milk from NJ, PA, and NY)

Honey: Check [NJ Beekeeper's Web site](#) for suppliers

Other Products: Maple syrup, apple cider, meat, poultry, eggs

The Rutgers Food Innovation Center

helps entrepreneurs develop food products and bring them to market. Employees there work with NJ-grown produce to create value-added products that will provide another revenue stream for New Jersey farmers and cut down on waste from the fields. And they have as one of their goals to create value-added products from New Jersey-grown products that can be used in school lunch programs throughout the state. Learn more about its work on the [Food Innovation Center's website](#).

The Budget for Garden State on Your Plate

Here is the original budget submitted to Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for our pilot GSOYP program.

1 part-time staff person @ \$30 an hour x 5 hours a week for 40 weeks	\$6,000
Fresh produce to be used in 20 school tastings @ \$200 per tasting, one per month for 10 months at two schools	\$4,000
Portable cooking station to include table, hot plate, cutlery	\$600
Materials such as invitations, flyers, photos and recipes to accompany tastings	\$500
Supporting resources for teachers including films and book	\$1,610
1 field trip per school to participating farms at \$175 per bus (there are about 360 students at each school, 55 students on a bus = 7 buses)	\$2,450
4 chefs will each conduct five school tastings @ \$250 per school tasting x 20 school tastings (two a month) for ten months	\$5,000
10 farmer presentations (five per school x two schools \$150 per event (\$50/hour x 3 hours)	\$1,500
2 plate waste trackers x \$9 an hour x 2.5 hours each per tasting x 20 tastings	\$900
1 videographer @ \$60 an hour for 60 hours	\$3,600
Two 2-hour workshops (one per school) on food-based education	\$240
Teachers in the two schools will be sent to workshops, seminars or conferences	\$3,600



CHEF RICK PIANCONE TALKS WITH A STUDENT



step 7

develop your tasting team

The tastings team is different from the core team, which is the engine behind the creation of the tastings. Members of the external team—chefs, farmers, parent volunteers and willing administrators—execute the tastings.

In *Keeping Score*, Mr. Ryle recommends searching for team members systematically—collecting information through conversations, resumes and references, at events that draw people who care about food, agriculture and education. If possible, he says, work alongside prospective team members to judge substance, style and sensibility.

“You are unlikely to have the good fortune to choose your team resources and will therefore have to spend more time in developing the team,” he said. “Provide sufficient time and environments in your plan to allow the team to move from a group of well-wishing volunteers to a high performing team.”

And, he says, study up on motivation. “Team spirit and individual motivation can be as elusive as a butterfly. It is useful to remember that maintaining motivation requires three things: The goal must be clear, the team must feel capable of achieving the goal and the reward for achieving the goal must be sufficient for each team member.”

There are five steps in the arc of teamwork for the tastings, Mr. Ryle writes: Forming, which is getting to know each other; storming, which is discovering and addressing real and potential conflicts; norming, which is agreement on processes and rules for conflict resolution and management; performing, which is running the actual tastings; and adjourning, which are the goodbyes and the lessons learned.

Each tasting in a series is a full project in miniature. Calibrating and recalibrating needs to happen throughout the entire tastings project, said Mr. Ryle.

In this chapter you will read about:

- ◆ Qualities that make an excellent team member
- ◆ Finding chefs and farmers for tastings
- ◆ Qualities to look for in your chefs
- ◆ Our participating chefs and farmers



Qualities to Look for in a Tasting Team Member

A great team that works well together makes tastings more successful, rewarding and fun. Not everyone who wants to be involved will be a good fit for your team. Invest time at the start to put together a cohesive team. This will help you to avoid losing good members because the organization is not professional enough or because the group dynamics are untenable.

Here are some qualities to look for in team members and volunteers:

- Reliable:** Gets work done and does fair share, can consistently be counted on to follow through, shows up on time
- Enthusiastic:** Energetic and positive; makes it fun to work hard
- Cooperative and Supportive:** Willing to work with others to get things done, doesn't have to have his or her way to be engaged, doesn't place conditions on helping out, is generous with praise and acknowledgement of others, empathetic
- Proactive:** Sees what needs to be done and jumps in without being asked; does whatever it takes to get things done
- Flexible:** In-school programs are fraught with unexpected and last-minute changes. Look for team members who can adapt to changes and don't get rattled by unexpected challenges. You want people who can think on their feet and adapt to shifting priorities.
- Respectful:** Professional, courteous, and mindful of other's feelings; does not have fun or aggrandize self at the expense of others; diplomatic
- Team Player:** Cares about the success of the effort and wants to be part of making the project a success, jumps in to tackle problems rather than rehashing or avoiding problems or looking for someone to blame; freely shares information, news, and expertise with members of the group; willing to be an active participant: arrives at meetings prepared; participates in discussions; takes initiative; volunteers for assignments; is fully engaged in the team

Skills to look for on your tasting team:

- Writing
- Public Relations
- Photography
- Marketing
- Teaching
- Cooking
- Diplomacy
- Gardening
- Farming
- Restaurant Experience
- Fund-raising
- Logistics

- Good Work Habits:** Values accuracy; self-motivated; always looking to improve processes to make them more efficient and effective; organized; detail oriented; versatile
- Effective and Constructive Communicator:** Clear, direct, honest, respectful, speaks up in a positive, confident, and respectful manner; willing to speak up about issues that concern them or on the behalf of others who are afraid to speak up; discreet in expressing concerns about sensitive situations; is able to separate personal feelings from business and the job at hand.
- Active listener:** Willing to listen to ideas and points of view without interrupting and without debating every point; takes criticism well without reacting defensively

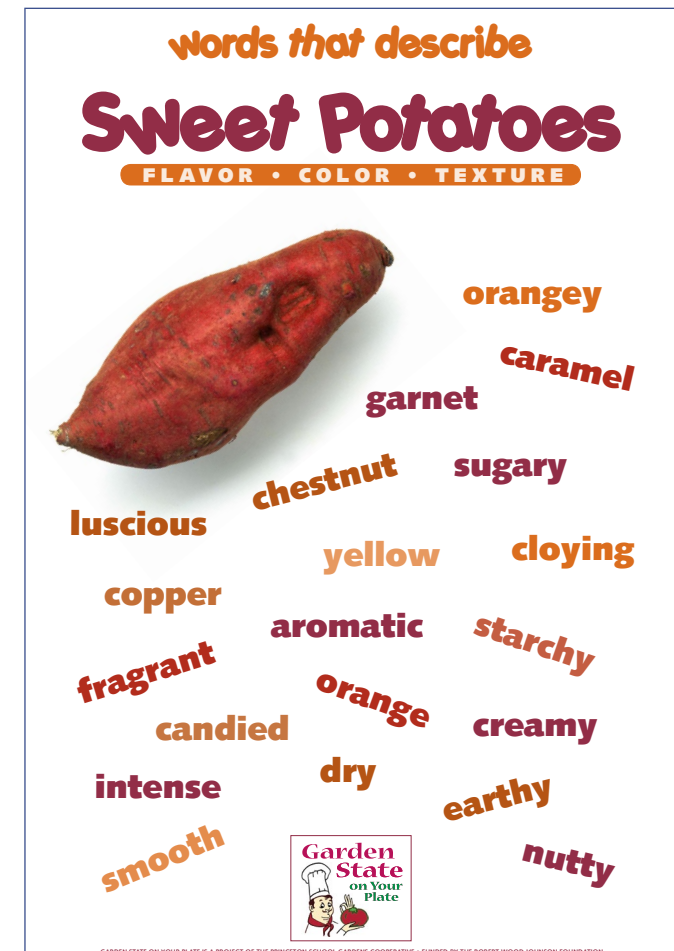
Qualities to Avoid:

- Unreliable**
- Unwilling to own up to mistakes**
- Negative**
- Gossipy**
- Too much time on their hands**
- Defeatist:** Tries to stop some aspect of the tasting program because he/she doesn't want to do it

Lacking vision: Believe that because he/she can't do something it can't be done

Inflexible thinker: It is good for team members to have clear ideas but they must also be open to what others have to offer and to not be petulant when their suggestions are not adopted

Only inviting friends: You don't have to have a social connection to everyone on your team



DESCRIPTOR POSTERS ARE USED IN CLASSROOMS TO SUPPORT GARDEN STATE ON YOUR PLATE TASTINGS



How to Find Farmers and Chefs for Your Tasting Program

When you are looking for New Jersey farmers and chefs to help you with your tasting program, you'll find a lot of great resources online. There are several websites that list the names and contact information for local farmers who sell direct to the public. And organizations that work to bring together farmers and chefs or home cooks can also point you toward farmers and chefs who want to be involved bringing local produce into school cafeterias and classrooms.

Websites with lists of local farmers:

Common Market: Philadelphia-based produce wholesaler that offers produce from southern NJ and PA farms; go to the website to see a list of its farmers

Fair Food: Philadelphia-based non-profit that links farmers to markets; Fair Food has a stand at the Reading Terminal Market that is stocked with locally raised foods; read its blog and sign up for the newsletter, both of which include a list of the farmers whose products are in the Fair Food Farmstand; buy a copy of its Local Food Guide for a comprehensive list of local farms and foods

Local Harvest: Use this national search engine to locate farms by distance from your home and by crop or product

New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA): the NJDA's website lists farms by category based on how they sell their products—U-Pick, farmstand, wholesale; the site also lists the location of farmers markets

Northeast Organic Farming Association-New Jersey (NOFA-NJ): NOFA-NJ is devoted to organic and sustainable farming practices; use its web-based guide to search for farms by product,

organic status, ZIP code and type of operation; pick up a copy of the annual Farm and Food Guide or download previous editions online

Zone 7: Specializes in delivering the products of small NJ and PA farms to restaurants and retailers; go to its website to see a list of the participating farmers

Organizations that can connect you to chefs and farmers:

Chef's Collaborative: A national network of chefs committed to sustainable food production; use the search function on its website to locate member chefs

Chefs Move to Schools: This program is devoted to matching chefs to schools all across the United States

Edible Jersey: This statewide magazine is devoted to food and farming in the Garden State; in each issue you will find articles and advertising that direct you to NJ farmers; sign up for its newsletter to get information on food and farming events around the state

NJ Farm to School Network: Statewide organization devoted to connecting local farmers to schools

Slow Food USA: This international organization is devoted to saving food culture and artisan foods around the world; there are five Slow Food chapters in NJ; contact your local chapter to find farmers and chefs who can help with your tasting program

SJ Hot Chefs: This group of chefs promote southern New Jersey as a dining destination; all member restaurants are independently owned

Where to find farmers and chefs in your community:

Talk with a chef at a restaurant that features local food: Find farm-focused chefs through Edible Jersey, stories in your local newspaper, and other resources listed in the Referral section above

Check your local farmers markets: Talk with farmers at the market to ask if they want to participate in your tastings

Check your local natural foods stores: Check their website or in-store signage for the names of farmers who supply them

Qualities to Look for in Your Chefs

Along with cooking skills, there are certain qualities to look for in the chefs you ask to be part of your tasting program. Your chefs should:

- Be reliable:** You must be able to count on them following through on their commitments
- Be flexible:** You want chefs who aren't rattled by last minute changes or disruptions during the tasting
- Be organized:** Find chefs who are used to catering off-site events because they know how to transport food safely and feed large numbers of people quickly and efficiently
- Know how to work with farmers:** Find chefs who have experience buying directly from farmers and who have a network of farmers to search amongst when looking for produce items
- Be comfortable talking in front of kids:** Having chefs who can engage children and teachers and get them excited about the tastings will help to make your program a success
- Be playful:** Dining should be pleasurable and relaxing, you want chefs who are passionate about quality and flavor but who aren't dictatorial and dogmatic about cooking and food
- Be aware of common food allergies:** Chefs should take food allergies seriously by creating dishes that avoid common allergens, lowering the risk of cross contamination when preparing foods for tastings, and knowing what information they need to reveal about the ingredients and preparation facility
- Have a good reputation and track record:** If you haven't worked with a chef before, start with a small project to assess his/her temperament and the ease of working together.



A STUDENT EXAMINES A CATERPILLAR THAT CAME INTO THE CLASSROOM HIDDEN IN A SOIL SAMPLE

Garden State on Your Plate: Chefs and Farmers

OUR CHEFS

- Christopher Albrecht**
Terra Momo Restaurant Group, Kingston
- Scott Anderson**
elements restaurant, Princeton
- Gab Carbone**
the bent spoon, Princeton
- Davide Erolano**
Lawrenceville School, Lawrenceville
- Gary Giberson**
Sustainable Fare and Lawrenceville School, Lawrenceville
- Rob Harbison**
Princeton University, Princeton
- Alex Levine**
Whole Earth Center, Princeton
- Stu Orefice**
Princeton University, Princeton
- Rick Piancone**
Princeton University, Princeton
- Craig Shelton**
Americana Hospitality Group, East Windsor
- Linda Twining**
Twin Hens, Princeton



OUR FARMERS

- Susan and Ted Blew**
Oak Grove Plantation, Pittstown
- Walter Bonczkiewicz**
Village Farms, Lawrenceville
- Fred Bowers**
Princeton Soil Institute, Princeton
- Bruce Cobb**
Arc Greenhouses, Shiloh
- Matt Conver**
Cherry Grove Organic Farm, Princeton
- Kevin and Bob Flaim**
Flaim Farms, Vineland
- Pier Guidi**
Bamboo Hollow Apiaries, Hillsborough
- Kelly Harding**
Cherry Grove Farm, Lawrenceville
- Ed Lidzbarski**
ER & Son Organic Farm, Monroe Township
- Andrew Marchese**
Doublebrook Farm, Hopewell
- Jess Niederer**
Chickadee Creek Farm, Pennington
- Mike Rassweiler**
North Slope Farm, Lambertville
- Mary Ann Thompson**
Paradise Hill Farm, Vincentown
- Chris Turse**
Double Brook Farm, Hopewell
- David Zaback**
Z Food Farm, Lawrence Township

step 8

prepare for and launch tastings

If all steps have been completed, this is a moment of delight.

Observe, communicate and delegate, as would a conductor, says Mr. Ryle. “This can be the most stressful part of the project for all the team members and stakeholders alike. Hopefully, planning can allow everybody to enjoy the tasting.”

Good planning requires leaving enough time at every stage of program development to allow for unexpected opportunities or setbacks. It means anticipating problems so that you have what you need on-hand—. For example, always have a roll of masking tape, scissors, pens, and paper towels as well as extra tasting spoons and cups in your tastings supply box. When you have done a good job of letting everyone know what to expect and what role he or she plays, the on-site management of your tasting will be much easier.

If you plan well and are organized, your tasting event will be relaxed, effective, and rewarding. And your chef, farmer, teachers, principal, cafeteria staff, and volunteers will know that you appreciate and want to make good use of their time and skills.

In this chapter you will learn about:

- ◇ The chronology of a tasting
- ◇ How to keep information organized and at hand
- ◇ The tasks and timing for volunteers
- ◇ Supplies needed for a typical tasting
- ◇ New Jersey’s most popular vegetables and fruits—and recipes for each
- ◆ The essentials of safe food handling
- ◆ How to reinforce the tastings in school and in the community
- ◆ Using a checklist for lesson plans
- ◆ Keeping order in the classroom during a tasting
- ◆ How to be a good visitor to a farm



Tasting Day Schedule

Here is a typical tasting day schedule for our school-wide tastings.

THE DAY BEFORE THE TASTING:

- The school mascot (an oversized stuffed animal) is dressed with an apron and chef's hat (called a toque)
- A poster announcing the chef and the farmer is placed in the school lobby with the school mascot

1 HOUR BEFORE TASTING

Core team arrives to:

- Set up sampling tables in cafeteria
- Make sure all descriptor posters have been distributed
- Make sure produce cut-outs are mounted on hallway and cafeteria walls



PARKER BEAR, THE SCHOOL MASCOT, ANNOUNCES THE DAY'S TASTING

- Let front office staff know that tasting is being held and details about chef and produce item being sampled
- Let cafeteria staff know that tasting is being held and details about chef and produce item being sampled
- Watch for arrival of chef and help him or her to unload

45 MINUTES BEFORE TASTING:

Chef arrives to:

- Unload food and tasting supplies
- Get food and equipment set up on sampling table
- Double-check that nothing is missing
- Go over lunch period schedule and tasting logistics
- Go over any special instructions on how samples are to be prepared
- Introduce him/herself to the principal and cafeteria staff

20 MINUTES BEFORE TASTING:

Preparation of tasting items begins by:

- Setting out onto trays enough empty sample cups for first group of students
- Confirming the seating assignments of first group of students with cafeteria staff
- Filling bowls of extra ingredients—such as lemon wedges and salt—and placing a set in the center of each table

15 MINUTES BEFORE TASTING:

Volunteers arrive to:

- Get instructions on logistics
- Get assigned tables
- Help set up

5 TO 10 MINUTES BEFORE TASTING:

- Sample cups are filled and one is placed at each seat assigned to the first lunch period class

FIRST 5 MINUTES OF THE TASTING:

When all students are seated, chef introduces him or herself and engages the students with questions and stories about:

- What produce item they will be tasting and in what forms
- Which farm the produce came from
- Why he or she likes this produce item
- Why this produce item is best when it comes from a local farm
- What he or she would like the children to pay attention to as they taste
- Any special instructions on the tasting such as “take a bite of the tomato and think about how it tastes, then put a little salt on it, take a bite, and observe how it changes the taste”

REMAINING 5 MINUTES OF THE TASTING:

- Students sample various items
- The chef goes from table to table talking with the children about food, cooking, the produce item, and the life of a chef
- If data are being collected, volunteers ask children how many of the items they tasted, whether this is their first time tasting this produce, and what they thought of the flavor

DURING THE REMAINING 15 MINUTES OF THE LUNCH PERIOD:

- Students eat their own lunch
- When they are finished with lunch, they can approach the sampling table to get a second taste
- The chef continues to talk with the students at their tables
- Teachers and staff are encouraged to stop by the sampling table to get a taste
- Samples are taken to the cafeteria staff and, sometimes, to the teacher's lounge
- Bowls of extra ingredients are removed from the centers of tables and returned to the sampling table

10 MINUTES BEFORE THE START OF THE NEXT LUNCH PERIOD:

- Sample cups are put out on trays
- Bowls of extra ingredients are dumped, wiped out, and refilled

5 MINUTES BEFORE THE START OF THE NEXT LUNCH PERIOD:

- Sample cups are filled and one is placed at each seat
- Bowls of extra ingredients are placed in the center of each table
- The students who have lunch next are brought in from recess 5 minutes early. If the first lunch period is still going on, it is too noisy in the cafeteria for the chef to be heard so the second period students assemble in the gym, which is right next to the cafeteria
- The chef goes to talk with the next group of students

AT THE START OF THE NEXT LUNCH PERIOD:

- The students file into the cafeteria and begin the tasting

THE REMAINDER OF THE SCHOOL LUNCHTIME:

- This schedule is repeated until all students have participated in the tasting

Keeping Information Organized

School-wide tastings require a lot of last-minute logistics. Keeping your contacts and basic information organized and accessible will help to lower your stress level. If possible, keep this information stored where all team members can access it. This helps in the unlikely case of emergency and it ensures that your information is consistent and correct.

Keep a file of:

School information:

- Address
- Phone number for main office
- Email address of school secretary and other key people
- Door access code if appropriate
- Directions and parking information to send to chefs, farmers, and volunteers

Chef Information:

- Name of chef: Check that the spelling is correct and whether the chef prefers that you use his or her full name or nickname
- Chef's title: Ask chef what title he or she wants used
- Chef's cell phone number
- Chef's e-mail address
- Restaurant name
- Restaurant address and phone number
- Photos: Head shot, kitchen shot, on-farm shot

Farmer Information:

- Name of farmer: Check that the spelling is correct and whether the farmer prefers that you use his or her full name or nickname

- Farmer's title: Ask the farmer what title he or she prefers (for example, owner or manager)
- Farmer's cell phone number
- Farmer's e-mail address
- Farm name
- Farm address and phone number
- Photos: head shot, on-farm shot
- Map and directions to farm, including distance to school

Cell phone numbers and e-mails:

- Volunteer coordinator
- Key team members
- Media contacts

Tasting Calendar:

- Date of each tasting
- Site of each tasting
- Date to send out advance publicity (fact sheet, video, etc)
- Chef
- Farmer and farm and whether he/she will be in attendance
- Produce item
- Dish being prepared

QUICK START

Checklist for Volunteers

Here is the checklist that we used for the Garden State on Your Plate lunchroom tastings

Have volunteers arrive 15 minutes before tasting

Go over schedule and flow of the tasting:

- The students assemble 5 minutes before the lunch period either in the cafeteria (if they are the only class) or in the adjacent gym or auditorium.
- The chef and farmer talk with them about the produce item they are about to taste
- The chef instructs the children on what they will find on the lunchroom table and how to proceed with the tasting. At each tasting the chef introduces an analytical exercise, such as asking the children to bite into a cherry tomato and reflect on the taste, then put salt on the tomato, taste and reflect, and then add lime juice, taste and reflect.
- The children then go into cafeteria to taste
- Volunteers go to their assigned table to collect remarks from the children and to record how many sampled the various items

Go over logistics of tasting:

- Before each classes' arrival, tables must be set up with all of the components of the tasting. This generally meant a tasting sample of the dish at each child's place and bowls in the center of the table with additional items to be sampled.
- When each class finishes its tasting, all bowls must be removed from the table and dumped and refilled.
- Because the table turnover is quick, help wipe down the tables with materials provided by the custodial staff.
- Reset the tables with tasting samples and bowls.

Go over schedule for class lunches and seating arrangements:

- The lunch schedule is divided by grade. Although each grade has 25 minutes for lunch, there are overlaps in the arrival time of some grades into the lunchroom—sometimes that overlap is only 10 minutes. You must keep an eye on the schedule, along with the size of each incoming grade, to be sure that the sampling cups are filled and the tables are set up when each class arrives. Keep printed copies of schedule available for volunteers, chef and organizers to reference.

Explain how to collect data:

- Each volunteer has a clipboard with tasting grids to record data. On each grid, fill in your name and the grade for which you are collecting information. We want to know how many children at each table tasted the produce item offered and in which form. They did not have to eat the entire portion. Collect their comments and reactions and try to get a first name.

Assign tables:

- Give each volunteer specific tables to cover.



PEA SHOOT CUT-OUT SIGNS—WITH FACTS ABOUT PEA SHOOTS AND NJ AGRICULTURE—ARE HUNG IN THE HALLWAY AND CAFETERIA DURING THE TASTING AND FOR THE WEEK THAT FOLLOWS

Supplies for Tastings

While your specific needs will change depending on what you are sampling, here is a list of commonly needed supplies for school-wide tastings in the cafeteria. It is crucial to determine in advance which items the chef is bringing and which items you or your organization is supplying. It is better to be over prepared than to realize too late that you have forgotten a crucial tool (an extension cord, for example) or food item (crackers for dipping salsa).

- Folding tables: *These are for your staging area for samples. We always use two 6-foot tables. The schools often have these available for use.*
- Tasting cups or plates
- Tasting spoons
- Trays for carrying samples to tables
- Tablecloths for the folding tables
- Bowls for any extra ingredients, *such as lemon wedges or salt, that go on the lunch tables as part of the sampling exercise*
- A banner with your group's name on it, if you have one.
- Clipboards and pens *if you are recording student reactions*
- Lunch schedule with number of students listed with each grade
- Samples of produce to show the kids
- Paper towels
- Reusable water cups for volunteers
- Food items being sampled
- Camera
- Extra items, *such as salt or lemon wedges, that are part of the tasting exercise*
- Heating source, if needed
- Knife and cutting board, if needed
- Gloves for portioning samples (check for latex allergies with any volunteers)
- Sanitation station (1 gallon water to 1½ ounces bleach and a clean rag).
- Spoons, tongs or other utensils for portioning samples



DESCRIPTOR POSTERS ARE USED IN CLASSROOMS TO SUPPORT GARDEN STATE ON YOUR PLATE TASTINGS

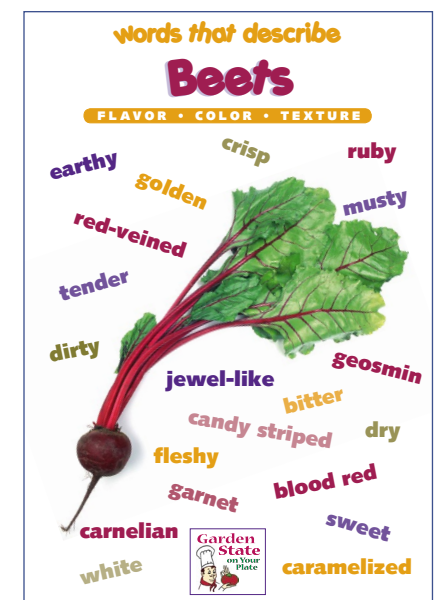
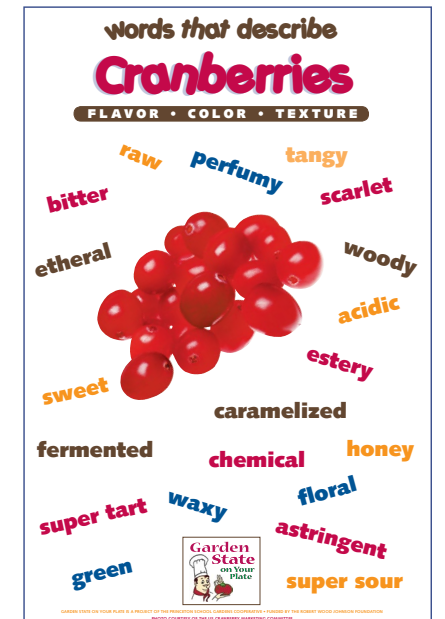
Easy Recipes for New Jersey's Top Crops

These recipes assume cleaned and prepped vegetables. When in doubt, or there is trouble in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator, peel what needs to be peeled, cut vegetables into roughly equal sizes, and toss with kosher salt, a lavish amount of olive oil and a wedge-cut onion. Roast in a large pan at 425°F, stirring every 8–10 minutes till vegetables are tender and show some caramelization. Remove in stages if some cook faster than others.

Apple Compote/Pie Filling: Peel, core and chop 8 apples, various varieties. Place in medium saucepan, along with ⅓ cup sugar, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, ¼ teaspoon salt, 2 tablespoons of either fresh lemon juice, apple cider or apple juice and 4 tablespoons unsalted butter (optional). Heat to simmer, stirring occasionally. Cook until apples are tender. Add 1 teaspoon vanilla extract. Cool to room temperature. Serve over oatmeal, stir up to ¾ cup into a pound cake batter, or use it, as is, to fill an apple pie. *8 servings.*

Roasted Asparagus: Heat oven to 425°F. Snap ends off 1 pound of asparagus, remove the arrowhead growths by peeling or scraping, if desired. Plunge into a large bowl of cold water, tips first, and shake vigorously to dislodge any sand. When clean, place in one layer in baking pan. Add about 3 tablespoons olive oil, or more—the goal is a lavish coating. Sprinkle with kosher salt. Roast until crisp-tender, about 4–7 minutes. Or broil for 2–3 minutes. *4 servings.*

Stuffed Peppers: Saute together 1 small onion, diced; and 1 red or green pepper, diced. Mix together 1–2 cups of cooked brown rice (leftover rice from a takeout Chinese meal works well), the onion and pepper; 1 15-ounce can black beans, drained and rinsed; 1 large tomato, chopped; 1 cup grated cheddar cheese, 1 teaspoon ground cumin if desired, ½ teaspoon chili powder if desired; and salt and pepper to taste. Heat oven to 350°F. Prepare each pepper by cutting generously around stem end of each pepper to leave ample cavity for stuffing and placing in oven-proof casserole just large enough to hold the peppers and lodge them in place. Stuff peppers with rice mixture. Cover with foil and bake for about 30 minutes, or until peppers are tender and stuffing is steaming hot. (Add 1–2 cups of browned, drained ground turkey or beef to the stuffing if desired.) *6–8 servings.*



Blueberry-Lemon Popsicles: Puree 5 cups blueberries with ½ cup lemonade, ½ teaspoon vanilla extract and a dash of salt. Strain. Pour into popsicle molds and freeze until firm. *4–6 servings.*

Sauteed Cabbage with Bacon: Heat oven to 350°F. Roast 10 strips bacon in large baking pan until crisp. Remove from pan and drain on paper towels. Cut with scissors into small pieces; set aside. Dice one large onion. Shred cabbage. In large saute pan, cook onion over medium heat in bacon grease (or olive oil) until translucent. Add cabbage, salt and pepper to taste and 1 teaspoon sugar. Stirring occasionally, cook until cabbage is crisp-tender. Stir in bacon and serve immediately. *8 servings.*

Corn Salad: Cook 5 ears shucked corn in large pot of boiling water for about 3 minutes. Remove, cool and cut from cob. Stir together with 1 small red onion, diced; 1 small red pepper, diced; several cherry or grape tomatoes, halved; 1 avocado, diced; 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro, if desired; juice of 1 lime; 3 tablespoons olive oil and salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste. *6 servings.*

Cranberry Sorbet: In large saucepan, cook for about 10 minutes 1 10-ounce package cranberries (pick over and discard any soft berries) with 1 cup orange juice, the zest of one orange, ⅓–½ cup sugar, 1 tablespoon kirsch, limoncello or other liqueur (optional)* and a dash of salt. Remove from heat. Add ½ teaspoon vanilla. Cool to room temperature; puree and strain. Freeze in ice-cream maker or make a granita by pouring into a shallow pan, placing in the freezer, and stirring mixture every 15–30 minutes until slushy-crunchy. *The liqueur helps keep the granita from freezing solid. Adapted from a [David Lebovitz](#) recipe. *6–8 servings.*

Israeli Cucumber Salad: Finely chop 3 cucumbers, 3 tomatoes, 1 red bell pepper and 3 scallions. Dress with olive oil, freshly squeezed lemon juice, salt and pepper. Add feta cheese, if desired. *4–6 servings.*

Grilled Eggplant Parmesan: Cut ends from eggplant. Slice lengthwise into 4 slices. Brush with olive oil. Grill at medium heat for about 3 minutes on each side. Remove from grill and place in heat-proof casserole dish. Sprinkle with grated mozzarella, julienned basil and grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese. Return eggplant to grill in casserole dish; heat until cheese melts. *4 servings.*

Roasted Belgian Endive: Heat oven to 350°F. Roast 10 strips bacon in large baking pan until crisp. Remove from pan and drain on paper towels. When cool, cut with scissors into bite-size pieces. Increase oven heat to 425°F. Trim the ends from 6–8 Belgian endives, rinse and cut in half lengthwise. Drizzle generously with olive oil and sprinkle with kosher salt. Lay them, face down in one layer, on a baking sheet. Roast until tender and leaves touching pan have a tinge of gold, about 30 minutes. Serve face up, dressed with bacon and drizzled with honey, if desired. *6–8 servings.*



Chopped Salad: To at least ½ head of chopped lettuce, add almost any chopped vegetable, raw or leftover: cucumber, tomato, scallion, bell green beans, diced cooked potatoes, diced carrots, and olives. Other worthy additions: boiled egg, roast beef, roast pork, sauteed onions. **Simple Vinaigrette:** Make a dressing by combining the juice of 1 lemon, 4 tablespoons olive oil, 1 clove crushed garlic, ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard, ½ teaspoon salt, ½ teaspoon sugar and black pepper to taste. *1–4 servings.*

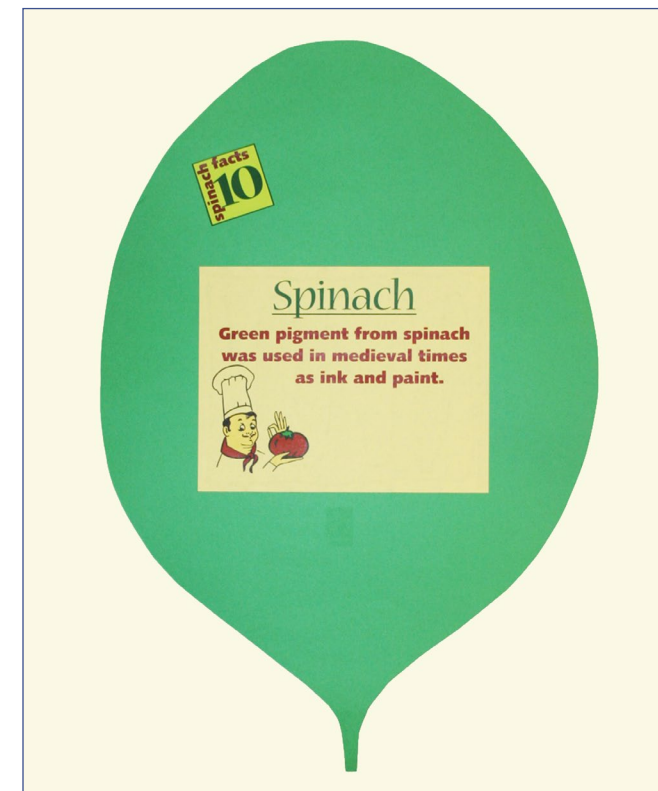
Peach Crisp: Heat oven to 375°F. Peel and slice 6–8 peaches*—enough to make at least 6 cups. In large bowl, toss fruit with the juice of 1 lemon (about 3 tablespoons), 2 tablespoons cornstarch, ½ teaspoon cinnamon, ½ teaspoon ground ginger, ½ teaspoon salt and 1 teaspoon vanilla. **Make crust:** In food processor, mix 1 cup flour, ¾ cup sugar, 1 teaspoon baking powder, ½ teaspoon salt. Add 1 egg, beaten and process until mixture resembles sand.

Spoon fruit into 8-inch-square baking pan. Strew crust evenly over the fruit. Melt ¾ stick unsalted butter; drizzle over crust. Bake for 40 minutes, or until pie is bubbly. *Add a pint of blueberries, as well, if desired. Adapted from [Saveur magazine](#). *8 servings.*

Sauteed Spinach with Garlic: Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil over medium heat in a heavy-bottomed saute pan. When it shimmers, add one clove crushed garlic. Allow clove to brown slightly, then add up to 2 pounds of rinsed spinach. Increase heat to medium high and cook, stirring constantly, until leaves are wilted. Add a sprinkle of salt and a squeeze of fresh lemon juice. *4 servings.*

Strawberry Smoothie: Place 8–12 hulled strawberries, any other desired fruit and ½ cup vanilla yogurt, dash of salt, and ½ teaspoon vanilla in the workbowl of a food processor. Add a few ice cubes. Puree. *1 serving.*

Sugar Snap Pea and Cucumber Salad: Trim about 1 pound of sugar snap peas, then slice into bite-size pieces on the diagonal. Toss together with a thinly sliced cucumber or two, about 1 cup of halved grape tomatoes and a bit of chopped dill—up to ¼ cup. Dress lightly with vinaigrette made by combining the juice of 1 lemon, 4 tablespoons olive oil, 1 clove crushed garlic, ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard, ½ teaspoon salt, ½ teaspoon sugar and black pepper to taste. Adapted from [this recipe](#) from Giada De Laurentiis, Food Network. *4 servings.*



SPINACH CUT-OUT SIGNS—WITH FACTS ABOUT SPINACH AND NJ AGRICULTURE—ARE HUNG IN THE HALLWAY AND CAFETERIA DURING THE TASTING AND FOR THE WEEK THAT FOLLOWS

Basic Food Safety for Your Tasting Program

Here is the list of sanitation practices for Garden State on Your Plate tastings from the Princeton Regional Health Department:

1. **Hand washing is critical** and most important for food handlers, after using the restroom, eating or drinking, smoking and before entering any food prep area. If outside, keep a supply of water, soap and paper towels available.
2. **Glove use for all ready-to-eat foods**, meaning foods that don't have a heat-kill process and the foods are ready to eat.
3. **Wash all produce** thoroughly in clean running water.
4. **Ill/Sick**, especially food handlers who have or had symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea, stomach cramps and nausea should not handle food for 3–4 days after symptoms subside—especially diarrhea.
5. **No sharing** of food or drinks.
6. **Encourage any participants to maintain good hygiene practices.** Hand washing with soap and warm water, not just rinsing hands under running water.
7. **Set up a small sanitizing station:** 1 gallon plastic container with 1½ ounces bleach and warm water mixture with a clean rag.
8. **Always have a large supply** of utensils and cookware on site.
9. **If any meats, poultry and fish are used**, keep separate from produce, vegetables etc. to prevent cross contamination.

Here are some additional tips and clarifications:

- **Make sure that students, staff, and volunteers wash their hands properly before working with food:** To properly clean your hands, you must scrub your hands with soap for about 30 seconds and then rinse with warm water and dry with a clean towel or paper towels. Don't forget to clean under your nails.
- **Repeat hand washing when needed:** Hands should be rewashed after handling raw meat, fish, chicken or eggs and after using the restroom, blowing your nose or sneezing, or touching your face or hair.
- **Work on a clean surface:** Clear and clean work surfaces before beginning food prep. Use clean cutting boards for prep. Any work surfaces, cutting boards, or utensils that have come into contact with raw meat, fish, poultry or eggs must be washed and sanitized before reuse. Better yet, avoid recipes that use meat, fish, eggs or poultry.
- **Work with clean utensils:** Make sure your utensils and bowls are clean when you start and are rewashed as needed.
- **Keep foods separated:** Don't allow raw meat, poultry, eggs, or fish to come in contact with foods that are not going to be cooked. Better yet, avoid recipes that use meat, fish, eggs or poultry.
- **Wash all fruits and vegetables before serving or using:** Wash under cold running water to remove surface dirt. Use a vegetable brush to remove dirt. Wash before using, not before storing. Wash tomatoes in warm water. This helps to prevent bacteria on the surface of the tomato from entering the interior of the tomato.
- **Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot:** Don't leave food out at room temperature for more than 2 hours. Keep perishable foods refrigerated until you are ready to use them and refrigerate leftovers right after the tasting. Fresh produce should be stored at 41°F or lower, especially after it has been cut. Hot food should be held at 140°F or above. If you store fresh produce on ice, avoid having the produce touch the ice.
- **Don't offer foods for sampling that contain raw eggs.** If you need raw eggs, use pasteurized.
- **Avoid working with meat, poultry, fish and eggs and serving raw sprouts.** Removing these items from your ingredients list reduces your risks and simplifies your handling.
- **Handle melons properly:** Choose whole melons without cracks or visible signs of decay. Wash melons before cutting into them using running water and a produce brush. Wash the outer surface of the melon thoroughly under running cool tap water to remove surface dirt. Serve cut melons immediately and discard uneaten cut melons if they have not been refrigerated.
- **Check with your local health department** about handling rules in your community.
- **Take a food safety course** if you are planning to conduct tastings on a regular basis.

Reinforcing Your Lesson Before and After the Tasting

Parents, teachers, and administrators have suggestions on helping children retain lessons from the tastings. Among them:

- **Send information** about the tasting or the guest farmer or chef to the school a week ahead of time so that teachers can work a mention of the visit into their lesson, along with a little something about farming and cooking. See our [Fact Sheets in Resources](#).
- **Ask the teacher** to take a minute at morning meeting time to let the children know that the farmer or chef is coming and to ask the students to prepare some questions. The teacher will need to have a little background material on why the farmer or chef is coming.
- **Prepare some ideas** for grade specific follow-up to lunchtime tastings. To integrate information, children need to experience and explore it through multiple channels. A carrot tasting, for example, will have a much greater impact on children if it is included in a group of carrot-focused lessons such as reading a story about carrots, growing carrots in the school garden, making stamp prints with carrots, and drawing carrots in art class.
- **Create colorful posters** that reinforce the tastings. See [Resources](#) to download the produce posters we created for Garden State on Your Plate.
- **Extend your program** to the parents. Make sure to invite them to the tastings. Provide questions for parents to ask their children about the event. Garden State on Your Plate proved that children are open to eating new foods. The next level is to get the families engaged through an evening family event. At that event, parents can learn about and sample what the children tasted in the program. Chefs from your tasting program can do cooking demonstrations. They can also learn how easy each produce item is to get and how to prepare it. Allow the children to come to evening events such as this so that parents don't need to get a babysitter.
- **Create opportunities** for your chefs and farmers to get involved in the school garden through an after-school club devoted to cooking and/or gardening.
- **Get food- and agriculture-focused field trips** into the school budget and help make these field trips easy for teachers to choose. Help teachers get the most out of their trip by learning how to be a good farm visitor.
- **Find ways to keep the teachers engaged** by offering follow-up opportunities with your chefs and farmers.

Lesson Plan Checklist

Talk with the teacher:

- Create lessons that fit into the state standards by talking with the teachers to find out what the children are studying and what recent lessons need reinforcing. [State standards](#) are also available online.
- Ask the teacher if there is anything you need to know about the children to make the lesson accessible, relevant, and culturally appropriate (example: food allergies to tree nuts, sesame, peanuts, eggs, dairy, gluten...).
- Set your objective in consultation with the teacher.

Plan your time and supplies:

- Find out how many children are in each class and how much time you have.
- Judging from the number of children in the class, determine how many hands-on activities you can manage and how to prepare supplies for each activity.
- Make a thorough supply list and purchase plenty of supplies well in advance.
- Complete all prep work before entering the school so that time in the classroom is used efficiently.
- Allow enough time for activities to be done well and properly. When you are preparing a new lesson, run through the activities at home a few times to get an idea of how long it will take in the classroom.
- Include extra activities in case you run short.

- After the lesson, take time to reflect on what worked, what didn't and areas for improvement in both content and lesson structure. Ask the teacher for feedback about the lesson to gauge if your teaching objectives were met.

Communicate effectively with the children:

- At the beginning of your lesson, make your learning objectives clear to the children.
- Use age-appropriate vocabulary.
- Use technology that is available and in use in the school. For example, an iPad or laptop can be used to show a short video clip of a farm or a specific crop or a chef in action. Document cameras (those that project an image onto a screen or wall) can be used to share photos or food prep examples.
- Encourage children to use all of their senses to explore and learn about food.
- Children learn through repetition. Design lessons that can be taught repeatedly using new foods and introducing new cultures.
- Use stories, pictures, and props to illustrate your lesson.
- Throughout the lesson, refer to your learning objective to remind students of "big idea."
- Include in your plan a list of questions to engage the kids and encourage them to ask questions of you.

Keeping Control without Losing your Cool

When recruiting chefs, farmers, and other presenters to lead a tasting or give a presentation, you may find that some of them are afraid to speak in front of a group of children. To even the most confident and accomplished professionals, the thought of a child refusing to pay attention or announcing—in a loud voice—that a workshop is “boring” or “stupid” is a frightening prospect.

Those fears are not unwarranted. One or two unruly or disruptive children can hijack or derail an entire workshop. Knowing how to deal with misbehavior comes from experience and the response varies depending on what is behind the behavior.

Your best defense against losing control is to have a well-planned, engaging workshop and have a backup plan for how to manage and avoid behavioral problems. Because what an instructor says in a classroom has a profound effect on the way children see themselves and their classmates, it is also important to have a clear understanding with any presenter of where the boundaries are as far as discipline goes.

Here are a few tips for keeping your workshop on track:

Be well prepared and prepare the students for what you will be doing.

You can eliminate many classroom behavioral problems by offering children a variety of diverse and challenging activities. And by getting their hands engaged as quickly as possible. Set clear, consistent rules and give clear directions. And remember to put the children at ease by introducing your lesson so they know what to expect.

Leave your ego behind. Don’t engage emotionally with disruptive behavior. If you lose your cool, you run the risk of losing control of the situation. And you ruin the experience for yourself and for the kids.

Be positive. Build on children’s images of themselves as responsible and cooperative by acknowledging positive, helpful behavior. Focus on what children do well and, if it is not too disruptive to the other children, try to ignore unacceptable behavior. Be joyful, enthusiastic, and playful—in other words, be more engaging than the child who is acting out.



A STUDENT USES A MAGNIFYING GLASS TO EXAMINE ROCKS—ONE OF THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF SOIL—AS PART OF A LESSON ON SEEDS AND SOIL



TOMATO CUT-OUT SIGNS—WITH FACTS ABOUT TOMATOES AND NJ AGRICULTURE—ARE HUNG IN THE HALLWAY AND CAFETERIA DURING THE TASTING AND FOR THE WEEK THAT FOLLOWS

Engage a heckler. If you have a heckler in the group, engage him/her. Most of the time, an outspoken child is looking for attention and can be disarmed by being acknowledged and engaged. Allow her to come up and be an assistant. Call on him to answer questions. Giving the heckler some positive attention might prevent him or her from seeking negative attention. Either way, you have to draw him in because you aren’t going to be able to shut him out.

Redirect bad behavior. If you can’t ignore a child who is being disruptive or uncooperative, try to get the child’s attention and introduce another activity. Or let the child know that you would love to have him join in the activities rather than acting out in a way that is not fair to his classmates. Sometimes just a simple invitation to join in will solve problem behavior.

Who's in Charge?

In a classroom setting, the teacher is in charge of keeping order. You will find that teachers have widely varying styles for how they run their classrooms and varying levels of tolerance for chaos and noise. Try to have a conversation with the teacher ahead of time to get a sense of the dynamics of the class and to establish how discipline will be handled.

In the cafeteria, teachers and lunch aides are in charge of maintaining order. The tastings coordinator ensures that chefs and farmers keep their comments brief, and also makes sure that children with questions are directed to the correct expert. The coordinator also makes sure that children who want seconds on any dish are given them, if available.

In after-school clubs and organizations, the dynamic can be quite different. Children have been holding it together all day so asking them to sit quietly is unrealistic. Often there is not a clear authority figure to rely upon to maintain order. A conversation with the after-school organizers about dynamics and discipline is also in order.

How to Get the Most Out of a Field Trip to a Farm

A field trip to a farm is a great way to reinforce the lessons learned in your in-school farmer visits and tastings. And it is the ultimate way to drive home the connection between the farm and the table.

When a farmer takes you on a tour of the farm, you learn much more about what it takes to grow food and to manage a farm than you do when you just stop by the farm stand to buy produce. Depending on the grade level of the children, a farm tour can be anything from a simple lesson about where food comes from to an in-depth science class on nutrient recycling, grass-based management, pest control, and other topics—many of which can then be applied and observed in your school garden.

September and October are good times to visit a farm. Your students will be able to see many crops in the fields and on the trees. The weather is often cooperative and farm life is less hectic than in spring. Just remember that fall trips need to be scheduled in June before the school year ends.

A spring trip will give children the opportunity to see newborn animals, learn about seeds, soil preparation, and planting. But, it is also a time for rain and mud. Get your spring trips scheduled in the fall.

How to find a farm to visit:

Visit your local farmers markets. To find markets start at these websites: [Jersey Fresh Community Farmers Market](#), [New Jersey Council of Farmers and Communities](#), and [Farmers Market Online](#).

Search under “Find Local Food” on the [NOFA-NJ website](#)

Check the [Jersey Fresh](#) section of the NJ Department of Agriculture’s website

Visit your neighborhood natural foods stores to see if they list the local farmers who supply them

Search these websites: [Local Harvest](#), [VisitNJFarms](#), and [PickYourOwn](#)

Choosing a Farm to Visit

Look for farms that are familiar with hosting school trips and that are enthusiastic about having children on the farm. A farm that holds festivals and public events is a good candidate for a field trip.

Some questions to consider when choosing a farm:

- What type of lessons and activities do they offer?
- How many children can they accommodate on a tour?
- What is the cost per child?
- What type of crops are being raised?
- What type of livestock are on the farm?
- Are there activities such as cheese-making or cider pressing?
- Are there restrooms and facilities for hand washing?
- Is there a shady area for lunch?
- Can they accommodate school buses?

Preparing for your farm visit

Once you have decided on a farm and have scheduled your visit, take steps to ensure that your trip is educational, safe, and fun. Working out the details and logistics ahead of time will allow you to arrive prepared and to get the most out of your visit.

Safety:

- Get list of farm safety rules from the farmer in advance of the visit. Go over them with the children a few days ahead of the trip and then again at the farm.
- Learn about potential dangers such as electric fences, animals, and farm equipment.
- Make sure the school’s insurance covers students’ visits to farms.
- Send home suggestions on what children should wear and bring on the field trip, such as sturdy shoes with closed toes, a hat, and rain gear.
- Bring an adequate number of chaperones to keep an eye on the children so that they don’t hurt themselves or damage the crops.
- Never bring a dog on a farm visit or field trip.

Logistics:

- Know the street address of the farm and get directions in advance.
- Discuss with the farmer where the buses can drop the kids and where they can park.
- Know in advance about the restroom and hand washing facilities. If necessary, bring a hand sanitizer that contains at least 62% alcohol.
- Arrive on time. Farms are busy workplaces where farmers put in long work days. Be respectful of their time.

Educational Content:

- In advance of the visit, tell the farmer the goals of your visit and how the field trip relates to what is being taught in class.
- Talk with the farmer about having hands-on activities rather than just talking with the children about farming. Ask the farmer to provide real experiences for the children such as planting, weeding, or harvesting.
- Find out if the farmer will be leading the children through the lessons, demonstrations and exercises or if you will need to prepare some lessons.
- If your farmer is nervous or unsure about talking with kids, give him or her a copy of Vermont FEED’s [A Guide for Connecting Farms to Schools and Communities](#), which contains a helpful list of teaching tips. You can download it for free.
- Ask the farmer if you need to bring any supplies for activities such as drawing, measuring, or creating a farm journal.
- Reinforce the farm lessons by having related in-class activities before and after the trip.

If you can’t make it to a farm:

- The NJ Agricultural Society offers a 30-minute video (broken into 3 10-minute segments) about farming entitled [Food Doesn’t Grow in the Supermarket](#). It includes a teacher’s guide and activities booklet.
- Arrange a visit to the local farmers market: some farm markets offer educational tours.
- Host local farmers in your classroom, cafeteria, or school garden.

Information for farmers who host field trips:

- [Making the Farm Connection: A Guide to Field Trips for Farmers](#) from the Community Alliance with Family Farmers

step 9

control the project

Look for clarification that the tastings are on track to reach the goals your team has set. Consider adopting a quality assurance approach. Maintain an issues log.

Consult widely, to determine the impact of the tastings and whether adjustments, large or small, need to be made, says Mr. Ryle. “The idea of controlling is sometimes linked to the idea of a lighthouse keeping the ships off the rocks. The tastings manager seeks to maintain control of the running of the project until the very end.”

Obtain information for the stakeholders; maintain a roster of participants and, if possible, offers of help—and compliments.

Track the progress of each work package detailed in Step 4 as a measure of progress, he said.

Get the word out by engaging the press early and often; maintain social media.

What you will learn in this chapter:

- ◆ Tips for effective connections with the media



Working with the Media

In addition to sending materials home with students and having a regular notice in the school newsletter, cultivating a relationship with the local press is an essential part of your plan to let your community know about your tastings and in-classroom visits by farmers and chefs.

Getting your story into the local newspaper, radio and television lets your community know about the work you are doing, which will help you to attract more sponsors, donors, volunteers and partners as well as more media coverage.

Where to Send Your Story

Reporters want to know what is going on in the community but don't generally have the resources to stay on top of everything. To get and keep your story in the news, cultivate relationships with reporters and writers by being a reliable, accurate source of interesting stories. Keep them informed about what happens at your events and programs. Invite them to your tastings and send them press releases about upcoming programs or changes that have occurred as a result of your program. Provide them sufficient background material so that they can write an accurate story within a short time frame. Provide them lists of possible contacts, and ensure that the information you share is accurate. Be available for last-minute phone conversations to clear up any questions.

To pitch a story about your tasting program, first identify the reporters or writers in your community and region who cover stories about food, health, environment, schools and education, lifestyle or local events. Spend a little time identifying the most influential writers and those who have shown an interest in writing stories about children's health, school lunches, and local agriculture. Get familiar with the type of stories that each writer covers and pitch your story accordingly - even referencing the reporter's previous stories. Gauge the importance of the story you are pitching and make the appropriate pitch. In some cases, it is appropriate to pitch a comprehensive story on your program. In others, you may want to just send in a picture and a caption.

In either case you need to have a hook—an angle that makes your story interesting. It could be pitched as a human interest story about how your program is changing the way children eat. Or it could be focused on a tasting event you conducted, with background on your goals and the reason that this work is important. Or, if you are a credentialed expert, you could offer to explain for readers why eating fruits and vegetables is important to children's health. Having chefs and farmers in attendance also is a good hook.

Getting the word out

When you have set the date of your tasting event, send a brief notice to the press, inviting them to attend and giving them the details of time, place, and logistics such as where to park and how to sign in at the office. Follow

up with a phone call, text or e-mail; try to speak directly with the reporter.

Follow up with a general press release about your event that includes background information. This will help a reporter write a story even if he or she is unable to attend. Include contact information so the reporter can follow up with questions.

Talking to the media

Choose one spokesperson for media relations to ensure consistency and accuracy in the coverage of your tasting program. Your spokesperson should be someone who is very familiar with the goals and mechanics of your tasting program—ideally someone who is instrumental in helping to organize and stage the program.

Your spokesperson should be on hand at events to talk with any reporters who attend. It is a good idea to have a one-page list of important facts about produce and health that you can distribute to reporters. Develop a



REPRESENTATIVE RUSH HOLT VISITED COMMUNITY PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WHERE HE TALKED ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF NUTRITIOUS SCHOOL LUNCHES AND THE VALUE OF SCHOOL GARDENS.

list of key points (including credible sources) about the importance of getting children to eat more fruits and vegetables, the reasons that school is a good place to introduce more produce into their diets, and why you work with local farms. Write up a few talking points for your media spokesperson to include in his or her conversation with the press including how your program is effective at getting children to try more produce items and what you would like parents and schools to do to get more produce into the diets of all children in your community. Have some stories to share with specific and personal examples of success.

Get your story out through other channels

No matter how hard you work at it, there is no guarantee that the press will cover your event. So use the other avenues that are available to you such as Facebook, Google+, Twitter, Pinterest, and your own website or blog to tell your story. Include photos, stories, and quotes to make it as compelling and engaging as possible.

Tips:

- Don't oversell your event or program. An event doesn't have to be large and star-studded to be relevant and important. If you give an overblown account of what will take place, you'll lose your credibility and your chance at another story.
- Get your facts straight and stick to them. There are compelling reasons why children should eat more fruits and vegetables. There is plenty of research available that shows children will eat produce when deliciously prepared and properly presented. Cite it. Do not speculate or put forth your own theories unless you are an expert and can direct reporters to your research and your scientific studies. Exaggerated claims and apocalyptic predictions undermine your credibility.

- Make sure you have a photographer on hand at all events. Pictures are essential to telling your story. Be sure that you have permission to take and publish photographs of the children in the program. Most schools have a photo release form that is sent home with each child in the beginning of the school year. Check with your school to be sure that these forms cover your program. If not, you will have to issue your own [release form](#) and get it signed by the parents. The release form likely will have to be approved by the principal or the school administration, so begin this process well in advance of your first event.
- Don't forget about Letters to the Editor (these go out after your event, and they are for thanking all of the participants and sponsors) and Public Service Announcements (these go to television and radio station where they may, or may not, get read on the air).



CLICK ON THE LOGO ABOVE TO SEE A SHORT VIDEO ABOUT REPRESENTATIVE RUSH HOLT'S PRESS CONFERENCE AT COMMUNITY PARK SCHOOL.



FARMER JESS NIEDERER OF CHICKADEE CREEK FARM SHARES SEEDS WITH CHILDREN AT THE PYA AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

step 10

close the tasting project

Frank Ryle, author of *Keeping Score*, says that closure on the tastings project is important for all concerned. What worked? What could be made better?

“This closing step can be combined with the tasting itself. You should be in a position to capture not just the results of the tasting itself but also the lessons learned on the journey from the beginning. Try to record the highs and the lows of the project—in a format and place that can be easily recovered—for the next tasting.”

A closing checklist can ensure there are no loose ends. Consider a closing party or ceremony, or something as simple as a letter to the editor of the local newspaper, if available.

Rewarding team members helps ensure enthusiastic participation on subsequent projects, and goodwill in the community.

Making results from the tasting available to stakeholders helps build the case for good food, as does a lessons learned summary.

In this chapter, you will learn:

- ◆ How to tie up loose ends by using checklists
- ◆ How to help volunteers understand their importance to the project
- ◆ About the challenges of creating lasting change



Closing Checklist

☐ Chefs

- Thank each chef for participating, mentioning specific and unique moments of the tastings.
- Return all borrowed equipment
- Pay any outstanding invoices

☐ Farmers

- Thank each farmer for participating.
- Pay any outstanding invoices
- Send copies of photos taken of them during their visits.

☐ Parent Volunteers

- Thank parents for donning aprons and scooping soup, and making the effort to participate in the tastings program. Ask them about ways to make their volunteering easier.

☐ Teachers

- Send a thank-you email to all teachers who enthusiastically supported and participated in the tastings by linking their

classroom teaching. Ask about ways to make the tastings work even better for their classes.

☐ Principals

- Send a thank-you email to all principals, naming specific ways they helped make the tastings a success. Solicit their input for making such food- and garden-based education efforts even more successful.

☐ Food Service Workers

- Thank them for their support and, if they are interested, arrange kitchen visits to participating chefs' restaurants.

☐ School Administrators

- Send a thank-you email. Solicit suggestions on how to improve the experience next time.

☐ Parents

- Thank parents for supporting the tastings at home. Provide easy online access to all recipes and contact information for all farms.

Rewarding Volunteers

Acknowledging and thanking your volunteers shows them how much you appreciate their efforts. It also goes a long way toward keeping them engaged and happy.

With Garden State on Your Plate, we sent out thank you e-mails to volunteers after each tasting. We also had a big dinner, hosted by Princeton University, for all of our volunteers, chefs and farmers. At that dinner we discussed ideas for improving the tastings and for additional programs that could make stronger and deeper connections between children and the source of their food.

There are many ways—great and small—to thank your volunteers. Here are some ideas from [Princeton Community Works](#) on ways to acknowledge volunteers:

Hold an Awards Ceremony: Present a community award to organizations and volunteers that do outstanding work; give out certificates acknowledging years of service; invite volunteers to give short presentations on where they volunteer and why; invite volunteers to give short presentations describing what they've gained from being a volunteer and how volunteering has affected their lives

Place Announcements in the Media: Run public service announcements that combine a pitch for the benefits of volunteering with a short profile of a community non-profit that benefits from volunteer help; create a Web site that contains profiles of volunteers working with local non-profits; place short stories about volunteer achievements in the local and regional press, radio and television; have a weekly volunteer profile in local newspapers; start a county-wide Volunteer of the Week program

Saying Thanks: Remember to thank volunteers for the work they do and to note the contribution their work makes to the success of your organization or project; create small ways of regularly thanking volunteers such as a monthly breakfast

Hold a Recognition Meal or Day: Gathering together around the table for a meal is a nice way to acknowledge the work that your volunteers have done; have an annual community volunteer day at which you honor volunteers as well as encourage new volunteers

Acknowledge Their Contribution: Get specific about how your volunteers help your program be successful; tell your volunteers about the tangible results of their efforts; recognize the efforts and achievements of individual volunteers

Make their Work Rewarding: Make the work in your program fun and uplifting; give volunteers opportunities to play a meaningful role in decision-making; listen to their suggestions and allow them to run with ideas that fit your organization and goals; make a donation in the name of your volunteers to a charity that they choose

Effecting Lasting Change

Tastings are no substitute for meals on trays in the cafeteria, but they have proven immensely valuable to the children and the surrounding community. Get one going in your school, in your after-school program, or in your church, synagogue or mosque—and then let us know so that together, we can build a Good Food network.

“The hardest part is how to get the camel’s nose under the tent,” said Steve Downs, of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation—our funder. “How do you engage the schools and the school lunch system and school bureaucracy with the potential of long-term change? How do you make it all stick? And with less resources, perhaps? None of this stuff is really cheap. But the Garden State on Your Plate program is a clear first step on a path that is plausible and can be envisioned.”

The transition to Institutionalizing the program is difficult, said Judy Wilson, superintendent at Princeton Public Schools.

“We must fit it into a budgeting cycle that has to be mapped into curriculum,” she said. “And this program was highly dependent on many hands. We have to know if it needs a volunteer corps, and that such a corps is available. It takes a good three years for something to become embedded.”

“But there is no question about my support of it and my encouragement of it, not for it to become just a one-time cycle.”

Garden State on Your Plate



closing

resources and materials

In this section you will find materials from our Garden State on Your Plate tasting. There are sample newsletters, recipes, produce facts, and descriptor posters. They are here for you to use and adapt for your in-school tasting programs.

What you will find in this chapter:

- ◇ Links to on-line resources
- ◇ Tomato tasting materials
- ◇ Beet tasting materials
- ◇ Swiss chard tasting materials
- ◇ Cranberry tasting materials
- ◇ Sweet potato tasting materials
- ◇ Corn tasting materials
- ◇ Pea shoot tasting materials
- ◇ Spinach tasting materials
- ◇ Kale tasting materials
- ◇ Apple tasting materials
- ◇ Chef and farmer after-school programs
- ◇ Our survey results



Food Literacy Resources

General

Alliance for a Healthier Generation
Center for Ecoliteracy Education for Sustainable Living
The Edible Schoolyard Project
Family Nutrition Nights
Foodshare Toronto
Growing Healthy Habits
Healthy Schools Program
Media-Smart Youth: Eat, Think and Be Active
Nourish Educational Initiative
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Slow Food in Schools

New Jersey

Center for Science in the Public Interest
Crisis Ministry
New Jersey Department of Agriculture
What's in season
New Jersey Department of Education
Common Core State Standards
NJ Farm to School

Cooking with Children

Cooking with Children: *15 Lessons for Children, Age 7 and Up, Who Really Want to Learn to Cook*, by Marion Cunningham
Cooking with Kids
Cooking with Kids (PBS)
Fanny at Chez Panisse: *A Child's Restaurant Adventure with 46 Recipes*, by Alice Waters
From Asparagus to Zucchini: *A Guide to Cooking Farm Fresh Seasonal Produce*
The Happy Kitchen (La Cocina Alegre)

More than Mud Pies

Pretend Soup and Other Real Recipes: *A Cookbook for Preschoolers and Up*, by Mollie Katzen and Ann Henderson
The Silver Spoon for Children: *Favorite Italian Recipes*, by the editors of Phaidon Press
What Chefs Feed Their Kids: *Recipes and Techniques for Cultivating a Love of Good Food*, by Fanae Aaron

Garden-based Curricula

Agriculture in the Classroom
Ag in the Classroom (Spanish)
American Horticultural Society
Chicago Botanic Garden
Cornell Garden-Based Learning
CitySprouts
Cruciferous Crusaders Lesson Plans
Garden ABCs School Garden Share Site
Garden Mosaics
Gardening with Children
Gardens for Learning Creating and Sustaining Your School Garden
Got Dirt?
Got Veggies?
The Great Plant Escape
The Great Plant Escape (Spanish)
Grow to Learn NYC
History of School Gardens
Kids Gardening
Life Lab: Bringing Learning to Life in the Garden
Life Lab (Spanish)
Life Lab (Spanish 2)

MyGarden Lesson Plans

National Gardening Association
Project Sprout
School Garden Activities, Library of Congress
School Garden Considerations
School Garden History
School Garden Resources, Library of Congress
School Gardens with Constance Carter
The Victory Garden: Grow
Virginia Tech Department of Horticulture

Farm to School

Ecotrust Farm to School
National Farm to School Network
New Jersey Farm to School
Farm to School Startup Kit

Environment

Center for Environmental Education
Sustainability K–12 Listserv Launched by the U.S. Partnership for Education for Sustainable Development as the first national listserv for K–12 educators focused specifically on education for sustainability. To join, go to its website or send an email to sustaink12-request@umich.edu with “subscribe” in the subject line of the message.
Sustainable Schools Project

Food Security/Eating Local

Eating Locally through Winter: Processing Squash
Harvest of the Month: Network for a Healthy California

The Food Project See the “BLAST Youth Initiative” for resources that teach K–12 students about sustainable agriculture and food systems.

Iron Chef

School Food

American Culinary Foundation
Berkeley Unified School District
Berkeley Unified School District Lunch Initiative
Better School Food
Center for Science in the Public Interest
CSPI School Food Kit.
Chefs Move to Schools
Cook for America
The Edible Schoolyard
The Food Trust
Healthy School Lunch Campaign
Institute of Medicine: School Meals
The Lunch Box
Lunch Money: Serving Healthy Food in a Sick Economy
Rethinking School Lunch Guide
My Garden School Meals Resource
School Meals
School Nutrition Association
Serving Up MyPlate: A Yummy Curriculum
The USDA HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSC)

This list was aggregated from sites including those of ecoliteracy.org and USDA



OUR CHEF AND FARMER PHOTOS: HERE ARE OUR PORTRAIT SHOTS OF CHEF GARY GIBERSON AND FARMER WALTER BONCZKIEWICZ. WHENEVER POSSIBLE, WE GET HIGH-RESOLUTION PORTRAIT SHOTS OF OUR FARMER AND CHEF. WE USE THESE PHOTOS FOR POSTERS, HANDOUTS, AND PUBLICITY.



OUR TOMATO CUT OUT POSTERS: TEN CUT OUT POSTERS—EACH WITH A DIFFERENT TOMATO FACT—ARE PUT UP IN THE SCHOOL HALLWAYS A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE TASTING AND ARE LEFT THERE FOR THE WEEK AFTER THE TASTING. THIS HELPS TO BUILD ANTICIPATION AND TO REINFORCE THE TASTING. WE NUMBER THE POSTERS SO THAT THE CHILDREN ARE AWARE THAT EACH POSTER HAS A DIFFERENT FACT. THE POSTERS ARE CUT OUT OF COLORED POSTER BOARD.

Tomato Tasting

Chef: Gary Giberson

Restaurant/Institution: Sustainable Fare and The Lawrenceville School

Farmer: Walter Bonczkiewicz

Farm: Village Farms, Lawrenceville

Items Tasted: Raw tomatoes, fresh tomato salsa

Month Held: September

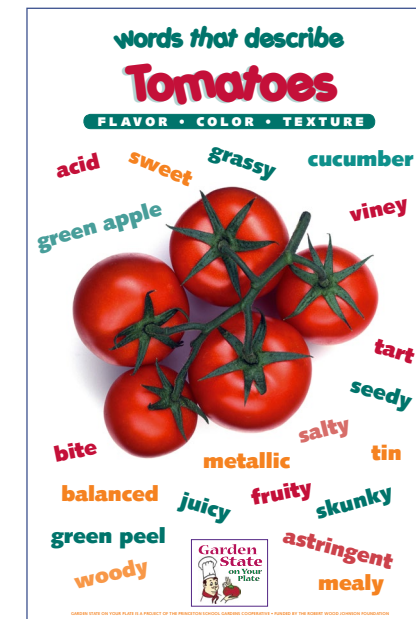
Tasting Exercise: A basket of grape tomatoes was placed at the center of each lunchroom table along with salt and lime wedges. Chef Gary asked the children to take a bite of a tomato and think about the taste. He instructed them to then put a little salt and lime juice on the tomato, taste it again, and notice how the flavor changed. The children then tasted Gary's fresh tomato salsa.

Chef Gary's Famous Tomato Salsa Picante

Makes about 2 cups

- 12 ounces (2 medium ripe tomatoes) cored and diced
- 3 serrano chiles, minced, stem and seeds removed
- 1 large garlic clove, minced
- 1 small white onion, diced
- 12 sprigs of cilantro, minced
- 2 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 ½ teaspoons fresh lime juice
- Salt, about ¾ teaspoon

1. In a medium bowl, combine all ingredients and mix well. Let salsa stand a few minutes for the flavors to meld.
2. Taste for seasoning, adjust if needed and then serve.



OUR TOMATO DESCRIPTOR POSTER. WE DISTRIBUTE DESCRIPTOR POSTERS TO EACH CLASSROOM WHERE THEY ARE USED BY TEACHERS TO TEACH VOCABULARY, OBSERVATION SKILLS, AND DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS. THE DESCRIPTOR POSTERS ARE 11 INCHES BY 17 INCHES. WE HAVE INCLUDED AN 8-1/2 BY 11-INCH VERSION IN THIS SECTION FOR EASY PRINTING. CLICK ON THE GRAPHIC ABOVE TO DOWNLOAD THE FULL-SIZE VERSION FOR PRINTING AT YOUR LOCAL COPY SHOP.

Tomato Facts used on our posters and handout:

Tomatoes are:

- The main ingredient in salsa, in ketchup and in pasta sauce.
- Classified as a fruit, though we usually think of them as vegetables
- A member of the nightshade family and related to pepper, eggplant, and white potato
- Sometimes tasting sweet and sometimes tasting a bit sour
- The state vegetable of New Jersey
- Studied at Rutgers University Agricultural Experiment Station, where scientists think deeply about flavor and work with the Moreton F1 (aka the July 4th Tomato), the Ramapo and the Rutgers tomatoes.
- Easy to grow from seed
- Fun to eat, still hot from the sun
- A \$19,627,000 crop over 3,100 acres in their fresh state for New Jersey farmers (2006) and a \$1,700,000 crop over 1,200 acres as a processing crop.
- Mostly grown for wholesale in Gloucester, Cumberland, Salem, and Atlantic counties
- Named very fancifully – main heirloom varieties grown in New Jersey are Mortgage Lifter, Prudens Purple, Mister Stripy, Eva Purple Ball, Arkansas Traveler, Brandywine, Lemon Boy and Snow White.



OUR TOMATO VIDEO: IN ADVANCE OF THE TASTING, A VIDEO FEATURING FARMER WALTER BONCZKIEWICZ AND CHEF GARY GIBERSON WAS SHOWN TO THE STUDENTS. WE USE VIDEOS TO GENERATE EXCITEMENT AND TO GIVE THE CHILDREN A FIRST-HAND VIEW OF THE FARM AND THE CHEF AT WORK. OUR TOMATO VIDEO IS POSTED ON YOUTUBE. CLICK THE LOGO ABOVE TO VIEW THE VIDEO OR SEARCH PSGCOOP ON YOUTUBE.

words that describe

Tomatoes

FLAVOR • COLOR • TEXTURE



OUR TOMATO HANDOUTS: (FULL SIZE VERSIONS OF SIDES 1 AND 2 OF THE ENGLISH VERSION AND THE SPANISH VERSION ARE ON THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW) HANDOUTS GO HOME IN EACH STUDENT'S BACKPACK A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE TASTING. WE ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO TALK WITH THEIR CHILDREN ABOUT THE TASTINGS.





Garden State

on your plate

SEPTEMBER 2010 • LINKING FARM TO SCHOOL

Dear parents,

At lunchtime today, Gary Giberson, president and founder of Sustainable Fare and director of dining services at the Lawrenceville School, treated your elementary schoolchildren to tasting portions of recipes using locally grown tomatoes of different types and sizes. The tasting is the first in a series of tastings and farmer visits that comprise "Garden State on Your Plate: Linking farm to school."

We are eager to hear about what you and your children think about the experience and our efforts. Please talk with your children about their experience—we've suggested some questions to help get the conversation going—and let us know what was said by writing us at info@psgcoop.org or by reaching out to your principal or her team members for this project.

Princeton School
Gardens Cooperative
www.psgcoop.org

Today we tasted fresh salsa prepared by Chef Gary Giberson. Chef Gary used tomatoes grown by Walter Bonczkiewicz at Village Farms in Lawrenceville.

Salsa can be made in many ways, including fresh or cooked, red or green, and fiery or sweet. It can be eaten with meat, fish, poultry, or beans. Or it can be scooped right out of the bowl on tortilla chips.

Fresh salsa is easy to make and is a delicious way to celebrate New Jersey's most famous crop—the Jersey tomato.



CHEF GARY GIBERSON



FARMER WALTER BONCZKIEWICZ

TOMATO TALK

Talk with your family about today's tomato tasting!

What did you like about the chef's visit today at lunchtime?

What foods did Chef Gary bring for you to taste? Describe the flavors.

Did you like the grape tomatoes? How about the salsa?

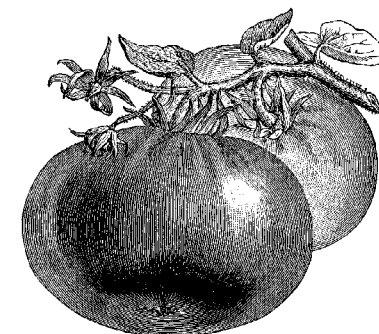
Did you season your tomato with fresh lime juice or salt? How did the seasonings change the flavor? Which combination did you like best?

Did Chef Gary give you any cooking tips?

To see recipes, pictures, updates, and video of this project and others, visit us at www.psgcoop.org

TOMATOES ARE:

- The main ingredient in salsa, in ketchup and in pasta sauce.
- Classified as a fruit, though we usually think of them as vegetables
- A member of the nightshade family and related to pepper, eggplant, and white potato
- Sometimes tasting sweet and sometimes tasting a bit sour
- The state vegetable of New Jersey
- Studied at Rutgers University Agricultural Experiment Station, where scientists think deeply about flavor and work with the Moreton F1 (aka the July 4th Tomato), the Ramapo and the Rutgers tomatoes.
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- Named very fancifully – main heirloom varieties grown in New Jersey are Mortgage Lifter, Prudens Purple, Mister Stripy, Eva Purple Ball, Arkansas Traveler, Brandywine, Lemon Boy and Snow White.



TOMATO HISTORY

1519: The Spanish adventurer Hernando Cortes, on his trip from Cuba to conquer New Spain (the Aztec empire, with its capital, Tenochtitlan in what now is Mexico), discovers that the Mayans (a rival tribe) eat tomatoes, along with cacao (chocolate) cacahuates (peanuts), camotes (sweet potatoes) and uahs (tortillas).

1527: Conquistadors return to Spain with tomatoes, avocados and papayas.

1554: The first identifiable description of the tomato appears in an Italian chronicle that calls the cherry-sized yellow fruit pomo d'oro (golden apple).

1596: The tomato is introduced to England as an ornamental plant.

1752: Philip Miller, in "The Gardener's Dictionary," expresses doubts about eating tomatoes.

1812: The first known recipe for tomato ketchup is published by James Mease, who supported the British in the American Revolution and then moved from New Jersey to Nova Scotia.

1820: Robert Gibbon Johnson, the Salem County, NJ Horticultural Society president, eats a raw tomato in front of a skeptical crowd at the Salem courthouse, defying predictions that it will soon kill him.



"Garden State on Your Plate: Linking farm to school," is a Farm to School pilot program administered by the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative and funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The pilot, a yearlong effort underway at Community Park and Littlebrook elementary schools, is designed to feed students' needs for fresh food and to begin to link for them the food they eat to the Garden State and to the larger world. Further, we hope that it will restore bonds between schools, the community and local farmers – and through a documentary being filmed of the process, offer other schools and parents support for beginning similar programs.



El Estado Jardín

en tu plato

SEPTEMBER 2010 • CONECTANDO LA GRANJA CON LA ESCUELA

Estimados padres,

En el almuerzo de hoy Gary Giberson, presidente y fundador de Menú Sostenible y Director de servicios alimenticios de la escuela de Lawrenceville, invitó a los niños de su escuela elemental a probar algunas de sus recetas donde utiliza tomates de diferentes tipos y tamaños cultivados en la región. Esta degustación es la primera de una serie programada junto con visitas del agricultor que hacen parte del proyecto "El Estado Jardín en tu Plato: Conectando la Granja con la Escuela".

Estamos deseosos de escuchar lo que Ud. y sus hijos piensan de la esta experiencia y nuestros esfuerzos. Por favor hable con su(s) hijo(s) sobre esta experiencia – hemos sugerido algunas preguntas que pueden usar en la conversación – y dejenos saber que dijeron escribiendonos a info@psgcoop.org o poniendose en contacto con la directora de su escuela o algún miembro de su equipo de trabajo en este proyecto.

Cooperativa de Jardines/Huertas de las escuelas de Princeton
www.psgcoop.org

Hoy probamos una deliciosa salsa preparada por el chef Gary Giberson. El Chef Gary utilizó tomates de la huerta de Walter Bonczkiewicz de "Village Farms" en Lawrenceville.

La salsa se puede preparar de muchas formas: fresca, cocinada, verde o roja, y picante o dulce. Se puede comer con carne, pescado, pollo, frijoles, o simplemente con tortillitas.

La salsa fresca es muy fácil de preparar y es una deliciosa manera de celebrar el cultivo más famoso de New Jersey—el tomate de Jersey.



CHEF GARY GIBERSON



FARMER WALTER BONCZKIEWICZ

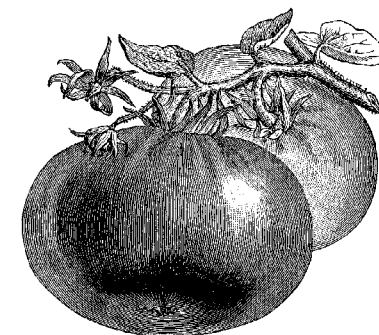
CHARLA SOBRE EL TOMATE

Habla con tu familia sobre la degustación de tomate de hoy:

- ¿Qué te gusto de la visita del chef a la hora del almuerzo?
- ¿Qué comidas trajo el chef Gary para probar? Describe los sabores
- ¿Te gustaron los tomates bebés/tomates "cereza"? ¿y la salsa?
- ¿Sazonas la salsa con hierbas y especias, jugo de limón o sal? ¿Cómo cambian los condimentos el sabor? ¿Cuál combinación te gusta más?
- ¿El chef Gary te dio alguna recomendación/consejo de cocina?

LOS TOMATES SON:

- El ingrediente principal de la salsa, la pasta de tomate y la salsa de tomate.
- Clasificados como frutas aunque tendamos a pensar que son vegetales.
- Un miembro de la familia de las belladonnas, relacionado con el pimiento, la berenjena y la papa blanca.
- Algunas veces puede tener un sabor dulzón otras un poco amargo.
- El vegetal insignia del estado de New Jersey.
- Fácil de cultivar usando sus semillas.
- Comerlo es divertido
- Generalmente es cultivado al por mayor en los condados de Gloucester, Cumberland, Salem, and Atlantic.
- Tiene nombres extravagantes como: Prudencia Morada, Señor rayado, Eva pelota morada, Viajero de Arkansas, Chico Limón, y Blanca nieves.



HISTORIA DEL TOMATE

- 1519:** El conquistador español Hernando Cortes, en su viaje desde Cuba a la conquista de Nueva España (El imperio Azteca, con su capital Tenochtitlan en lo que ahora es Mexico) descubre que los Mayas (una tribu rival) comen tomates junto con cacao (chocolate) cacahuets, camotes, y uahs (tortillas)
- 1527:** Los conquistadores regresan a España con tomates, aguacates y papayas.
- 1554:** La primera descripción identificable del tomate aparece en una crónica italiana que denomina al fruto amarillo del tamaño de una cereza como la fruta pomo d'oro (manzana de oro).
- 1596:** El tomate se introduce en Inglaterra como una planta ornamental.
- 1752:** Philip Miller, en el "Diccionario de Horticultura" expresa dudas sobre si los tomates son comestibles.
- 1812:** La primera receta conocida para salsa de tomate es publicada por James Mease que apoyó a los Británicos en la Revolución Americana y luego se mudo de New Jersey a Nova Scotia.
- 1820:** Robert Gibbon Johnson, presidente de la sociedad de horticultura del condado de Salem en NJ se come un tomate crudo en presencia de una multitud escéptica en la corte de Salem, desafiando las predicciones de que pronto lo matara.



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OUR CHEF AND FARMER PHOTOS: HERE ARE OUR PORTRAIT SHOTS OF CHEF ALEX LEVINE AND FARMER MATT CONVER. WHENEVER POSSIBLE, WE GET HIGH-RESOLUTION PORTRAIT SHOTS OF OUR FARMER AND CHEF. WE USE THESE PHOTOS FOR POSTERS, HANDOUTS, AND PUBLICITY.

Beet Tasting

Chef: Alex Levine

Restaurant/Institution: Whole Earth Center, Princeton

Farmer: Matt Conver

Farm: Cherry Valley Organic Farm, Lawrenceville

Items Tasted: Raw beets, cooked beets, chilled beet and orange soup

Month Held: October

Tasting Exercise: Bowls of thinly sliced raw beets were placed on each table. Small sample cups of cooked beets—Chef Alex prepared white, golden, and red beets—and chilled beet soup were put at each student’s seat. Chef Alex asked the students to taste a raw beet and then a cooked beet and to notice the difference that cooking makes to the flavor. The children then tasted the chilled soup.

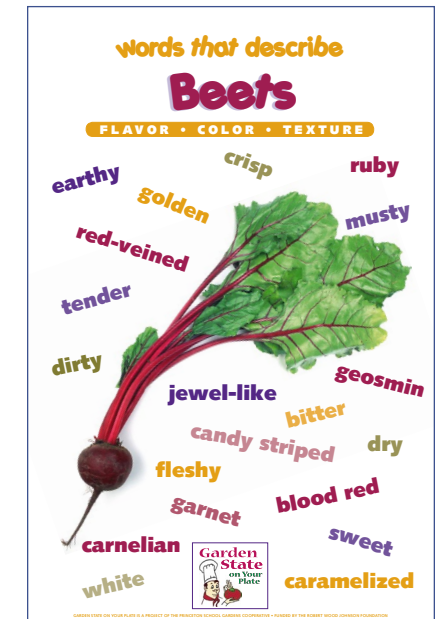
Chef Alex’s Chilled Beet and Orange Soup

Yield: 2 quarts, or 8 cups

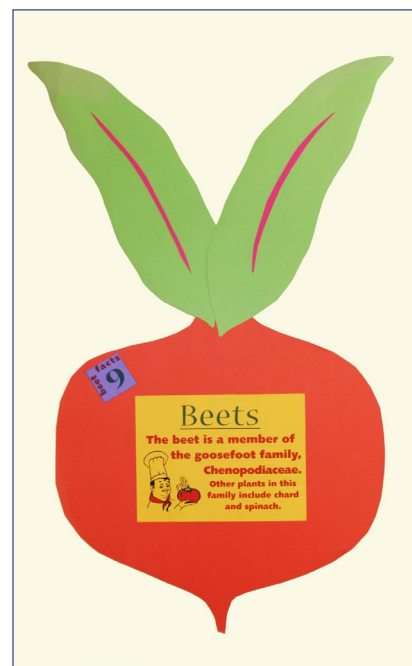
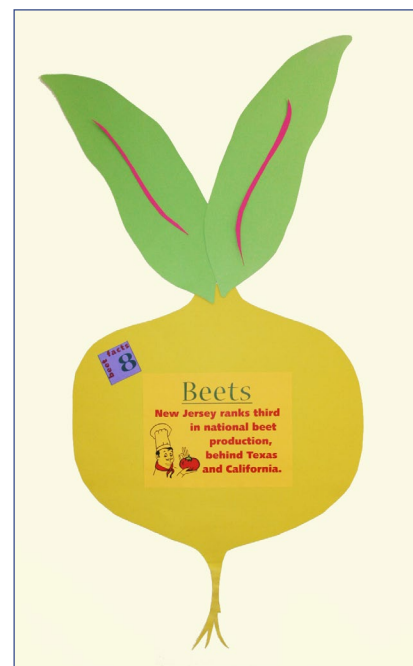
Both sweet and earthy from beets, aromatic from ginger, hearty from miso, and refreshing from fresh orange juice, this shimmering soup is a delicious appetizer all year long.

- 1 tablespoon neutral-flavored vegetable oil
- 1 cup ½-inch diced yellow onions
- ½-inch piece ginger, peeled and minced
- ½ teaspoon salt plus a pinch
- 1 cup ½-inch diced carrots
- 5 cups ½-inch diced raw beets
- 1 quart water
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon miso (fermented soybean paste) or an additional half-teaspoon or more salt
- 2 cups freshly squeezed orange juice (the soup is not the same without freshly squeezed juice; juice bought in any kind of container just won’t do)

Heat oil in a heavy-bottomed saucepan. Add onions, ginger, and pinch of salt. Sauté until onions are soft and translucent. Add carrots, beets, water, pepper, and remaining salt. Bring to boil and simmer, covered, until vegetables are very, very tender.



OUR BEET DESCRIPTOR POSTER. WE DISTRIBUTE DESCRIPTOR POSTERS TO EACH CLASSROOM WHERE THEY ARE USED BY TEACHERS TO TEACH VOCABULARY, OBSERVATION SKILLS, AND DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS. THE DESCRIPTOR POSTERS ARE 11 INCHES BY 17 INCHES. WE HAVE INCLUDED AN 8-1/2 BY 11-INCH VERSION IN THIS SECTION FOR EASY PRINTING. CLICK ON THE GRAPHIC ABOVE TO DOWNLOAD THE FULL-SIZE VERSION FOR PRINTING AT YOUR LOCAL COPY SHOP.



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Cool to room temperature. Add miso (or salt to taste), and purée with an immersion blender, a regular blender, or a food processor, in batches. When soup is cooled to room temperature, stir in orange juice. Chill well and enjoy.

Beet Facts used on our posters and handout

- New Jersey ranks third in national beet production, behind Texas and California.
- Fresh beets have twice the folic acid and potassium of canned beets.
- Beets have the highest natural sugar content of all vegetables.
- Beet greens are packed with beta carotene, folic acid, potassium and calcium.
- Small to medium size beets have the best flavor and texture.
- In Greece, some people drink beet juice with a twist of lemon.
- One of the most salt tolerant vegetables, beets (*Beta vulgaris*) are descended from the sea beet (*B. maritima*), a seashore plant from the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts of Europe and northern Africa.
- Beet pigments are rich in an antioxidant called betalain, which helps prevent disease.
- Garden or table beets may be red, yellow, orange, white, pink or striped. Some are long and slim, some are flattened and others are the typical globe shape.
- The beet is a member of the goosefoot family, *Chenopodiaceae*. Other plants in this family include chard, spinach, and common pigweed.
- For a steady supply of beets, start planting seeds around April 10 and continue with successive plantings at 3- to 4-week intervals into July.



OUR BEET VIDEO: IN ADVANCE OF THE TASTING, A VIDEO FEATURING FARMER MATT CONVER AND CHEF ALEX LEVINE WAS SHOWN TO THE STUDENTS. WE USE VIDEOS TO GENERATE EXCITEMENT AND TO GIVE THE CHILDREN A FIRST-HAND VIEW OF THE FARM AND THE CHEF AT WORK. OUR BEET VIDEO IS POSTED ON YOUTUBE. CLICK THE LOGO ABOVE TO VIEW THE VIDEO OR SEARCH PSGCOOP ON YOUTUBE.



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Words that describe

Beets

FLAVOR • COLOR • TEXTURE





Garden State

on your plate

OCTOBER 2010 • LINKING FARM TO SCHOOL

Dear parents,

Last month, we started "Garden State on Your Plate: Linking farm to school" with a tasting of something simple, easy and familiar: Jersey tomatoes.

But today, we ramped it up in the school cafeteria.

Alex Levine, chef at Whole Earth Center, double-dog dared your children to eat beets. But not just any beets—these are beets grown by Matt Conner, farmer at Cherry Grove Organic Farm, and they're fresh from the dirt. Chef Alex offered three choices —a cold beet-orange soup, as well as raw and cooked beets.

Beets are easy to make at home, and are deeply flavored and delicious. As far as health? Don't tell the children —but you can know that beets are packed with antioxidants. A general rule with vegetables: The deeper the color, the higher the nutrients.

Princeton School Gardens Cooperative
www.psgcoop.org

Today we tasted chilled beet and orange soup prepared by Chef Alex Levine. Chef Alex used beets grown by Matt Conner at Cherry Grove Organic Farm in Lawrenceville.

Beets are easy to prepare. Try them raw, sliced and steamed, or oven-roasted to earthy perfection. And the beet greens are delicious sauteed with garlic or tossed with pasta.



CHEF ALEX LEVINE



FARMER MATT CONNER

BEET TALK

Talk with your family about today's beet tasting!

We hope your child dared to eat beets and that you'll be inspired to add more beets to your repertoire. Please consider these topics of dinnertime conversation—and **let us know what was said by writing us at info@psgcoop.org or by reaching out to your principal or her project team members.**

- What did you like about the chef's visit today at lunchtime?
- Which did you like better, the soup, the raw beet, or the cooked beet?
- What flavors surprised you today?
- Did your mouth turn bright red after eating beets?

To see recipes, pictures, updates, and video of this project and others, visit us at www.psgcoop.org

Chilled Beet and Orange Soup

contributed by Alex Levine, Whole Earth Center

YIELD: 2 quarts, or 8 cups

Both sweet and earthy from beets, aromatic from ginger, hearty from miso, and refreshing from fresh orange juice, this shimmering soup is a delicious appetizer all year long.

- 1 tablespoon neutral-flavored vegetable oil
- 1 cup ½-inch diced yellow onions
- ½-inch piece ginger, peeled and minced
- ½ teaspoon salt plus a pinch
- 1 cup ½-inch diced carrots
- 5 cups ½-inch diced raw beets
- 1 quart water
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon miso (fermented soybean paste) or an additional half-teaspoon or more salt
- 2 cups freshly squeezed orange juice (the soup is not the same without freshly squeezed juice; juice bought in any kind of container just won't do)

Heat oil in a heavy-bottomed saucepan. Add onions, ginger, and pinch of salt. Sauté until onions are soft and translucent. Add carrots, beets, water, pepper, and remaining salt. Bring to boil and simmer, covered, until vegetables are very, very tender.

Cool to room temperature. Add miso (or salt to taste), and purée with an immersion blender, a regular blender, or a food processor, in batches. When soup is cooled to room temperature, stir in orange juice. Chill well and enjoy.

SOME FACTS ABOUT BEETS

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El Estado Jardin en tu plato

OCTUBRE 2010 • CONECTANDO LA GRANJA CON LA ESCUELA

Estimados padres,

El mes anterior iniciamos el proyecto "El Estado Jardin en tu Plato: Conectando la Granja con la Escuela". Iniciamos el proyecto con algo simple, fácil y familiar: tomates de Nueva Jersey.

Hoy volveremos a tomarnos la cafetería de la escuela con un nuevo producto.

Alex Levine, chef de "Whole Earth Center" retará a los niños a comer remolachas/betabeles pero no cualquier remolacha, estas son cultivadas por Matt Conner de la Granja Orgánica Cherry Grove, son super frescas y vienen directo de tierra.

El chef Alex ofrecerá tres opciones: una sopa fría de remolacha-naranja, remolachas crudas y remolachas cocidas.

Las remolachas son fáciles de preparar en casa, y tienen un gusto dulce y delicioso. Además son super saludables; están llenas de antioxidantes y cumplen con la regla general de los vegetales: entre más oscuro su color más alto su contenido de nutrientes.

Cooperativa de Jardines/Huertas de las escuelas de Princeton
www.psgcoop.org

Hoy probamos una deliciosa sopa fría de remolacha y naranja preparada por el chef Alex Levine. El Chef Alex utilizó remolachas de la granja orgánica "Cherry Grove" de Matt Conner en Lawrenceville.

Las remolachas son fáciles de preparar. Pruébelas crudas, en pedacitos y al vapor o asadas en el horno. Las remolachas verdes son deliciosas salteadas con ajo o sobre la pasta.



CHEF ALEX LEVINE



FARMER MATT CONNER

CHARLA SOBRE LA REMOLACHA/EL BETABEL

Habla con tu familia sobre la degustación de remolacha de hoy
Esperamos que su pequeño(a) haya probado las remolachas y que ahora usted se sienta inspirado a adicionarlas a su repertorio culinario. Por favor considere lo siguiente como tema de conversación en la mesa – **y dejémos saber por escrito lo que se comentó a info@psgcoop.org o hable con la directora de la escuela o con algún miembro del proyecto.**

¿Qué te gusto de la visita del chef a la hora del almuerzo?

¿Qué te gusto más: la sopa, la remolacha cruda, o la remolacha cocida?

¿Qué sabores te sorprendieron hoy?

¿Tú boca se puso roja (rojo fuerte) después de comer remolachas?

Sopa Fria de Remolacha y Naranja

Contribución del chef Alex Levine, "Whole Earth Center"

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Cucharada de aceite vegetal | 1 cuarto de agua |
| 1 Taza y media pulgada de celobas amarillas picadas | Una pizca (1/4 de cucharadita) de pimienta negra |
| Media pulgada de jengibre pelado y en trocitos | 1 Cucharada de miso (pasta fermentada de granos de soya) o media cucharadita adicional o más sal |
| Media cucharadita de sal | 2 Tazas de jugo de naranja recién exprimido (la sopa no sabe igual sino se utiliza jugo fresco, el jugo de caja no funciona!) |
| 1 Taza y media pulgada de zanahorias en cubitos | |
| 5 Tazas y media pulgada de remolachas crudas en cubitos | |

Caliente el aceite en una cacerola grande. Agregue las cebollas, el jengibre y una pizca de sal. Saltee hasta que las cebollas estén suaves. Agregue las zanahorias, las remolachas, el agua, la pimienta y el resto de la sal. Tape y deje hervir a fuego lento hasta que los vegetales estén completamente tiernos.

Dejela enfriar a temperatura ambiente. Agregue el miso (o más sal) y mezclela como pure en una licadora, o con un procesador de alimentos. Cuando la sopa se haya enfriado a temperatura ambiente mezcle y revuelva el jugo de naranja. Sirva y disfrute!!

ALGUNOS DATOS DE LAS REMOLACHAS

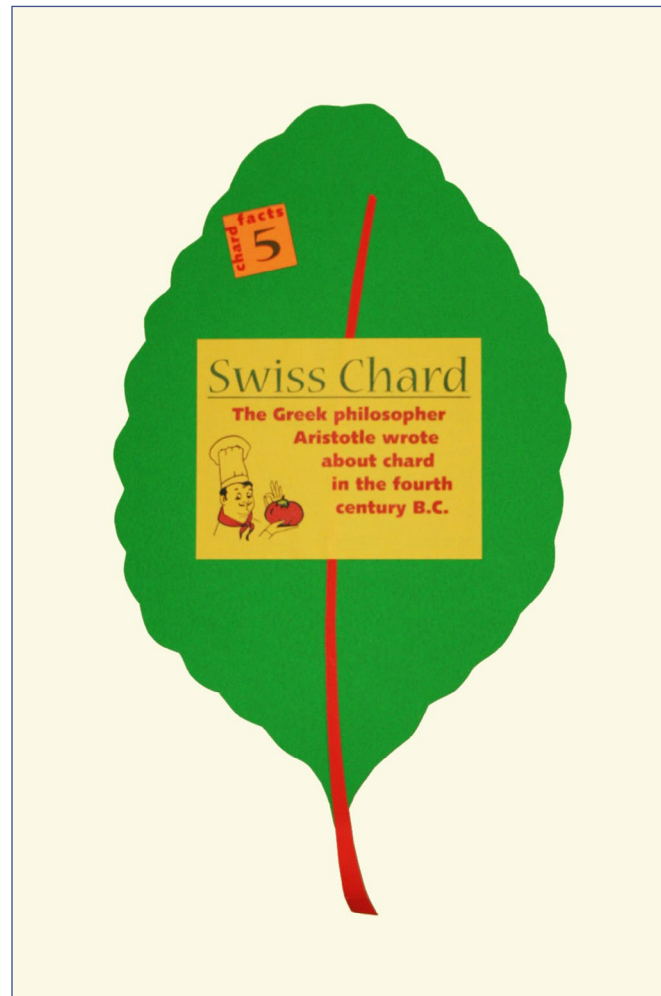
- Nueva Jersey se ubica tercero en la producción nacional de remolachas después de Texas y California.
- Las remolachas frescas tienen dos veces más la cantidad de ácido fólico y potasio que las remolachas enlatadas.
- Las remolachas tienen el contenido de azúcar más alto de todos los vegetales.
- Las remolachas verdes están llenas de betacarotenos, ácido fólico, potasio y calcio.
- Las remolachas medianas y pequeñas son las que tienen mejor sabor y textura.
- En Grecia algunas personas toman jugo de remolacha con un poco de limón.
- Uno de los vegetales más tolerantes a la sal, las remolachas (*Beta vulgaris*) son descendientes de la remolacha marina (*B. maritima*) una planta de las costas Atlántica y Mediterránea de Europa y el Norte de África.
- Los pigmentos de las remolachas son ricos en antioxidantes que ayudan a prevenir enfermedades.
- Las remolachas o betabeles de huerta o jardín pueden ser rojas, amarillos, anaranjados, blancos, rosados, o con rayitas. Algunos son largos y delgados, otros son planos y otros tienen la forma típica de globo.
- Las remolachas son de la familia de las quenopodiáceas. Otras plantas de esta familia incluyen la acelga y la espinaca.
- Para mantener una producción constante de remolachas comience a plantar las semillas alrededor del 10 de abril y continúe plantando sucesivamente con intervalos de 3 a 4 semanas hasta julio.



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OUR CHEF AND FARMER PHOTOS: HERE IS OUR PORTRAIT SHOT OF CHEF CHRISTOPHER ALBRECHT AND FARMER JESS NIEDERER. WHENEVER POSSIBLE, WE GET HIGH-RESOLUTION PORTRAIT SHOTS OF OUR FARMER AND CHEF. IN THIS CASE, WE HAD TO GRAB AN IMAGE FROM THE VIDEO—RESULTING IN A LOW RESOLUTION PHOTO THAT WAS DIFFICULT TO USE. WE USE THESE PHOTOS FOR POSTERS, HANDOUTS, AND PUBLICITY.



OUR CHARD CUT OUT POSTERS. TEN CUT OUT POSTERS—EACH WITH A DIFFERENT CHARD FACT—ARE PUT UP IN THE SCHOOL HALLWAYS A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE TASTING AND ARE LEFT THERE FOR THE WEEK AFTER THE TASTING. THIS HELPS TO BUILD ANTICIPATION AND TO REINFORCE THE TASTING. WE NUMBER THE POSTERS SO THAT THE CHILDREN ARE AWARE THAT EACH POSTER HAS A DIFFERENT FACT. THE POSTERS ARE CUT OUT OF COLORED POSTER BOARD.

Swiss Chard Tasting

Chef: Christopher Albrecht

Restaurant/Institution: Eno Terra, Kingston

Farmer: Jess Niederer

Farm: Chickadee Creek Farm, Pennington

Items Tasted: Raw Swiss chard, braised Swiss chard, braised Swiss chard with bacon

Month Held: November

Tasting Exercise: Bowls of raw chard were placed in the center of each table, along with lemon wedges and salt. Chef Chris asked the students to taste the raw chard and then to taste it again with lemon and salt. Each child was also given a sample of braised chard and asked to reflect on how cooking changed the flavor and texture of the chard. Students were also invited to visit the tasting table for a sample of braised chard with bacon.

Chef Christopher's Braised Rainbow Swiss Chard

- 6 garlic cloves, peeled
- 1 cup plus 1 tablespoon olive oil, divided
- 1 bunch rainbow Swiss Chard (about ½ pound), cleaned
- 2 leeks
- 1 cup white grape juice (or verjus*)
- 2 cups vegetable stock (or chicken stock)
- 4 sprigs fresh thyme, or ¼ teaspoon dried
- 1 bay leaf
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

1. In small saucepan, simmer garlic in 1 cup of olive oil until soft. Drain oil from garlic, reserving oil.
2. Clean leeks: Cut white part of leeks into coins about ¼ inch thick and float them in a bowl of cold water. Agitate to help sand fall to the bottom. When clean, remove leeks, drain and pat dry.
3. Cut Swiss chard stems away from leaves. Set leaves aside and cut stems into uniformly sized pieces—squares or sticks.
4. Place remaining olive oil in heavy-bottomed pot. Add leeks and cook on low heat until they are tender, about 10 minutes. Season to taste. Add the cooked garlic and about 1 tablespoon of garlic oil. When garlic becomes



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aromatic, add verjus and simmer until liquid is reduced to half of its original. Add the vegetable stock, tie the thyme and bay leaf together with some kitchen twine and add to stock. Return to a simmer. Adjust seasoning.

- In the meantime, bring a medium sized pot of salted water to a rolling boil. Add stems and cook for two minutes, then remove them from the water and add to the leek mixture. Simmer for two minutes.
- Add greens to boiling water; remove after 15 seconds, drain and add to leek mixture. Adjust seasonings, remove herb bundle and serve.

VARIATION: Braised Rainbow Swiss Chard with Bacon: Cut 2 ounces of bacon or pancetta into postage-stamp sizes. Cook over medium heat until almost crisp. Add to cooked leeks at the end of step 5.

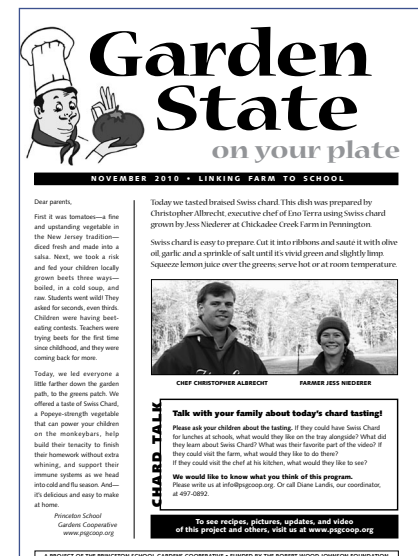
*Verjus is the bottled juice of unripe grapes.

Chard Facts used on our posters and handout

- Swiss chard is not from Switzerland, but from the Mediterranean region.
- The Greek philosopher Aristotle wrote about chard in the fourth century B.C.
- Chard acquired its common name from another Mediterranean vegetable, the cardoon, a celery-like plant with thick stalks that resemble those of chard. The French got the two confused and called them both “carde.”
- Swiss Chard tolerates poor soil, inattention, and withstands frost and mild freezes.
- At Rutgers, scientists experimented with Swiss Chard as a salad crop for moon or space stations. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12481809>
- Swiss Chard is a member of the chenopod family, which includes beets, spinach, and quinoa (pronounced KEEN-wah).
- Swiss Chard stems may be red, creamy white or even multi-color.
- Plant Swiss Chard early in the spring, and harvest all year. A four to six foot row will feed a family—with some left over to share. Deer enjoy eating Swiss Chard, too.
- Chlorophyll is a major contributor to the rich green color of Swiss Chard.
- Swiss Chard is high in vitamins A, K and C and in calcium



OUR CHARD VIDEO: IN ADVANCE OF THE TASTING, A VIDEO FEATURING FARMER JESS NIEDERER AND CHEF CHRISTOPHER ALBRECHT WAS SHOWN TO THE STUDENTS. WE USE VIDEOS TO GENERATE EXCITEMENT AND TO GIVE THE CHILDREN A FIRST-HAND VIEW OF THE FARM AND THE CHEF AT WORK. OUR SWISS CHARD VIDEO IS POSTED ON YOUTUBE. CLICK THE LOGO ABOVE TO VIEW THE VIDEO OR SEARCH PSGCOOP ON YOUTUBE.



OUR CHARD HANDOUTS: (FULL SIZE VERSIONS OF SIDES 1 AND 2 OF THE ENGLISH VERSION AND THE SPANISH VERSION ARE ON THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW) HANDOUTS GO HOME IN EACH STUDENT'S BACKPACK A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE TASTING. WE ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO TALK WITH THEIR CHILDREN ABOUT THE TASTINGS.

Words that describe

Chard

FLAVOR • COLOR • TEXTURE





Garden State

on your plate

NOVEMBER 2010 • LINKING FARM TO SCHOOL

Dear parents,

First it was tomatoes—a fine and upstanding vegetable in the New Jersey tradition—diced fresh and made into a salsa. Next, we took a risk and fed your children locally grown beets three ways—boiled, in a cold soup, and raw. Students went wild! They asked for seconds, even thirds. Children were having beet-eating contests. Teachers were trying beets for the first time since childhood, and they were coming back for more.

Today, we led everyone a little farther down the garden path, to the greens patch. We offered a taste of Swiss Chard, a Popeye-strength vegetable that can power your children on the monkeybars, help build their tenacity to finish their homework without extra whining, and support their immune systems as we head into cold and flu season. And—it's delicious and easy to make at home.

Princeton School
Gardens Cooperative
www.psgcoop.org

Today we tasted braised Swiss chard. This dish was prepared by Christopher Albrecht, executive chef of Eno Terra using Swiss chard grown by Jess Niederer at Chickadee Creek Farm in Pennington.

Swiss chard is easy to prepare. Cut it into ribbons and sauté it with olive oil, garlic and a sprinkle of salt until it's vivid green and slightly limp. Squeeze lemon juice over the greens; serve hot or at room temperature.



CHEF CHRISTOPHER ALBRECHT

FARMER JESS NIEDERER

CHARD TALK

Talk with your family about today's chard tasting!

Please ask your children about the tasting. If they could have Swiss Chard for lunches at schools, what would they like on the tray alongside? What did they learn about Swiss Chard? What was their favorite part of the video? If they could visit the farm, what would they like to do there? If they could visit the chef at his kitchen, what would they like to see?

We would like to know what you think of this program.

Please write us at info@psgcoop.org. Or call Diane Landis, our coordinator, at 497-0892.

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Chef Christopher's Braised Rainbow Swiss Chard

Christopher Albrecht, Eno Terra

- | | |
|--|---|
| 6 garlic cloves, peeled | 2 cups vegetable stock (or chicken stock) |
| 1 cup plus 1 tablespoon olive oil, divided | 4 sprigs fresh thyme, or ¼ teaspoon dried |
| 1 bunch rainbow Swiss Chard (about ½ pound), cleaned | 1 bay leaf |
| 2 leeks | Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste |
| 1 cup white grape juice (or verjus*) | |

- In small saucepan, simmer garlic in 1 cup of olive oil until soft. Drain oil from garlic, reserving oil.
- Clean leeks: Cut white part of leeks into coins about ¼ inch thick and float them in a bowl of cold water. Agitate to help sand fall to the bottom. When clean, remove leeks, drain and pat dry.
- Cut Swiss chard stems away from leaves. Set leaves aside and cut stems into uniformly sized pieces – squares or sticks.
- Place remaining olive oil in heavy-bottomed pot. Add leeks and cook on low heat until they are tender, about 10 minutes. Season to taste. Add the cooked garlic and about 1 tablespoon of garlic oil. When garlic becomes aromatic, add verjus and simmer until liquid is reduced to half of its original. Add the vegetable stock, tie the thyme and bay leaf together with some kitchen twine and add to stock. Return to a simmer. Adjust seasoning.
- In the meantime, bring a medium sized pot of salted water to a rolling boil. Add stems and cook for two minutes, then remove them from the water and add to the leek mixture. Simmer for two minutes.
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El Estado Jardin en tu plato

NOVIEMBRE 2010 • CONECTANDO LA GRANJA CON LA ESCUELA

Estimados padres,

Primero fueron tomates – un magnífico y reconocido vegetal en la tradición de Nueva Jersey – picado en pedacitos y convertido en una deliciosa salsa. Después, nos arriesgamos y les dimos a probar a sus niños remolachas cultivadas localmente. Las probaron de tres formas: cocidas, en una sopa fría, y crudas. Los niños estaban super entusiasmados. Repitieron, algunos hasta tres veces. Hicieron competencias de remolachas para ver quién comía más. Algunos maestros no probaban remolacha desde que eran chicos, y también pidieron repetir.

Hoy quisimos llevarlos a todos un poco más dentro del jardín, a los terrenos verdes. Ofrecimos una prueba de acelga suiza, el vegetal de la fuerza de Popeye que también puede energizar a sus niños para atravesar el travesaño, o darles la tenacidad suficiente para terminar sus deberes sin quejarse. Este vegetal también ayuda al sistema inmune ahora que se acerca la estación de gripas y resfrios. Y finalmente, es deliciosa y fácil de preparar en casa.

Cooperativa de Jardines/
Huertas de las escuelas
de Princeton
www.psgcoop.org

Hoy probamos un encurtido de acelga suiza y acelga suiza salteada. Estos fueron platos preparados por el chef Christopher Albrecht de Eno Terra usando acelgas cultivadas por Jess Niederer de la granja "Chickadee" en Titusville.

La acelga suiza es fácil de preparar. Se corta en tiritas y se saltea con aceite de oliva, ajo, y una pizca de sal hasta que se vea bien verde y un poco suelta. Se exprime jugo de limón encima y se sirve caliente o a temperatura ambiente.



CHEF CHRISTOPHER ALBRECHT

FARMER JESS NIEDERER

CHARLA SOBRE LA ACELGA SUIZA

Hable con su familia sobre la degustación de acelga suiza de hoy!

Por favor preguntele a su(s) niños sobre la degustación

¿Cuál fue su plato favorito de acelga suiza?

Si pudieran tener acelga suiza en los almuerzos de la escuela, ¿qué les gustaría ver en su plato?

¿Qué aprendieron sobre la acelga suiza?

¿Cuál fue la parte favorita del video?

¿Si pudieran visitar la granja, qué les gustaría hacer allá?

¿Si pudieran visitar al chef en su cocina, qué quisieran ver?

Queremos saber lo que piensan sobre este programa

Por favor escribanos a info@psgcoop.org o comuníquese con Diane Landis, nuestra coordinadora, al 497-0892

Estofado arcoiris de acelga suiza del chef Christopher

Contribución del chef Christopher Albrecht, "Eno Terra"

6 Dientes de ajo pelados

1 Taza y una cucharada más de aceite de oliva

1 Ramo de acelga suiza arcoiris (aproximadamente 1/2 libra)

2 Puerros

1 Taza de jugo de uva blanca o de *verjus**

2 tazas de caldo de vegetales (o de caldo de pollo)

4 Ramitas de tomillo fresco, o un 1/4 de cucharadita de

tomillo en polvo

1 Hoja de laurel

Sal y pimienta fresca

1. En un sartén pequeño cocine a fuego lento el ajo en aceite de oliva. Cuando este suave cuele el aceite, pero no lo vote.
2. Limpie los puerros: corte la parte blanca en redondetes de 1/4 de pulgada más o menos colóquelos en una taza de agua fría. Agite para ayudarles a que escurran las impurezas. Cuando estén limpios cuelelos y seque los.
3. Corte los tallos de la acelga aparte de las hojas. Ponga las hojas a un lado y corte los tallos en pedacitos iguales – cubitos o palitos.
4. Coloque el aceite de oliva restante en una olla, agregue los puerros y cocine en bajo hasta que se pongan tiernos, 10 minutos más o menos. Sazone a su gusto. Agregue el ajo cocido y una cucharada de aceite de ajo. Cuando el ajo empiece a oler, o este aromático agregue el *verjus* y cocine a fuego lento hasta que el líquido este reducido a la mitad. Agregue el caldo de vegetales, amarre el tomillo y el laurel con algún cordel de cocina y agréguelo al caldo. Vuelva a cocinar a fuego lento. Ajuste el sazón.
5. Mientras tanto ponga a hervir una olla mediana de agua con sal. Agregue los tallos y cocine por dos minutos, después saque los del agua y adiciónelos a la mezcla de los puerros. Cocine a fuego lento por dos minutos.
6. Agregue los vegetales al agua hirviendo, saque los después de 15 segundos, cuele y agregue a la mezcla de puerros. Revise la sazón y saque las ramitas de tomillo y laurel. Sirva.

VARIACION: **Estofado arcoiris de acelga suiza con tocino:** Corte dos onzas de tocino o pancetta en cuadritos. Cocine en medio hasta que estén casi crujientes. Agregue a los puerros cocidos al final del paso 5.

**Verjus* es el jugo embotellado de las uvas verdes.

Algunos Datos de la Acelga Suiza

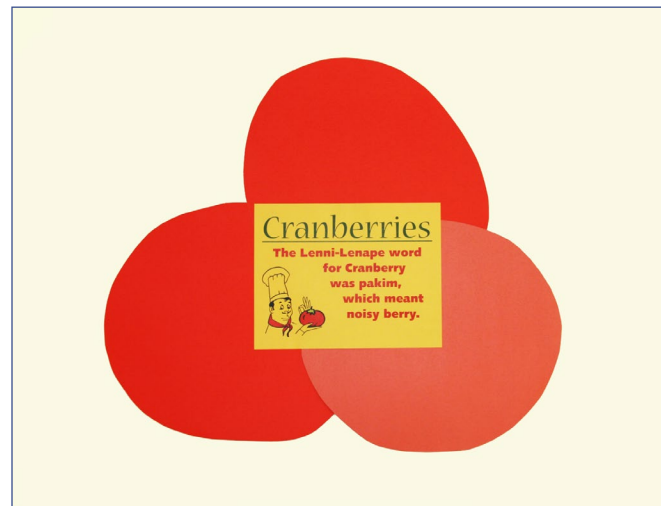
- La acelga suiza no es de Suiza, pero sí de la región del mediterráneo.
- El filósofo griego Aristóteles escribió sobre la acelga en el siglo cuarto antes de Cristo.
- La acelga adquirió su nombre de otro vegetal mediterráneo común, el cardo, un vegetal parecido al apio con tallos gruesos que se parecen a los de la acelga. Los franceses se confundían y a ambos los llamaban "carde."
- La acelga suiza puede tolerar un terreno mal alimentado y aguantar temperaturas muy bajas.
- En la Universidad de Rutgers los científicos han experimentado con acelga suiza como
- La acelga suiza es un miembro de la familia de las quenopodiáceas cuales incluyen a las remolachas, la espinaca, y la quinoa.
- Los tallos de la acelga suiza pueden ser rojos, blancos/beige o a veces multicolores.
- Plante la acelga suiza a comienzos de la primavera y se produzca durante todo el año
- La clorofila es lo que más contribuye al color verde de la acelga suiza
- La acelga suiza es alta en vitaminas A, K y calcio.
- Las remolachas medianas y pequeñas son las que tienen mejor sabor y textura.



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OUR CHEF AND FARMER PHOTOS: HERE IS OUR PORTRAIT SHOT OF CHEF ROB HARBISON AND A CRANBERRY FIELD AT PARADISE HILL FARM. WHENEVER POSSIBLE, WE GET HIGH-RESOLUTION PORTRAIT SHOTS OF OUR FARMER AND CHEF. IN THIS CASE, OUR PHOTOGRAPHER WAS UNABLE TO GET TO THE FARM. WE USED A FARM SHOT THAT ONE OF TEAM MEMBERS HAD TAKEN ON A FARM VISIT. WE USE THESE PHOTOS FOR POSTERS, HANDOUTS, AND PUBLICITY.



OUR CRANBERRY CUT OUT POSTERS: TEN CUT OUT POSTERS—EACH WITH A DIFFERENT CRANBERRY FACT—ARE PUT UP IN THE SCHOOL HALLWAYS A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE TASTING AND ARE LEFT THERE FOR THE WEEK AFTER THE TASTING. THIS HELPS TO BUILD ANTICIPATION AND TO REINFORCE THE TASTING. WE NUMBER THE POSTERS SO THAT THE CHILDREN ARE AWARE THAT EACH POSTER HAS A DIFFERENT FACT. THE POSTERS ARE CUT OUT OF COLORED POSTER BOARD.

Cranberry Tasting

Chef: Rob Harbison

Restaurant/Institution: Princeton University Dining Services, Princeton

Chef: Gab Carbone

Restaurant/Institution: bent spoon, Princeton

Farmer: Mary Ann Thompson

Farm: Paradise Hill, Vincentown

Items Tasted: Raw cranberries, cranberry relish, and cranberry-cider sorbet

Month Held: December

Tasting Exercises: A bowl of raw cranberries was placed in the center of each table. At each student's seat we placed a sample of Chef Rob's fresh cranberry sauce and of the bent spoon's cranberry-apple cider sorbet. The students were asked to taste each to see how the tartness of the cranberry is softened when balanced with a sweetener such as sugar and apple cider.

Chef Rob's Fresh Cranberry Sauce

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| 1 pound fresh cranberries | 1 cup water |
| 1/4 pound sugar | 1 cinnamon stick |

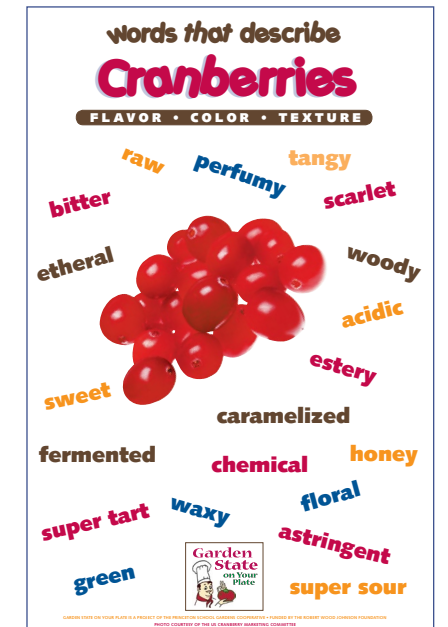
Combine ingredients and boil till berries burst. Refrigerate in pan to cool.

Bent Spoon Cranberry-Cider Sorbet

Makes about 4 cups

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1-1/4 cups fresh cranberries | 1/4 teaspoon salt |
| 3/4 cup simple* or agave syrup | 2-1/4 cups Terhune Orchards apple cider** |
| 1/4 cup local honey | |

1. In a heavy-bottomed saucepan combine cranberries, syrup, honey and salt. Cook at medium heat until cranberries have burst apart and mixture thickens; set aside to cool.
2. Mix in cold apple cider and use either an immersion blender, regular blender or food processor to blend until smooth as possible.
3. Press through a sieve, strainer or cone filter to remove skins and large seeds. Discard skins or reuse them to make another simple syrup.
4. Place strained mixture into refrigerator until completely cooled (2+ hours or overnight) and freeze in an ice cream maker according to the manufacturer's instructions or try a popsicle mold.



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* To make simple syrup, combine equal parts sugar and water in heavy-bottomed saucepan. Heat to boiling, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat; simmer until sugar is dissolved. Cool to room temperature before using; store leftovers in the refrigerator.

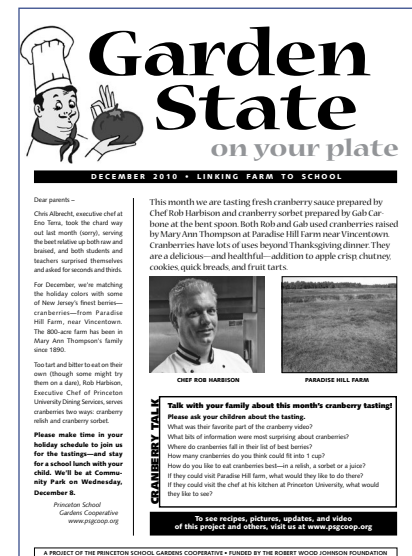
** Leftover mulled cider works well as a substitute for regular cider in this recipe.

Cranberry Facts used on our posters and handout

- Cranberries initially are white but turn red when fully ripe.
- Ninety-five percent of the nation's cranberry crop is processed into juice, sauce, and sweetened dried cranberries. The remainder is sold fresh.
- New Jersey is the nation's third-largest cranberry producer after Wisconsin and Massachusetts.
- Cranberries bushes are evergreen, and they grow best in acidic bogs.
- Cranberries are related to bilberries, blueberries, and huckleberries.
- Cranberries, along with blueberries and Concord grapes, are the three main fruits native to North America.
- Cranberry vines are perennial. Some producing cranberry bogs are well over 100 years old.
- Small air-filled chambers inside a cranberry cause the fruit to bounce, and also to float.
- The Lenni-Lenape word for cranberry (pakim) meant noisy berry.
- Native Americans used cranberries as a symbol of peace.
- Cranberries were often kept on whaling ships in the 1800s as a source of Vitamin C for Sailors to ward off scurvy.
- Cranberry comes from "craneberry," named by early European settlers who thought the flower looked like the neck, head, and bill of a crane.
- In North America, Native Americans used cranberries in a variety of foods, especially for pemmican, wound medicine and dye.
- Cranberries are a good source of vitamin C, dietary fiber and manganese, which helps our bones and connective tissue grow properly and helps our body burn fats and carbohydrates.
- Most southern New Jersey cranberry farmers are members of the Ocean Spray cooperative.
- Cranberry cultivation began in New Jersey in 1835. Cranberries are grown commercially in the Pine Barrens of New Jersey on approximately 3,911 acres, mostly around the town of Chatsworth in Burlington County. The majority of the remaining farms were located in the nearby counties of Atlantic and Ocean.
- Large quantities of water are needed in cranberry production. Surface waters, such as lakes, streams, and ponds, are used as a constant water supply for irrigation, frost protection, heat protection, and, in some states, application of fertilizers and pesticides.
- Harvesting of cranberry for red fruit in New Jersey occurs from September 15th through November 1st.



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OUR CRANBERRY HANDOUTS: (FULL SIZE VERSIONS OF SIDES 1 AND 2 OF THE ENGLISH VERSION AND THE SPANISH VERSION ARE ON THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW) HANDOUTS GO HOME IN EACH STUDENT'S BACKPACK A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE TASTING. WE ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO TALK WITH THEIR CHILDREN ABOUT THE TASTINGS.

Words that describe Cranberries

FLAVOR • COLOR • TEXTURE

- raw
- perfumy
- tangy
- scarlet
- woody
- acidic
- estery
- caramelized
- honey
- floral
- super tart
- super sour
- green
- waxy
- fermented
- chemical
- sweet
- ethereal
- bitter





Garden State

on your plate

DECEMBER 2010 • LINKING FARM TO SCHOOL

Dear parents –

Chris Albrecht, executive chef at Eno Terra, took the chard way out last month (sorry), serving the beet relative up both raw and braised, and both students and teachers surprised themselves and asked for seconds and thirds.

For December, we're matching the holiday colors with some of New Jersey's finest berries—cranberries—from Paradise Hill Farm, near Vincentown. The 800-acre farm has been in Mary Ann Thompson's family since 1890.

Too tart and bitter to eat on their own (though some might try them on a dare), Rob Harbison, Executive Chef of Princeton University Dining Services, serves cranberries two ways: cranberry relish and cranberry sorbet.

Please make time in your holiday schedule to join us for the tastings—and stay for a school lunch with your child. We'll be at Community Park on Wednesday, December 8.

Princeton School
Gardens Cooperative
www.psgcoop.org

This month we are tasting fresh cranberry sauce prepared by Chef Rob Harbison and cranberry sorbet prepared by Gab Carbone at the bent spoon. Both Rob and Gab used cranberries raised by Mary Ann Thompson at Paradise Hill Farm near Vincentown. Cranberries have lots of uses beyond Thanksgiving dinner. They are a delicious—and healthful—addition to apple crisp, chutney, cookies, quick breads, and fruit tarts.



CHEF ROB HARBISON



PARADISE HILL FARM

CRANBERRY TALK

Talk with your family about this month's cranberry tasting!

Please ask your children about the tasting.

What was their favorite part of the cranberry video?

What bits of information were most surprising about cranberries?

Where do cranberries fall in their list of best berries?

How many cranberries do you think could fit into 1 cup?

How do you like to eat cranberries best—in a relish, a sorbet or a juice?

If they could visit Paradise Hill farm, what would they like to do there?

If they could visit the chef at his kitchen at Princeton University, what would they like to see?

To see recipes, pictures, updates, and video of this project and others, visit us at www.psgcoop.org

Fresh Cranberry Sauce

- 1 pound fresh cranberries
- 1/4 pound sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1 cinnamon stick

1. Combine all ingredients and boil till berries burst.
2. Place in pans in refrigerator to cool.



NEW JERSEY
CRANBERRY
BOG

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El Estado Jardín en tu plato

DICIEMBRE 2010 • CONECTANDO LA GRANJA CON LA ESCUELA

Estimados padres,

En noviembre Chris Albrecht, chef de Eno Terra deleito a estudiantes y profesores con su deliciosa preparación de acelga suiza; cruda y estofada. Todos querían repetir y hasta pidieron una tercera porción.

Para diciembre haremos juego con los colores de las festividades de fin de año con una de las más exquisitas bayas de Nueva Jersey -los arándanos rojos- de la granja "Paradise Hill" cerca de Vincentown. Esta granja de 800 acres ha sido propiedad de la familia de Mary Ann Thompson desde 1890.

El arándano rojo muy ácido y amargo para comerse solo (aunque algunos pueden valientemente intentarlo) El chef Rob Harbison de los servicios de comedor y restaurante de la Universidad de Princeton lo servirá de dos formas: salsa de arándano y sorbete/helado de arándano.

Por favor saque tiempo de su apretada agenda de fin de año para acompañarnos en esta degustación y almuerzo en la escuela con su hijo(a). Estaremos en Community Park el 8 de diciembre.

Cooperativa de Jardines/
Huertas de las escuelas
de Princeton
www.psgcoop.org

Este mes probaremos salsa fresca de arándanos rojos preparada por el chef Rob Harbison y sorbete/helado de arándano preparado por Gab Carbone de la heladería Bent Spoon. Los dos usarán arándanos cultivados en la granja "Paradise Hill" de Mary Ann Thompson cerca de Vincentown. Los arándanos rojos tienen mucho más usos además de la cena de Acción de Gracias. Son un delicioso -y saludable- complemento para panes, pasteles de fruta, galletas, manzana crujiente, y chutney.



CHEF ROB HARBISON



PARADISE HILL FARM

CHARLA SOBRE EL ARANDANO

Hable con su familia sobre la degustación de arándano de este mes! Por favor preguntele a su(s) niños sobre la degustación

- ¿Cuál fue tu parte favorita del video sobre el arándano?
- ¿Qué fragmentos de la información sobre los arándanos fueron los más sorprendentes?
- ¿En tu lista de las mejores bayas dónde quedan los arándanos?
- ¿Cuántos arándanos crees que pueden caber en una taza?
- ¿Cómo te gusta más comer arándanos: en salsa, en sorbete/helado o en un jugo?
- ¿Si pudieran visitar la granja "Paradise Hill" qué les gustaría hacer allá?
- ¿Si pudieran visitar al chef en su cocina, en la Universidad de Princeton qué quisieran ver?

Para ver las recetas, el video, las fotos, y más información, de este proyecto y otros visite: www.psgcoop.org

Salsa Fresca de Arándanos

- 1 libra de arándanos frescos
- 1 taza de agua
- 1/4 de libra de azúcar
- 1 astilla de canela

1. Mezcle los ingredientes y hierva la mezcla hasta que los arándanos se rompan.
2. Coloque en moldes en el refrigerador para que se enfríe.



ALGUNOS DATOS SOBRE LOS ARANDANOS

- Los arándanos son inicialmente blancos, pero cuando están completamente maduros se ponen rojos.
- Noventa y cinco por ciento de la producción nacional de arándanos es procesada para hacer jugo, salsa, y arándanos dulces secos. El cinco por ciento restante se vende fresco.
- Nueva Jersey es el tercer productor de arándanos a nivel nacional después de Wisconsin y Massachusetts.
- Las matas/los arbustos de arándanos rojos son siempre verdes y crecen mejor en ciénaga ácida.
- Los arándanos rojos junto con los arándanos azules y las uvas "Concord" son las tres principales frutas nativas de América del Norte.
- Las enredaderas de arándanos son perennes. Algunas de las ciénagas de arándanos tienen más de 100 años.
- Unas pequeñas cámaras de aire dentro de los arándanos les permiten rebotar y flotar.
- La palabra de los Leni-Lenape para arándano era "pakim" que significa baya ruidosa.
- Los nativos americanos utilizaban los arándanos como símbolo de paz.
- En los años 1800 los arándanos eran con frecuencia guardados en barcos balleneros como fuente de vitamina C para prevenir el escorbuto en los marineros.
- El nombre en Inglés "cranberry" viene de "craneberry" nombre originalmente dado por los conquistadores europeos que pensaron que la flor se parecía al cuello y a la cabeza de una grúa.
- En América del norte los nativos usaban los arándanos en gran variedad de comidas, también como medicina para curar heridas, y como tinte.
- Los arándanos son excelente fuente de vitamina C, fibra y manganeso que ayuda a los huesos y tejidos a crecer adecuadamente. Ayudan también a quemar grasa y carbohidratos.
- La mayoría de los granjeros cultivadores de arándanos al sur de Nueva Jersey son miembros de la cooperativa "Ocean Spray".
- Los cultivos de arándanos en Nueva Jersey se iniciaron en 1835. Los arándanos son cultivados comercialmente en terrenos estériles de Nueva Jersey aproximadamente 3,911 acres principalmente en el área de Chatsworth en el condado de Burlington. La mayoría de las granjas restantes de arándanos se encuentran en los condados vecinos como Ocean y Atlantic.
- La producción de arándanos requiere grandes cantidades de agua. Lagunas, lagos, arroyos, riachuelos, se usan constantemente como proveedores de agua y fuentes de irrigación, protección del hielo, o el calor extremo y en algunos estados para la aplicación de fertilizantes y pesticidas.
- La cosecha/recolección de arándano rojo en Nueva Jersey sucede de septiembre 15 a noviembre primero



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Sweet Potato Tasting

Chef: Christopher Albrecht

Restaurant/Institution: Eno Terra, Kingston

Farmer: Chuck Katzenbach

Farm: Sweet Sourland Farm, Hopewell

Farmer: Kevin and Bob Flaim

Farm: Flaim Farms, Vineland

Items Tasted: sweet potato chips, sweet potato-maple focaccia, sweet potato puree topped with maple syrup

Month Held: March

Tasting Exercise: Freshly made sweet potato chips were placed in the center of each table. The children sampled the chips. At the first sweet potato tasting, the children sampled focaccia topped with sweet potatoes. That proved to be messy and difficult. At the next tasting, the children tried two samples of sweet potato puree—one made from white sweet potatoes and one from orange sweet potatoes. Both were topped with a drizzle of maple syrup. The children were asked if they tasted a difference between the two.

Chef Christopher's Sweet Potato-Maple Focaccia

Makes a flat loaf about 13 inches by 18 inches

This yeast bread is easy but requires planning ahead. First, bake the sweet potatoes (425°F on a baking pan—pierced before cooking) and fry the bacon, if using. If you're using active dry yeast for the first time, try this tip: Measure the water in advance and let it come to room temperature on the counter while the potatoes bake.

1½ cups warm water (100-110°F)

¼ cup olive oil + additional for finishing

4 cups bread flour (or multipurpose white unbleached flour)

2 teaspoons salt

2 teaspoons active dry yeast

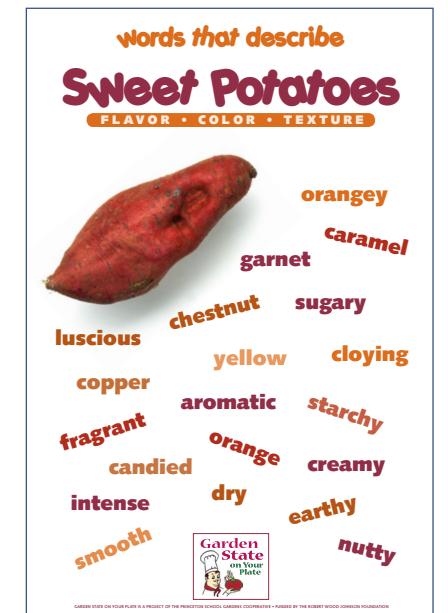
2 bulbs fennel, trimmed to white part, cut lengthwise and then ¼-inch thick

1 pound sweet potatoes, baked, peeled, and cut to ¼-inch slices)

4 ounces maple syrup

Optional garnishes: smoked bacon or jalapenos

1. In medium mixing bowl or in work bowl of food processor, combine water and ¼ cup olive oil. Add flour, salt and yeast. Using dough hook of stand mixer or food processor, mix for 8 minutes, or knead by hand for about 12 minutes.
2. Drizzle olive oil into large mixing bowl. Add dough to bowl, swirl by hand and flip upside down, so oiled surface faces up. Cover with plastic wrap and allow to rest in a sheltered, warm spot for about an hour.
3. Punch dough down and remove from bowl. Oil baking sheet, and stretch dough to roughly fit.
4. Top with fennel and potatoes. Drizzle with maple syrup, cover with plastic and allow to rise for about 45 minutes.



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Words that describe

Sweet Potatoes

FLAVOR • COLOR • TEXTURE



orangey

caramel

garnet

sugary

chestnut

cloying

luscious

yellow

copper

aromatic

starchy

fragrant

orange

candied

creamy

dry

intense

earthy

smooth

nutty



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Garden State on your plate
MARCH 2011 • LINKING FARM TO SCHOOL

Dear parents... Sweet potatoes are on the tasting menu for March. Nutritional powerhouses of the vegetable world, one sweet potato contains five times the B6 of Vitamin A, the glycemic index, a measure of the effects of carbohydrates on blood sugar levels—with lower numbers being better—it's only 14 compared to a white potato at 85. For a comparison, Blueberries rank at 62.

Roasted sweet potatoes are easy to make at home. Place oven rack at lowest position, heat the oven to 425°F. Wash sweet potatoes and cut in half lengthwise. Place potatoes, cut side down on an oiled baking sheet. Roast until potatoes can be easily pierced with a fork, about 30 minutes. Serve in the jackets, or peel and mash, adding butter, hot cream, salt and pepper to taste.

MEET OUR FARMER AND CHEF
For his insights, Chef Christopher Albrecht, executive chef of the Terra, will be serving a simple roasted sweet potato dish to local farmers.

For his insights, Chef Christopher Albrecht, executive chef of the Terra, will be serving a simple roasted sweet potato dish to local farmers.

SWEET POTATO TALK
Talk with your family about the sweet potato tasting!
How does the texture of a sweet potato compare to that of a white potato?
Can you think of other vegetables that are as sweet as a sweet potato?
What is your favorite dish containing sweet potatoes?
Name some words that describe the way a sweet potato looks, tastes and even feels in your mouth.
How sweet potatoes are sweet and maple syrup is sweet, how do you think Chef Christopher balanced these flavors?
Your comments requested: We want to know how your children like these tastings and the farmer with them. Garden State on Your Plate. Please send us a note at info@psgcoop.org or call Kaiti Cook at 609-252-1919.

See you in the cafeteria.
Princeton School
Gardens Cooperative
www.psgcoop.org

A PROJECT OF THE PRINCETON SCHOOL GARDENS COOPERATIVE • FUNDED BY THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION

OUR SWEET POTATO HANDOUTS: (FULL SIZE VERSIONS OF SIDES 1 AND 2 OF THE ENGLISH VERSION AND THE SPANISH VERSION ARE ON THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW) HANDOUTS GO HOME IN EACH STUDENT'S BACKPACK A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE TASTING. WE ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO TALK WITH THEIR CHILDREN ABOUT THE TASTINGS.

- Heat oven to 425°F. Bake focaccia for about 12 to 18 minutes, or until bread is puffed and golden and juices are bubbling.
- Let cool on the pan for about five minutes, then remove from pan to wire rack for cooling.

Sweet Potato Facts used on our posters and handout:

- Sweet potatoes, Ipomoea batatas, are the root of a vine in the morning glory family. They likely are native to South America. Their history dates back to 750 B.C. in Peruvian records.
- The sweet potato is only distantly related to the white potato.
- Sweet potatoes are not yams! The true yam is a root of the tropical vine Dioscorea batatas, grown in South America, Africa and the Caribbean. In Spanish, yams are called boniato.
- The word potato originally referred to the sweet potato, not the white potato, which arrived here from South America in the late 17th century.
- Sweet potatoes are high in potassium.
- New Jersey ranks 8th in sweet potato production. North Carolina, Louisiana and California grow the most sweet potatoes.
- Deer like sweet potatoes so much that a portion of the crop—small size, deformed potatoes or those damaged by insects—are sold as deer bait. On the farm, deer will graze on the leaves but will also feed on exposed roots or even dig roots up.
- Sweet potato fields are prepared in April and May and vine cuttings, called slips, are planted in mid- to late May to mid-June.
- Common sweet potato varieties grown in New Jersey are Beauregard, O'Henry, Hernandez, and Jersey White. Beauregard and Hernandez are orange-fleshed varieties and O'Henry and Jersey White are white-fleshed varieties. Other popular varieties are Goldrush, Georgia Red, Centennial, Puerto Rico, New Jersey, and Velvet.
- China is the largest grower of sweet potatoes, providing about 80 percent of the world's supply. More than half of the crop is fed to pigs.
- New Jersey's sweet potato harvest begins in September. Prime season is from October to January.
- The word yam comes from African words njam, nyami or djambi, meaning to eat. It was first recorded in America in 1676. To prevent confusion, the United States Department of Agriculture requires that sweet potatoes labeled as "yams" also be labeled as "sweet potatoes."
- At the market, choose sweet potatoes with tight, unblemished skins. At home, store them in a cool dark place. Eat them within two to three weeks—they don't keep as long as white potatoes.



Garden State

on your plate

MARCH 2011 • LINKING FARM TO SCHOOL

Dear parents –

After what seemed like a long, hard winter, the soil is warming and seeds will soon be sprouting. That means it's time for more tastings of the Garden State on Your Plate! We hope you will join your children during lunchtime (Littlebrook, March 2, and Community Park, March 9), when Christopher Albrecht, executive chef of Eno Terra, will be serving a simple flatbread featuring foods from two local farmers.

For his focaccia, Chef Christopher chose fingerling sweet potatoes stored since the fall harvest from Windy Knolls Farm, just 150 miles away in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania, you say? Yes—the Garden State's foodshed (think of a watershed) stretches across the Delaware into the fertile farmland beyond. It's there where he met farmer Isaac Hosteler, who, along with livestock, raises organic sweet potatoes and other root crops.

But sweet potatoes—in some cases—can take a little gilding, so Chef Christopher took a short trip to Hopewell, where he met Chuck Katzenbach, scored some maple syrup, and did a little tree tapping of his own.

See you in the cafeteria,
Princeton School
Gardens Cooperative
www.psgcoop.org

Sweet potatoes are on the tasting menu for March. Nutritional powerhouses of the vegetable world, one sweet potato contains five times the RDA of Vitamin A. On the glycemic index, a measure of the effects of carbohydrates on blood sugar levels—with lower numbers being better—it's only 54, compared to a white potato at 85. For a comparison, Rice Krispies rank at 82.

Roasted sweet potatoes are easy to make at home. Place oven rack at



FARMER CHUCK KATZENBACH
AND CHEF CHRISTOPHER ALBRECHT

lowest position; heat the oven to 425°F. Wash sweet potatoes and cut in half lengthwise. Place potatoes, cut side down, on an oiled baking sheet. Roast until potatoes can be easily pierced with a fork, about 30 minutes. Serve in the jackets, or peel and mash, adding butter, hot cream, salt and pepper to taste.

SWEET POTATO TALK

Talk with your family about the sweet potato tasting!

How does the texture of a sweet potato compare to that of a white potato?
Can you think of other vegetables that are as sweet as a sweet potato?
What is your favorite dish containing sweet potatoes?
Name some words that describe the way a sweet potato looks, tastes and even feels in your mouth.
Since sweet potatoes are sweet and maple syrup is sweet, how do you think Chef Christopher balanced those flavors?

Your comments requested: We want to know how your children like these tastings and the farmer visits from Garden State on Your Plate. Please send us a note at info@psgcoop.org or call Karla Cook at 609-252-1919.

To see recipes, pictures, updates, and video of this project and others, visit us at www.psgcoop.org

Chef Christopher's Sweet Potato-Maple Focaccia

Christopher Albrecht, Eno Terra Restaurant, Kingston, NJ

Makes a flat loaf about 13 inches by 18 inches

This yeast bread is easy but requires planning ahead. First, bake the sweet potatoes (425°F on a baking pan—pierced before cooking) and fry the bacon, if using. If you're using active dry yeast for the first time, try this tip: Measure the water in advance and let it come to room temperature on the counter while the potatoes bake.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1½ cups warm water (100-110°F) | 2 bulbs fennel, trimmed to white part, cut lengthwise and then ¼-inch thick |
| ¼ cup olive oil + additional for finishing | 1 pound sweet potatoes, baked, peeled, and cut to ¼-inch slices) |
| 4 cups bread flour (or multipurpose white unbleached flour) | 4 ounces maple syrup |
| 2 teaspoons salt | Optional garnishes: smoked bacon or jalapenos! |
| 2 teaspoons active dry yeast | |

1. In medium mixing bowl or in work bowl of food processor, combine water and ¼ cup olive oil. Add flour, salt and yeast. Using dough hook of stand mixer or food processor, mix for 8 minutes, or knead by hand for about 12 minutes.
2. Drizzle olive oil into large mixing bowl. Add dough to bowl, swirl by hand and flip upside down, so oiled surface faces up. Cover with plastic wrap and allow to rest in a sheltered, warm spot for about an hour.
3. Punch dough down and remove from bowl. Oil baking sheet, and stretch dough to roughly fit.
4. Top with fennel and sweet potatoes. Drizzle with maple syrup, cover with plastic wrap and allow to rise for about 45 minutes.
5. Heat oven to 425°F. Bake focaccia for about 12 to 18 minutes, or until bread is puffed and golden and juices are bubbling.
6. Let cool on the pan for about five minutes, then remove from pan to wire rack for cooling.

SWEET POTATOES FACTS

- Sweet potatoes, *Ipomoea batatas*, are the root of a vine in the morning glory family. They likely are native to South America. Their history dates back to 750 B.C. in Peruvian records.
- The sweet potato is only distantly related to the white potato (*Solanum tuberosum*).
- Sweet potatoes are not yams! The true yam is a root of the tropical vine *Dioscorea batatas*, grown in South America, Africa and the Caribbean. It is not related to the sweet potato. In Spanish, yams are called boniato.
- New Jersey ranks 8th in sweet potato production. North Carolina, Louisiana and California grow the most sweet potatoes.
- Deer like sweet potatoes so much that a portion of the crop—small size, deformed potatoes or those damaged by insects—are sold as deer bait. On the farm, deer will graze on the leaves but will also feed on exposed roots or even dig roots up.
- Common sweet potato varieties grown in New Jersey are Beauregard, O'Henry, Hernandez, and Jersey White. Beauregard and Hernandez are orange-fleshed varieties and O'Henry and Jersey White are white-fleshed varieties. Other popular varieties are Goldrush, Georgia Red, Centennial, Puerto Rico, New Jersey, and Velvet.
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- The word yam comes from African words njam, nyami or djambi, meaning to eat. It was first recorded in America in 1676. To prevent confusion, the United States Department of Agriculture requires that sweet potatoes labeled as "yams" also be labeled as "sweet potatoes."
- At the market, choose sweet potatoes with tight, unblemished skins. At home, store them in a cool dark place. Eat them within two to three weeks—their sugar content means they don't keep as long as white potatoes.



"Garden State on Your Plate: Linking farm to school," is a Farm to School pilot program administered by the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative and funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The pilot, a yearlong effort under way at Community Park and Littlebrook elementary schools, is designed to feed students' needs for fresh food and to begin to link for them the food they eat to the Garden State and to the larger world. Further, we hope that it will restore bonds between schools, the community and local farmers – and through a documentary being filmed of the process, offer other schools and parents support for beginning similar programs.



El Estado Jardin en tu plato

MARZO 2011 • CONECTANDO LA GRANJA CON LA ESCUELA

Estimados padres,

Después de lo que pareció ser un largo y duro invierno, la tierra se está empezando a calentar y las semillas pronto empezarán a retoñar. Eso significa que tendremos más degustaciones del Estado Jardín en tu Plato! Esperamos que pueda acompañar a su(s) hijo(s) durante el almuerzo. (Littlebrook, Marzo 2 y Community Park Marzo 9) cuando el chef Christopher Albrecht, jefe de chefs de Eno Terra estará sirviendo un pan plano usando productos de dos granjeros locales.

Para su focaccia el chef Christopher escogió batatas "fingerling" almacenadas y conservadas desde la cosecha de otoño. La Batatas son de la granja Windy Knolls a 150 millas de Doylestown, Pennsylvania. ¿Cómo Pennsylvania? Se pregunta ud. Si el galpón de alimentos del estado jardín (piénselo como una cuenca hidrográfica) se extiende a través del Delaware y más allá de sus tierras de labranza. Allí es donde El chef conoció al granjero Isaac Hosteler quién además de ganado, cultiva batatas orgánicas y otros tubérculos.

Pero las batatas – en algunos casos – pueden tomar una coloración dorada de modo que el chef Christopher hizo un corto viaje a Hopewell en donde conoció a Chuck Katzenbach, y consiguió sirope de maple(arce) para acompañarlas.

Nos vemos en la cafetería,
Cooperativa de Jardines/Huertas
de las escuelas de Princeton
www.psgcoop.org

Las batatas/los camotes son el menu para degustar en marzo. Uno de los vegetales con más alto poder nutricional. Una sola batata contiene 5 veces el RDA (la cantidad diaria recomendada) de vitamina A. En el índice glicémico, una medida de los efectos de los carbohidratos en los niveles de azúcar en la sangre – con los números más bajos siendo lo mejor- es solamente 54 comparado con una papa común que es 85. Para tener una referencia comparativa los "rice krispies" se ubican en el número 82.

Las batatas asadas son fáciles de hacer en casa. Coloque la parrilla del interior del horno en la posición más baja, precaliente el horno a 425 grados F. Lave las batatas y cortelas en mitades a lo largo. Coloquelas hacia abajo (el corte hacia abajo) en una bandeja de horno untada de aceite. Dejelas asar por aproximadamente 30 minutos. Sirvalas así o pelepas y hagalas pure agregando mantequilla, crema caliente y sal y pimienta al gusto.



FARMER CHUCK KATZENBACH
AND CHEF CHRISTOPHER ALBRECHT

CHARLA SOBRE
LA BATATA/EL CAMOTE

Hable con su familia sobre la degustación de batatas/camotes de este mes!

Por favor preguntele a su(s) niños sobre la degustación

¿Cómo es la textura de una batata en comparación con la de una papa común?

¿Puedes pensar en otros vegetales que tengan un gusto dulce como la batata/camote?

¿Cuál es tu plato favorito con batatas?

Nombra algunas palabras que describan una batata, su apariencia, gusto/sabor y como se siente en la boca.

Sabiendo que la batata es dulce y el sirope de maple(arce) también ¿Qué crees que el chef Christopher hizo para balancear estos sabores?

Queremos sus comentarios: Queremos saber qué piensan los niños de estas degustaciones y de las visitas de los granjeros del Estado Jardín en su Plato. Por favor envíenos una nota a info@psgcoop.org or llámé a Karla Cook al 609-252-1919.

Focaccia de Batata y Arce (maple) del chef Christopher

Christopher Albrecht, Restaurante Eno Terra, Kingston, NJ

Prepare un molde de pan plano de 13 por 18 pulgadas

Esta levadura de pan es fácil pero requiere planeación previa. Primero, hornee las batatas (425°F en un molde de horneado-perforado antes de cocinar) y frite la tocineta, si le quiere poner. Si esta utilizando levadura activa seca por primera vez pruebe este tip: Mida el agua anticipadamente y dejela a temperatura ambiente en el meson mientras las papas se hornean)

1½ tazas de agua caliente (100-110°F)

¼ taza de aceite de oliva + un poco más al final

4 tazas de harina para pan (o harina blanca multipropósito)

2 cucharaditas de sal

2 cucharaditas de levadura seca activa

2 bulbos de hinojo cortaditos a la parte blanca, a lo largo y luego ¼ de pulgada de ancho

1 libra de batatas horneadas, peladas y cortadas en pedacitos de más o menos un ¼ de pulgada

4 onzas de sirope de arce (maple)

Opcional: tocineta o jalapeños

1. En un tazón mediano, o en el tazón del procesador de alimentos mezcle el agua y el aceite de oliva. Agregue la harina, la sal y la levadura. Usando el gancho de masa de la batidora o el procesador de alimentos mezcle/amase por 8 minutos o hagalo manualmente por 12 minutos.
2. Rocíe aceite de oliva en una taza grande de mezclar. Agregue la masa a la taza, dele la vuelta con la mano de modo que la superficie untada de aceite quede hacia arriba. Cubra con un plástico y deje reposar en un lugar cubierto y fresco por una hora.
3. Golpee la masa hacia abajo y saquela de la taza. Engrase una bandeja de hornear y extienda la masa sobre ella.
4. Coloque encima el hinojo, las batatas, rocíe el sirope y cubra de nuevo con un plástico. Dejelo por 45 minutos para que levante.
5. Caliente el horno a 425°F. Hornee la focaccia de 12 a 18 minutos, o hasta que el pan "se infle" y empiecen a salir jugos dorados.
6. Dejelo enfriar en el molde por 5 minutos aproximadamente. Después retírelo del molde y dejelo enfriar encima de una base de alambre.

DATOS DE LAS BATATAS/LOS CAMOTES

- Las batatas, Ipomoea batatas son la raíz de una enredadera en la familia de la mañana de gloria. Generalmente son originarias de Sur América. Su historia data desde el 750 AC en los registros de Perú.
- La batata es sólo un pariente lejano de la papa común. (solanum tuberosum)
- Las batatas no son ñames/boniatos. El ñame real es una raíz de la enredadera tropical Dioscorea batatas que crece en Sur América, Africa y en el Caribe. No está relacionada con la batata.
- Nueva Jersey se ubica 8vo en la producción de batatas. Carolina del Norte, Louisiana y California son los estados donde se cultivan más batatas.
- A los venados les encantan las batatas, tanto que una pequeña porción de los cultivos (la que está dañada) se vende como cebo/anuelo.
- Las variedades más comunes de batatas que se cultivan en Nueva Jersey son Beauregard, O'Henry, Hernandez, y Jersey blanca. Beauregard y Hernandez son variedades de coloración naranja y O'Henry y Jersey Blanca son de coloración blanca. Otras variedades populares son Goldrush, Georgia Red, Centennial, Puerto Rico, New Jersey y Velvet.
- China es el productor más grande de batatas con casi el 80% de la producción mundial. Más de la mitad de los cultivos se usa para alimentar a los cerdos.
- La palabra "yam" viene de las palabras africanas njam, nyami, o djambi que significan comer. La primera vez que esto se documentó fue en 1676. Para prevenir una confusión El Departamento de Agricultura de Los Estados Unidos exige que las batatas etiquetadas como "yams" (ñames/boniatos) sean también etiquetadas como batatas.
- En el mercado escoja las batatas con piel dura y sin manchas. En la casa guardélas en un lugar oscuro. Consumalas en dos o tres semanas luego de su compra. Su contenido de azúcar indica que no duran lo mismo que las papas comunes.



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OUR CHEF AND FARMER PHOTOS: HERE IS OUR PORTRAIT SHOT OF CHEFS DAVIDE ERCOLANO AND GARY GIBERSON AND FARMER SUSAN BLEW. WHENEVER POSSIBLE, WE GET HIGH-RESOLUTION PORTRAIT SHOTS OF OUR FARMER AND CHEF. IN THIS CASE, THE FARMER PHOTO IS AN IMAGE FROM THE VIDEO—RESULTING IN A LOW RESOLUTION PHOTO THAT WAS DIFFICULT TO USE. WE USE THESE PHOTOS FOR POSTERS, HANDOUTS, AND PUBLICITY.



OUR CORN CUT OUT POSTERS: TEN CUT OUT POSTERS—EACH WITH A DIFFERENT CORN FACT—ARE PUT UP IN THE SCHOOL HALLWAYS A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE TASTING AND ARE LEFT THERE FOR THE WEEK AFTER THE TASTING. THIS HELPS TO BUILD ANTICIPATION AND TO REINFORCE THE TASTING. WE NUMBER THE POSTERS SO THAT THE CHILDREN ARE AWARE THAT EACH POSTER HAS A DIFFERENT FACT. THE POSTERS ARE CUT OUT OF COLORED POSTER BOARD.

Corn Tasting

Chef: Gary Giberson

Restaurant/Institution: Sustainable Fare and The Lawrenceville School

Chef: Davide Ercolano

Restaurant/Institution: The Lawrenceville School

Farmer: Susan and Ted Blew

Farm: Oak Grove Plantation, Pittstown

Items Tasted: creamy (savory) polenta and sweet polenta

Month Held: April

Tasting Exercises: Each student tried two samples of polenta—a savory version flavored with Parmesan cheese and a sweet version topped with raspberry sauce.

Chef Gary's Creamy Polenta

Makes 12 four-ounce portions

- 4 cups water
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup cornmeal (yellow or white)
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 ½ teaspoons kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese

1. Bring water to boil in a heavy bottom 4-quart saucepan. Add salt and cream. Whisking constantly, add the cornmeal in a slow steady stream until all is incorporated. Add butter, and stir with a wooden kitchen spoon until well incorporated. Lower heat and continue cooking, stirring with spoon until consistency is dense but still pourable (around 10 minutes).
2. Remove heat and stir in Parmesan cheese. Serve by placing in a large bowl and garnish by drizzling with basil pesto or other savory sauces.

Chef Gary's Sweet Creamy Polenta

Makes 12 four-ounce portions

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 4 cups water | 2 tablespoons unsalted butter |
| 1 cup heavy cream | ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon |
| 1 cup cornmeal (yellow or white) | ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg |
| 4 tablespoons granulated sugar | |



OUR CORN DESCRIPTOR POSTER. WE DISTRIBUTE DESCRIPTOR POSTERS TO EACH CLASSROOM WHERE THEY ARE USED BY TEACHERS TO TEACH VOCABULARY, OBSERVATION SKILLS, AND DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS. THE DESCRIPTOR POSTERS ARE 11 INCHES BY 17 INCHES. WE HAVE INCLUDED AN 8-1/2 BY 11-INCH VERSION IN THIS SECTION FOR EASY PRINTING. CLICK ON THE GRAPHIC ABOVE TO DOWNLOAD THE FULL-SIZE VERSION FOR PRINTING AT YOUR LOCAL COPY SHOP.

Words that describe

Corn & Polenta

FLAVOR • COLOR • TEXTURE



OUR CORN VIDEO: IN ADVANCE OF THE TASTING, A VIDEO FEATURING FARMER SUSAN BLEW AND CHEFS GARY GIBERSON AND DAVIDE ERCOLANO WAS SHOWN TO THE STUDENTS. WE USE VIDEOS TO GENERATE EXCITEMENT AND TO GIVE THE CHILDREN A FIRST-HAND VIEW OF THE FARM AND THE CHEF AT WORK. OUR CORN VIDEO IS POSTED ON YOUTUBE. CLICK THE LOGO ABOVE TO VIEW THE VIDEO OR SEARCH PSGCOOP ON YOUTUBE.



OUR CORN HANDOUTS: (FULL SIZE VERSIONS OF SIDES 1 AND 2 OF THE ENGLISH VERSION AND THE SPANISH VERSION ARE ON THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW) HANDOUTS GO HOME IN EACH STUDENT'S BACKPACK A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE TASTING. WE ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO TALK WITH THEIR CHILDREN ABOUT THE TASTINGS.

1. Bring water to a boil in a heavy bottom 4-quart saucepan. Add sugar and cream. Whisking constantly, add cornmeal in a slow steady stream until all is incorporated. Add butter, cinnamon and nutmeg and stir with a wooden kitchen spoon until well incorporated. Lower heat and continue cooking, stirring with spoon until consistency is dense but still pourable (around 10 minutes).
2. Serve by placing in a large bowl and garnish by drizzling with raspberry sauce or other fruit sauce.

Corn Facts used on our posters and handout:

- Polenta comes from corn varieties that are high in starch, sometimes called flint corn.
- Heirloom corn varieties that make good polenta include Bloody Butcher, Blue Hopi, Hickory King (white or yellow).
- New Jersey ranks 33rd among the 41 states reporting field corn harvests.
- Polenta is the Italian name for cornmeal and corn mush. Polenta can range from coarse to fine.
- In Italy, some cooks make polenta in a traditional copper pan called a paiolo—and stir it for half an hour to an hour.
- The easiest way to make polenta is to pour boiling water over the cornmeal, stir well and steam it in a double boiler.
- Polenta can also be cooked and cooled, then cut into wedges and fried.
- Masa harina is a kind of cornmeal or polenta that is been cooked during the processing and is used for making tortillas and for thickening stews in Latin American cuisine.
- In Puerto Rico, cornmeal is boiled in coconut milk to make Funche con Leche de Coco—Coconut Polenta.
- In France, polenta is sometimes treated as if it were rice and sauteed with onion and butter.
- In Zambia, nshima, cooked cornmeal, is a very thick version of polenta and is usually served with meat or nuts and a vegetable. Ugali, similar to polenta, is common in West Africa. It is rolled into a ball and dipped into gravies or stews.
- New Jersey corn is planted in northern New Jersey from April 25 to June 1 and in southern New Jersey from April 15 to June 15
- Grain harvest occurs begins on average in mid-late October.



Garden State

on your plate

APRIL 2011 • LINKING FARM TO SCHOOL

Dear parents –

We are learning as we go! We had big plans to serve kale for April's Garden State on Your Plate tasting, but the crop wasn't ready. As we were reminded, cool, wet weather doesn't encourage the growth of greens.

Our intrepid chef, Gary Giberson, of Sustainable Fare, thought fast and realized he could take a beloved crop of New Jersey – corn – and show us another side of it. This month, we're sampling two versions of creamy polenta from Oak Grove Plantation in Pittstown, about 45 minutes from Princeton.

Please do make time in your schedule to join your child at lunchtime for the sampling. Chef Gary will visit Community Park Elementary on Wednesday, April 6 and Littlebrook Elementary on Wednesday, April 13.

Hope to see you there!

Princeton School
Gardens Cooperative
www.psgcoop.org

To see recipes, photos, updates, and video of this project and others, visit us at www.psgcoop.org

This month we are tasting creamy polenta prepared by Chef Gary Giberson. Chef Gary used corn grown, dried and ground by Ted and Susan Blew at Oak Grove Plantation in Pittstown.

Drying corn to be ground when needed is a good way to preserve a summer crop for year-round use. Oak Grove also grinds wheat to make flour. They are the only farm-based commercial grain mill operating in New Jersey.



CHEF GARY GIBERSON



FARMER SUSAN BLEW

CORN TALK

Parlez-vous polenta?

Please ask your children about the polenta tasting. If they could have polenta for lunches at school, would they like to have a savory version, with pesto or meat sauce, or a sweet version, topped with jam? Or, maybe, both? What did they learn about polenta? Could they taste corn? How did eating polenta compare with eating corn on the cob? What differences in taste and texture did they notice? What's their favorite way to eat corn? Have they had polenta in other ways – maybe tortillas, or as an ingredient in hush puppies (a fried cornbread)?

Please share your thoughts about this program. We want to know how your children like these tastings and the farmer visits from Garden State on Your Plate. Please write us at info@psgcoop.org.

Chef Gary's Creamy Polenta

Gary Giberson, Sustainable Fare

Makes 12 four-ounce portions

- 4 cups water
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup cornmeal (yellow or white)
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 ½ teaspoons kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Bring water to boil in a heavy bottom 4-quart saucepan. Add salt and cream. Whisking constantly, add the cornmeal in a slow steady stream until all is incorporated. Add butter, and stir with a wooden kitchen spoon until well incorporated. Lower heat and continue cooking, stirring with spoon until consistency is dense but still pourable (around 10 minutes).

Remove heat and stir in parmesan cheese. Serve by placing in a large bowl and garnish by drizzling with basil pesto or other savory sauces.

Chef Gary's Sweet Creamy Polenta

Gary Giberson, Sustainable Fare

Makes 12 four-ounce portions

- 4 cups water
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup cornmeal (yellow or white)
- 4 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg

Bring water to a boil in a heavy bottom 4-quart saucepan. Add sugar and cream. Whisking constantly, add cornmeal in a slow steady stream until all is incorporated. Add butter, cinnamon and nutmeg and stir with a wooden kitchen spoon until well incorporated. Lower heat and continue cooking, stirring with spoon until consistency is dense but still pourable (around 10 minutes).

Serve by placing in a large bowl and garnish by drizzling with raspberry sauce or other fruit sauce.

CORN AND POLENTA FACTS

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- New Jersey corn is planted in northern New Jersey from April 25 - June 1 and in southern New Jersey from April 15- June 15
- Grain harvest occurs begins on average in mid-late October.



"Garden State on Your Plate: Linking farm to school," is a Farm to School pilot program administered by the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative and funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The pilot, a yearlong effort under way at Community Park and Littlebrook elementary schools, is designed to feed students' needs for fresh food and to begin to link for them the food they eat to the Garden State and to the larger world. Further, we hope that it will restore bonds between schools, the community and local farmers – and through a documentary being filmed of the process, offer other schools and parents support for beginning similar programs.



El Estado Jardin en tu plato

ABRIL 2011: CONECTANDO LA GRANJA CON LA ESCUELA

Estimados padres,

Vamos aprendiendo sobre la marcha. Teníamos grandes planes de servir este mes col rizada, pero la cosecha no estuvo lista. ¡Es claro que el clima frío y húmedo no promueve el crecimiento de legumbres verdes!

Nuestro intrepido chef, Gary Giberson, de "Tarifa Sostenible" (Sustainable Fare) pensó rápidamente y cayó en cuenta que podía traernos uno de los más queridos cultivos de Nueva Jersey, el maíz, y nos muestra otra faceta de este vegetal. Este mes estamos probando dos versiones de una polenta cremosa de los cultivos de la finca Oak Grove en Pittstown a 45 minutos de Princeton.

Por favor saque tiempo en su agenda para acompañar a su hijo(a) durante el almuerzo el día de la degustación. El chef Gary estará visitando la escuela Community Park el miércoles 6 de abril y la escuela Littlebrook el miércoles 13 de abril.

¡Esperamos verlos allí!

Cooperativa de Jardines
Huertas de las escuelas
de Princeton
www.psgcoop.org

Este mes estamos probando polenta cremosa preparada por el chef Gary Giberson. El chef Gary utilizó maíz maduro, seco y molido por Ted y Susan Blew en la finca Oak Grove en Pittstown.



CHEFS GARY GIBERSON AND
DAVID ERCOLANO



FARMER SUSAN BLEW

CHARLA SOBRE
EL MAIZ

Parlez-vous polenta?

Por favor preguntele a sus hijos sobre la degustación de polenta. Si ellos pudieran tener polenta para el almuerzo en la escuela, ¿les gustaría tener una versión salada, con pesto, salsa de carne, o una versión dulce con jamón por encima? ¿O quizá las dos?

¿Qué aprendieron sobre la polenta? ¿pudieron sentir el gusto a maíz? ¿cuál es la diferencia entre comer polenta y mazorca? ¿qué diferencias hay en sabor y textura? ¿cuál es su forma favorita de comer maíz? ¿han probado polenta en otras formas – como tortillas, o como ingrediente de tortas de maíz fritas?

Para ver recetas, fotos, novedades y el video de este proyecto
y otros visite www.psgcoop.org

Polenta Cremosa del Chef Gary

Gary Giberson, Sustainable fare

Hace 12 porciones de cuatro onzas

4 tazas de agua
1 taza de crema de leche
1 taza de harina de maíz (amarilla o blanca)
2 cucharadas de mantequilla sin sal
1 1/2 cucharadita de sal kosher
1/4 de cucharadita de pimienta negra molida
1 taza de queso parmesano rallado

Ponga a hervir el agua en una cacerola de 4 cuartos. Agregue sal y crema. Batiendo constantemente, vierta la harina despacio. Agregue la mantequilla y revuelva con una cuchara de palo hasta que quede una mezcla uniforme. Reduzca el fuego y continúe cocinando y revolviendo con la cuchara hasta que se vea una consistencia densa, pero vertible (más o menos 10 minutos)

Quite la mezcla del fuego, revuelva con el queso parmesano. Sirva colocando la mezcla en un tazón grande y decore con albahaca, pesto u otras salsas saladas.

Polenta Cremosa Dulce del Chef Gary

Gary Giberson, Sustainable fare

Hace 12 porciones de cuatro onzas

4 tazas de agua
1 taza de crema de leche
1 taza de harina de maíz (amarilla o blanca)
4 cucharadas de azúcar granulada
2 cucharadas de mantequilla sin sal
1/4 cucharadita de canela molida
1/4 de cucharadita de nuez moscada

Ponga a hervir el agua en una cacerola de 4 cuartos. Agregue el azúcar y la crema. Batiendo constantemente, vierta la harina despacio. Agregue la mantequilla, la canela y la nuez moscada y revuelva con una cuchara de palo hasta que quede una mezcla uniforme. Reduzca el fuego y continúe cocinando y revolviendo con la cuchara hasta que se vea una consistencia densa, pero vertible (más o menos 10 minutos)

Sirva colocando la mezcla en un tazón grande y decore con salsa de frambuesa o cualquier otra salsa de fruta.

DATOS SOBRE EL MAIZ Y LA POLENTA

- La polenta viene de variedades de maíz que son altas en almidón a veces denominadas maíz piedra.
- Las variedades de maíz que hacen una buena polenta incluyen Bloody Butcher, Blue Hopi, Hickory King (blanco o amarillo)
- Nueva Jersey esta en la posición 33 entre los 41 estados que reportan cultivos de maíz.
- Polenta es el nombre italiano para la harina de maíz cocida en leche o la papilla. La polenta puede ser gruesa o refinada.
- En Italia algunos cocineros hacen polenta en una cacerola de cobre tradicional que se llama paiolo. Y la revuelven entre media y una hora.
- La forma más fácil de hacer polenta es vertir agua hirviendo en la harina, revolver bien y cocer al baño María.
- La polenta también puede cocinarse, dejarse enfriar y después cortarse en tajadas para ser freidas.
- Masa harina es un tipo de harina de maíz o polenta que es procesada y se usa para hacer tortillas y estofados en la cocina Latinoamericana.
- En Puerto Rico la harina de maíz es hervida en leche de coco para preparar Funche con leche de coco-polenta de coco.
- En Francia la polenta es tratada a veces como si fuera arroz y se saltea con cebolla y mantequilla.
- En Zambia, la nshima, harina de maíz cocida, es una versión muy gruesa de la polenta y usualmente se sirve con carne o nueces y un vegetal. El Ugali, similar a la polenta, es común en Africa Occidental. Se envuelve como una bolita se unta en salsas, guisos, o estofados.
- El maíz en Nueva Jersey se cultiva en la parte norte de abril 25 a junio 1 y en el sur de Nueva Jersey de abril 15 a junio 15.
- La cosecha de granos comienza a aparecer en promedio a mediados de octubre.



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OUR CHEF AND FARMER PHOTOS: HERE ARE OUR PORTRAIT SHOTS OF CHEF RICK PIANCONE AND FARMER BRUCE COBB. WHENEVER POSSIBLE, WE GET HIGH-RESOLUTION PORTRAIT SHOTS OF OUR FARMER AND CHEF. WE USE THESE PHOTOS FOR POSTERS, HANDOUTS, AND PUBLICITY.



OUR PEA SHOOTS CUT OUT POSTERS: TEN CUT OUT POSTERS—EACH WITH A DIFFERENT PEA FACT—ARE PUT UP IN THE SCHOOL HALLWAYS A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE TASTING AND ARE LEFT THERE FOR THE WEEK AFTER THE TASTING. THIS HELPS TO BUILD ANTICIPATION AND TO REINFORCE THE TASTING. WE NUMBER THE POSTERS SO THAT THE CHILDREN ARE AWARE THAT EACH POSTER HAS A DIFFERENT FACT. THE POSTERS ARE CUT OUT OF COLORED POSTER BOARD.

Pea Shoots Tasting

Chef: Rob Harbison

Restaurant/Institution: Princeton University Dining Services, Princeton

Chef: Rick Piancone

Restaurant/Institution: Princeton University Dining Services, Princeton

Farmer: Bruce Cobb

Farm: Arc Greenhouses, Shiloh

Farmer: Tannwen Mount

Farm: Terhune Orchards

Items Tasted: Raw pea tendrils and pea tendril salad

Month Held: May

Tasting Exercises: A bowl of raw pea tendrils was placed in the middle of each table. The children sampled the raw tendrils and then a sample of a salad made with pea tendrils and slivers of apples from Terhune Orchards.

Chef Rob's Carrot-Apple Salad with Pea Tendrils

8 ounces pea tendrils

2 medium carrots, cut into matchsticks

1 apple, peeled, cored and cut into matchsticks

1/2 cup honey

1/4 cup apple cider vinegar

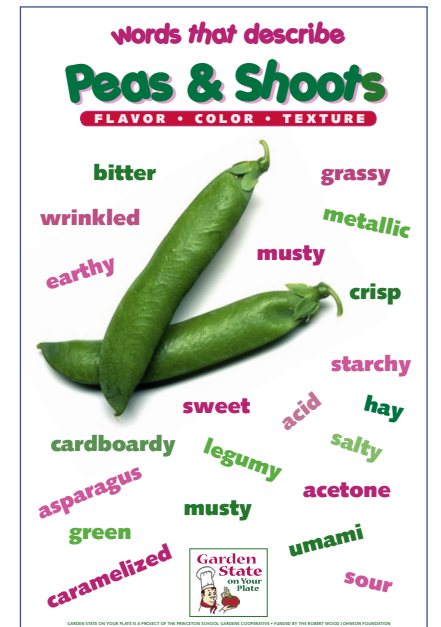
Juice of 1 lemon (about 3 tablespoons)

1 shallot, minced

3/4 cup olive oil

Coarse sea salt and freshly ground pepper

1. Combine pea tendrils, carrots, and apple in a large bowl.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together honey, vinegar, lemon juice, and shallot. Slowly whisk in olive oil to form an emulsion. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Toss with salad and serve.



OUR PEA DESCRIPTOR POSTER. WE DISTRIBUTE DESCRIPTOR POSTERS TO EACH CLASSROOM WHERE THEY ARE USED BY TEACHERS TO TEACH VOCABULARY, OBSERVATION SKILLS, AND DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS. THE DESCRIPTOR POSTERS ARE 11 INCHES BY 17 INCHES. WE HAVE INCLUDED AN 8-1/2 BY 11-INCH VERSION IN THIS SECTION FOR EASY PRINTING. CLICK ON THE GRAPHIC ABOVE TO DOWNLOAD THE FULL-SIZE VERSION FOR PRINTING AT YOUR LOCAL COPY SHOP.

Words that describe

Peas & Shoots

FLAVOR • COLOR • TEXTURE

bitter

grassy

wrinkled

metallic

earthy

musty

crisp

starchy

sweet

acid

hay

salty

cardboardy

legummy

acetone

asparagus

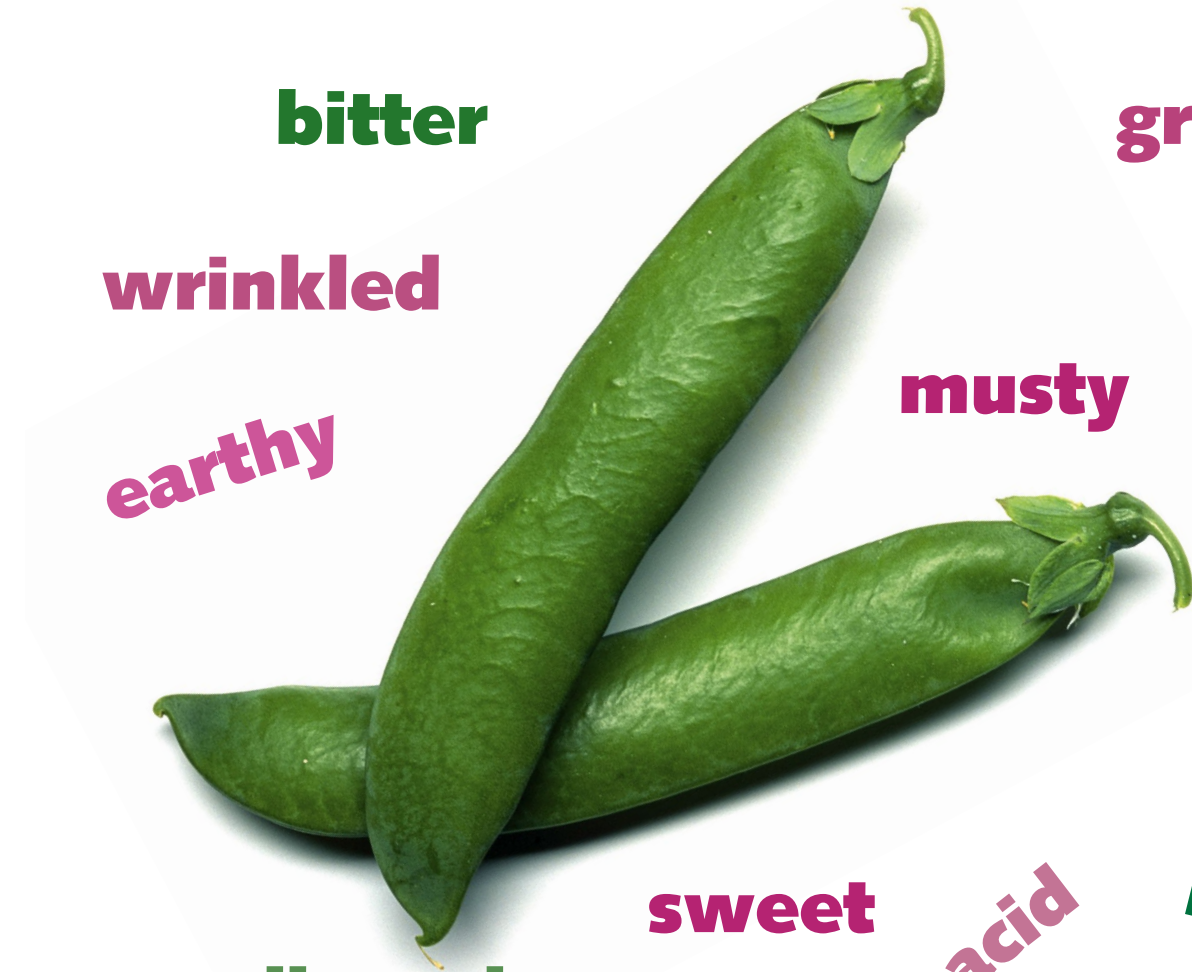
musty

umami

green

caramelized

sour



OUR PEA VIDEO: IN ADVANCE OF THE TASTING, A VIDEO FEATURING FARMER BRUCE COBB AND CHEF ROB HARBISON WAS SHOWN TO THE STUDENTS. WE USE VIDEOS TO GENERATE EXCITEMENT AND TO GIVE THE CHILDREN A FIRST-HAND VIEW OF THE FARM AND THE CHEF AT WORK. OUR PEA SHOOTS VIDEO IS POSTED ON YOUTUBE. CLICK THE LOGO ABOVE TO VIEW THE VIDEO OR SEARCH PSGCOOP ON YOUTUBE.



OUR PEA SHOOTS HANDOUTS: (FULL SIZE VERSIONS OF SIDES 1 AND 2 OF THE ENGLISH VERSION AND THE SPANISH VERSION ARE ON THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW) HANDOUTS GO HOME IN EACH STUDENT'S BACKPACK A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE TASTING. WE ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO TALK WITH THEIR CHILDREN ABOUT THE TASTINGS.

Pea Facts used on our posters and handout:

- Pea shoots include the top pair of small leaves (the tip), delicate tendrils attached to the young stem, and maybe a few larger leaves or even blossoms.
- Begin harvesting when pea plants are 6 to 8 inches tall. Cutting off the growing tip will encourage the plants to branch out and continue growing. Harvest the top 2 to 6 inches of the pea plants, flowers and buds every 3 to 4 weeks.
- Shoots are typically harvested from snow pea vines, although they can be from any type of garden pea.
- Pea shoots are sold in Asian markets or grocery stores as dou miao.
- Pea shoots were traditionally used in the cuisine of the Hmong people of southern Asia, and grew popular in Asia and parts of Africa.
- Pea tendrils are high in Vitamin C, Vitamin K and antioxidants, which keep our cells strong and healthy.
- Use pea shoots within one to two days of harvesting.
- Store them, wrapped in paper towels in the vegetable bin of the refrigerator.
- Pea shoots can be eaten raw or lightly cooked.
- To cook, place freshly washed pea shoots in an empty saucepan over medium heat or in a small bowl in the microwave. Heat just until wilted.
- For a twist on spring greens, stir-fry pea shoots with sauteed garlic. At the end of cooking time add a squeeze of fresh lemon.



Garden State

on your plate

MAY 2011 • LINKING FARM TO SCHOOL

Dear parents –

After many false starts, spring has finally arrived, and with it, the promise of a bountiful harvest in the Garden State. Chefs Rob Harbison and Stu Orefice of Princeton University are serving up the epitome of the season – curling, twining pea tendrils – in a carrot salad dressed with Terhune Orchards apple cider vinaigrette.

Please do make time in your schedule to join your child at lunchtime for the sampling. Chef Rob and Chef Stu will visit Community Park Elementary on Wednesday, May 4, and Littlebrook Elementary on Wednesday, May 11.

See you in the cafeteria,
Princeton School
Gardens Cooperative
www.psgcoop.org

Join Our Google Group
<http://groups.google.com/group/princeton-school-gardens-cooperative-a-growing-movement>

This month we are tasting pea tendril and carrot salad dressed in an apple cider vinaigrette. The pea tendrils, also known as pea shoots, are from Bruce Cobb, his dad, Richard Cobb and his mom Ann Cobb, who together own and operate Arc Greenhouses and its three acres of greenhouses in Shiloh, NJ. The apple cider in the vinaigrette is from Terhune Orchards in Princeton and Fruitwood Orchards in Hardingville.



CHEF ROB HARBISON



FARMER BRUCE COBB

PEA TENDRIL TALK

Talk with your family about the pea tendril tasting!

Please ask your children about the pea shoots tasting. If they could have pea tendrils for lunches at school, would they prefer them in salads or stir-fried as a vegetable with garlic, as they often are served in Asian restaurants? Or maybe both? What did they learn about pea tendrils? Are there peas growing in the school gardens? Do you have peas growing in your own gardens at home? Could they taste the subtle pea flavor in the leaves and greens?

Your comments requested: We want to know how your children like these tastings and the farmer visits from Garden State on Your Plate. Please send us a note at info@psgcoop.org or call Karla Cook at 609-252-1919.

To see recipes, pictures, updates, and video of this project and others, visit us at www.psgcoop.org

Chef Rob's Carrot-Apple Salad with Pea Tendrils

Rob Harbison, Princeton University Dining Services

- 8 ounces pea tendrils
- 2 medium carrots, cut into matchsticks
- 1 apple, peeled, cored and cut into matchsticks
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- Juice of 1 lemon (about 3 tablespoons)
- 1 shallot, minced
- 3/4 cup olive oil
- Coarse sea salt and freshly ground pepper

1. Combine pea tendrils, carrots, and apple in a large bowl.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together honey, vinegar, lemon juice, and shallot. Slowly whisk in olive oil to form an emulsion. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Toss with salad and serve.



PEA TENDRIL FACTS

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- Pea shoots can be eaten raw or lightly cooked.
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- For a twist on spring greens, stir-fry pea shoots with sauteed garlic. At the end of cooking time add a squeeze of fresh lemon.



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El Estado Jardin en tu plato

MAYO 2011 • CONECTANDO LA GRANJA CON LA ESCUELA

Estimados padres,

Después de muchos falsos intentos la primavera finalmente ha llegado y con ella la promesa de una cosecha abundante en el estado jardín. Los chefs Rob Harbison y Stu Orefice de la Universidad de Princeton estarán sirviendo el arquetipo de la estación -zarcillos de arvejas/ guisantes- en un ensalada de zanahoria aderezada con vinagreta de cidra de manzana de Terhune Orchards.

El chef Rob y el Chef Stu estarán en Community Park el miércoles 4 de mayo y en Littlebrook el miércoles 11 de mayo. Por favor saque tiempo en su agenda diaria para compartir con su hijo esta degustación durante el tiempo del almuerzo.

Nos vemos en la cafetería,
*Cooperativa de Jardines/
Huertas de las escuela
de Princeton*

**Unáse a nuestro grupo
de Google**

[http://groups.google.com/
group/princeton-school-
gardens-cooperative-a-
growing-movement](http://groups.google.com/group/princeton-school-gardens-cooperative-a-growing-movement)

**CHARLA SOBRE
LAS ARVEJAS**

Este mes estamos probando ensalada de guisantes(arvejas) y zanahoria aderezada con una vinagreta de cidra de manzana. Los guisantes vienen de Bruce Cobb, su padre Richard Cobb y su madre Ann Cobb quienes son dueños y manejan el invernadero Arc. Tres acres de invernadero localizados en Shiloh NJ. La cidra de manzana para la vinagreta es de "Terhune Orchards" en Princeton y Fruitwoods Orchards en Hardingville.



CHEF ROB HARBISON



FARMER BRUCE COBB

Converse con su familia sobre la degustación de "zarcillos de arvejas/guisantes"

Por favor preguntele a sus hijos sobre la degustación de arvejas. Si ellos pudieran tener arvejas para el almuerzo en la escuela, ¿les gustaría tenerlas en ensaladas o levemente fritas con ajo, como se sirven normalmente en los restaurantes asiáticos? ¿O de las dos formas? ¿En sus huertas caseras han sembrado uds. arvejas? ¿tenemos sembradas arvejas en el jardín de la escuela? ¿Pudieron percibir el sutil sabor de las arvejas en las hojas también?

Queremos sus comentarios: Queremos saber si a sus hijos les han gustado las degustaciones y las visitas de los granjeros del Estado Jardín en tu Plato. Por favor envíenos una nota a info@psgcoop.org o llame a Karla Cook al 609-252-1919.

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Ensalada de Zanahoria-Manzana con zarcillos de Guisantes/Arvejas del Chef Rob

Rob Harbison, Servicios de comedor de la Universidad de Princeton

- 8 onzas de zarcillos de arvejas
- 2 zanahorias medianas cortadas en palillos
- 1 manzana, pelada, y cortada en palillos
- 1/2 taza de miel
- 1/4 taza de vinagre de cidra de manzana
- Jugo de un limon (más o menos 3 cucharadas)
- 1 cebolla chalote picada
- 3/4 taza da aceite de oliva
- Sal de mar gruesa y pimienta recién molida



1. Mezcle las arvejas, las zanahorias y la manzana en un tazón grande
2. En un tazón pequeño bata la miel, el vinagre, el jugo de limon y el chalote. Vaya batiendo la mezcla despacio en aceite de oliva hasta formar una emulsion. Aliñe con sal y pimienta.
3. Echélo a la ensalada y sirva

DATOS SOBRE LOS ZARCILLOS DE GUI SANTES/ARVEJAS

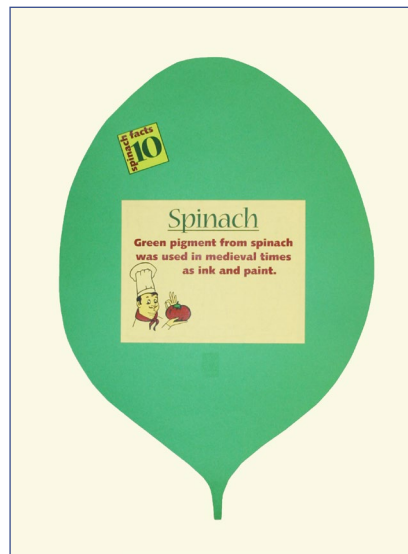
- Las arvejas incluyen muchas veces las hojas que estan en la parte de arriba, los delicados zarcillos que estan unidos al tallo y muchas veces hojas más grandes e incluso flores.
- La recolección comienza cuando las plantas tienen entre 6 y 8 pulgadas de alto. Si se quita la parte superior hará que las plantas sigan creciendo.
- Las arvejas sin desgranar se venden en los mercados asiáticos como dou miao.
- Las arvejas sin desgranar fueron usadas tradicionalmente en la cocina de los Hmong (comunidades del sur de Asia) después su uso se expandió por todo Asia y por partes de Africa.
- Las arvejas o guisantes sin desgranar tienen un alto contenido de vitamina C, vitamina K y antioxidantes que mantienen nuestras células fuertes y sanas.
- Las arvejas sin desgranar se deben usar uno o dos días después de la recolección.
- Para guardarlas debe envolverlas en toallas de papel y colocarlas en el cubo para vegetales del refrigerador.
- Para cocinarlas coloque las arvejas recién lavadas en una cacerola a fuego medio o en un tazón pequeño en el horno microondas hasta que se pongan mustias.



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OUR CHEF AND FARMER PHOTOS: HERE ARE OUR PORTRAIT SHOTS OF CHEF ALEX LEVINE AND FARMER ED LIDZBARSKI. WHENEVER POSSIBLE, WE GET HIGH-RESOLUTION PORTRAIT SHOTS OF OUR FARMER AND CHEF. IN THIS CASE, THE PHOTO OF CHEF ALEX IS A CROPPED VERSION OF THE PHOTO FROM THE BEET TASTING. RATHER THAN SHOOTING CLOSE-UPS, ASK YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER TO GIVE YOU EXTRA ROOM IN PHOTOS SO YOU HAVE FLEXIBILITY IN CROPPING. WE USE THESE PHOTOS FOR POSTERS, HANDOUTS, AND PUBLICITY.



OUR SPINACH CUT OUT POSTERS: TEN CUT OUT POSTERS—EACH WITH A DIFFERENT SPINACH FACT—ARE PUT UP IN THE SCHOOL HALLWAYS A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE TASTING AND ARE LEFT THERE FOR THE WEEK AFTER THE TASTING. THIS HELPS TO BUILD ANTICIPATION AND TO REINFORCE THE TASTING. WE NUMBER THE POSTERS SO THAT THE CHILDREN ARE AWARE THAT EACH POSTER HAS A DIFFERENT FACT. THE POSTERS ARE CUT OUT OF COLORED POSTER BOARD.

Spinach Tasting

Chef: Alex Levine

Restaurant/Institution: Whole Earth Center, Princeton

Farmer: Ed Lidzbarski

Farm: ER and Son Organic Farm

Items Tasted: Raw spinach, spinach and strawberry salad, and cream of spinach soup

Month Held: June

Tasting Exercise: A bowl of raw spinach was put in the center of each table. Children were encouraged to try the raw spinach and then to taste a sample of spinach and strawberry salad as well as a sample of cream of spinach soup.

Chef Alex's Cream of Spinach Soup

1/4 cup finely chopped celery

1/3 cup finely chopped onion

4 tablespoons butter, divided

2 tablespoons flour

3 cups hot vegetable stock or chicken stock

1 cup milk, whole, 2%, or fat free

2 cups cooked pureed or very finely chopped spinach

Pinch fresh-ground nutmeg

Salt

Fresh-ground black pepper.

1. Sauté celery and onion in 2 tablespoons butter with a dash of salt.
2. Meanwhile, make béchamel: Heat remaining 2 tablespoons butter in medium-size stock pot. Sift flour over butter, whisking to combine into a smooth paste. Slowly add stock or milk to flour-oil mixture (called a roux), whisking constantly to retain velvety texture. Add salt and pepper to taste.
3. Add sautéed celery and onion, stirring to combine.
4. Whisk in pureed spinach; add nutmeg. Season to taste. Serve hot.



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Spinach Facts used on our posters and handout:

- Spinach is native plant to Persia, now Iran.
- Spinach was brought to Europe around the 12th century and to the U.S. in 1806.
- Spinach is a member of the goose-foot family, related to beets and chard.
- Spinach is a power food. It is high in vitamins and antioxidants, both of which build strength and resistance to disease.
- An math error is blamed for the widespread belief that spinach is high in iron. In 1870, Dr. E von Wolff measured its iron content but placed the decimal point in the wrong position, overstating the iron content of spinach ten-fold. The mistake was discovered 67 years later, but the myth remains.
- There are three groups of spinach: Savoy, with crinkly, curly leaves; smooth-leaf; and semi-savoy, a cross between the two.
- Catherine de Medici, from Florence, Italy, loved spinach, and her appreciation of the vegetable back in the 16th century gave rise to the term “Florentine” for dishes that include spinach.
- In the 1930s, a cartoon was built around the power provided by eating spinach. Here’s the chorus: I’m Popeye the Sailor Man (toot toot!). I’m Popeye the Sailor Man! I’m strong to the finish cause I eats me spinach! I’m Popeye the Sailor Man!
- Popeye was credited with a 33 percent increase in spinach consumption during the Great Depression.
- New Jersey follows California and Arizona in spinach production. Other big spinach-growing states include Texas, Colorado, Maryland and Arkansas.
- China grows 85 percent of the world’s spinach. The U.S. grows about 3 percent.
- Green pigment from spinach was used in medieval times as ink and paints



OUR SPINACH VIDEO: IN ADVANCE OF THE TASTING, A VIDEO FEATURING CHEF ALEX LEVINE WAS SHOWN TO THE STUDENTS. WE USE VIDEOS TO GENERATE EXCITEMENT AND TO GIVE THE CHILDREN A FIRST-HAND VIEW OF THE FARM AND THE CHEF AT WORK. OUR SPINACH VIDEO IS POSTED ON YOUTUBE. CLICK THE LOGO ABOVE TO VIEW THE VIDEO OR SEARCH PSGCOOP ON YOUTUBE.



OUR SPINACH HANDOUTS: (FULL SIZE VERSIONS OF SIDES 1 AND 2 OF THE ENGLISH VERSION AND THE SPANISH VERSION ARE ON THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW) HANDOUTS GO HOME IN EACH STUDENT’S BACKPACK A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE TASTING. WE ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO TALK WITH THEIR CHILDREN ABOUT THE TASTINGS.

Words that describe

Spinach

FLAVOR • COLOR • TEXTURE





Garden State

on your plate

JUNE 2011 • LINKING FARM TO SCHOOL

Dear parents –

It's the last tasting of the year. Your children have sampled fresh tomato salsa, braised Swiss chard, cranberry sauce and cranberry sorbet, both savory and sweet polenta, sweet potatoes, either on focaccia or pureed, pea tendrils with julienned carrots with apple cider vinaigrette, and now, cream of fresh spinach soup! Along the way, they have had raw beet-eating contests, stood in line for second and third servings, and learned about flavors, met farmers and seen chefs at work.

We began this farm-to-school pilot program with the theory that, with proper support, children would venture beyond the familiar – that they could, and would, analyze flavor, texture, aroma, combinations. This yearlong program has proved the theory, and along the way, has grown a community.

We are grateful to the army of parents who have turned out to scoop soup and record children's comments, all allies in this work that recognizes the transformative power of good food, its connections to our children's academic subjects and to the landscape of our beautiful Garden State. We thank the principals, Sharon Goldman of CP and Annie Kosek of LB, whose leadership and good cheer in the face of lunchtime cacophony was inspiring. We thank the teachers who came to taste and stayed to talk – and then used the lunchroom lessons in teachings of their own, connecting those tasting portions to gardening, to history, to civics, to art, to literature, to vocabulary. And we thank the students, these leaders of tomorrow, for conquering their fears and trying one bite.

This project was funded by a special one-year, one-time grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, so our question to you is: What's next? What do you like about the program? How could it be better? More useful? How shall it be funded?

You can share your opinions with us by joining your child for June's lunchtime tasting (Wednesday, June 1 at Littlebrook, and Wednesday, June 8 at Community Park). Come hungry!

See you in the cafeteria,
Princeton School Gardens Cooperative
www.psgcoop.org

At our June tastings, Chef Alex, of Whole Earth Center, will be serving up spinach two ways—raw with strawberries and balsamic vinegar, and in a smooth cream of spinach soup. The spinach will be harvested from the fields of Ed Lidzbarski, of ER & Son Farm in Colts Neck.



CHEF ALEX LEVINE



FARMER ED LIDZBARSKI

To see recipes, pictures, updates, and video of this project and others, visit us at www.psgcoop.org

Chef Alex's Cream of Spinach Soup

Alex Levine, Whole Earth Center, Princeton

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1/4 cup finely chopped celery | 1 cup milk, whole, 2%, or fat free |
| 1/3 cup finely chopped onion | 2 cups cooked pureed or very finely chopped spinach |
| 4 tablespoons butter, divided | Pinch fresh-ground nutmeg |
| 2 tablespoons flour | Salt |
| 3 cups hot vegetable stock or chicken stock | Fresh-ground black pepper. |

1. Sauté celery and onion in 2 tablespoons butter with a dash of salt.
2. Meanwhile, make béchamel: Heat remaining 2 tablespoons butter in medium-size stock pot. Sift flour over butter, whisking to combine into a smooth paste. Slowly add stock or milk to flour-oil mixture (called a roux), whisking constantly to retain velvety texture. Add salt and pepper to taste.
3. Add sautéed celery and onion, stirring to combine.
4. Whisk in pureed spinach; add nutmeg.
5. Season to taste. Serve hot.

SPINACH FACTS

- Spinach is native plant to Persia, now Iran.
- Spinach was brought to Europe around the 12th century and to the U.S. in 1806.
- Spinach is a member of the goose-foot family, related to beets and chard.
- Spinach is a power food. It is high in vitamins and antioxidants, both of which build strength and resistance to disease.
- An math error is blamed for the widespread belief that spinach is high in iron. In 1870, Dr. E von Wolff measured its iron content but placed the decimal point in the wrong position, overstating the iron content of spinach ten-fold. The mistake was discovered 67 years later, but the myth remains.
- There are three groups of spinach: Savoy, with crinkly, curly leaves; smooth-leaf; and semi-savoy, a cross between the two.
- Catherine de Medici, from Florence, Italy, loved spinach, and her appreciation of the vegetable back in the 16th century gave rise to the term "Florentine" for dishes that include spinach.
- In the 1930s, a cartoon was built around the power provided by eating spinach. Here's the chorus: I'm Popeye the Sailor Man (toot toot!). I'm Popeye the Sailor Man! I'm strong to the finish cause I eats me spinach! I'm Popeye the Sailor Man!
- Popeye was credited with a 33 percent increase in spinach consumption during the Great Depression.
- New Jersey follows California and Arizona in spinach production. Other big spinach-growing states include Texas, Colorado, Maryland and Arkansas.
- China grows 85 percent of the world's spinach. The U.S. grows about 3 percent.
- Green pigment from spinach was used in medieval times as ink and paint.



"Garden State on Your Plate: Linking farm to school," is a Farm to School pilot program administered by the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative and funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The pilot, a yearlong effort under way at Community Park and Littlebrook elementary schools, is designed to feed students' needs for fresh food and to begin to link for them the food they eat to the Garden State and to the larger world. Further, we hope that it will restore bonds between schools, the community and local farmers – and through a documentary being filmed of the process, offer other schools and parents support for beginning similar programs.



El Estado Jardín en tu plato

JUNIO 2011 • CONECTANDO LA GRANJA CON LA ESCUELA

Estimados padres,

Esta es la última degustación del año. Hasta el momento sus hijos han probado: salsa (hecha con tomates frescos), estofado de acelga suiza, salsa y sorbete de arándanos, polenta dulce y polenta salada, batatas en focaccia y en pure, zarcillos de arveja con zanahorias cortadas en julianas y con vinagreta de cidra de manzana, y ahora degustarán crema de espinaca fresca. Al mismo tiempo han tenido competencias como comer remolacha cruda, han hecho fila para repetir hasta dos y tres veces, han aprendido acerca de los sabores, han conocido a los granjeros y han visto a los chefs en acción.

Iniciamos este programa piloto de la granja a la escuela con la teoría de que con el apoyo adecuado los niños se aventurarían a probar cosas fuera de lo normal o dentro de su entorno familiar. Pensamos que ellos analizarían el sabor, la textura, el aroma y las diferentes combinaciones. Durante todo el año el programa ha probado la teoría, y hemos construido una comunidad.

Estamos muy agradecidos con el ejército de padres que han colaborado registrando los comentarios de los niños. Todos unidos en este trabajo que reconoce el poder transformador de la buena comida, las conexiones con las diferentes áreas académicas y clases de los niños, y el paisaje de nuestro bello estado jardín. Agradecemos a las directoras, Sharon Goldman de CP y Annie Kosek de LB, quienes con su liderazgo y entusiasmo fueron inspiradoras durante la algarabía del almuerzo. Damos gracias igualmente a los profesores que venían a probar y se quedaban a conversar – y después utilizaban las lecciones del comedor en sus propias lecciones, conectando esas degustaciones con la huerta, la historia, el civismo, el arte, la literatura y el vocabulario. Y finalmente agradecemos a los estudiantes, los líderes del mañana por vencer sus miedos y probar un bocado.

Este proyecto fue financiado por una beca especial de un año de la Fundación Robert Wood Johnson así que nuestra pregunta para ustedes es: ¿Qué viene ahora? ¿Qué le gusto del programa? ¿Cómo podría mejorarse? ¿Cómo podría ser más útil? ¿Cómo podría ser financiado?

Usted puede compartir sus opiniones con nosotros acompañando a su hijo(a) en la degustación de junio (el miércoles 1 de junio en Littlebrook y el miércoles 8 de junio en Community Park).

Nos vemos en la cafetería,
Cooperativa de Jardines/Huertas de las escuelas de Princeton
www.psgcoop.org

Durante la degustación de junio, el chef Alex de Whole Earth Center servirá espinaca de dos formas – cruda con fresas y vinagre balsámico, y en una suave crema (sopa). Las espinacas serán recolectadas de los campos de Ed Lidzbarski de la granja ER e hijo en Colts Neck.



CHEF ALEX LEVINE



FARMER ED LIDZBARSKI

Para ver recetas, fotos, novedades y el video de este proyecto y otros visite www.psgcoop.org

Chef Alex's Cream of Spinach Soup

Alex Levine, Whole Earth Center, Princeton

1/4 taza de apio finamente picado	1 taza de leche, entera, 2%, o libre de grasa
1/3 taza de cebolla finamente picada	2 tazas de espinaca cocida o finamente picada
4 cucharadas de mantequilla	Una pizca de nuez moscada
2 cucharadas de harina	Sal
3 tazas de caldo caliente de vegetales o de pollo	Pimienta negra fresca

1. Sofría el apio y la cebolla en 2 cucharadas de mantequilla con una pizca de sal.
2. Mientras tanto prepare la salsa béchamel: caliente las dos cucharadas de mantequilla restante en una olla mediana para caldo. Espolvoree harina sobre la mantequilla batiendo hasta que se forme una pasta suave. Despacio agregue caldo o leche a la mezcla (que se llama roux) batiendo constantemente para conservar la textura suave. Agregue sal y pimienta al gusto.
3. Agregue el apio y la cebolla salteados, revolviendo constantemente.
4. Mezcle la espinaca, agregue la nuez moscada.
5. Sazone al gusto. Sirva caliente.

DATOS SOBRE LA ESPINACA

- La espinaca es originaria de Persia, ahora Iran.
- La espinaca fue traída a Europa en el siglo 12 y a Estados Unidos en 1806.
- La espinaca es un miembro de la familia de "las patas de ganso" relacionadas con las remolachas y la acelga.
- La espinaca es un alimento poderoso. Tiene un alto contenido de vitaminas y antioxidantes los cuales ayudan a resistir las enfermedades.
- Un error matemático es el culpable de la esparcida creencia de que la espinaca es alta en hierro. En 1870 el doctor Evon Wolff midió su contenido de hierro, pero colocó el punto decimal en la posición equivocada sobre-estimando el contenido de hierro casi 10 veces más. El error fue descubierto 67 años después, pero el mito permanece.
- Hay tres grupos de espinaca: Savoy con hojas rizadas y arrugadas; hoja lisa; y semi-savoy, una mezcla de las dos.
- A Catherine de Medici de Florencia, Italia, le encantaba la espinaca y su apreciación por este vegetal en el siglo 16 originó el termino "Florentina" para los platos que la contienen.
- En la década de los 30 se creó una tira cómica alrededor del poder y la fuerza que da comer espinaca. El coro dice: "Popeye el marino soy. Soy fuerte porque como espinaca, Popeye, el marino soy!"
- A Popeye se le dió el crédito por el aumento del 33% del consumo de espinacas durante la Gran Depresión.
- New Jersey sigue a California y Arizona en producción de espinaca. Otros estados productores de espinaca incluyen Texas, Colorado, Maryland y Arkansas.
- China cultiva el 85 por ciento de la espinaca mundial. Estados Unidos el 3 por ciento.
- El pigmento verde de la espinaca fue usado en los tiempos medievales como tinta y pintura.



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OUR CHEF AND FARMER PHOTOS: HERE IS OUR PORTRAIT SHOT OF CHEF CHRISTOPHER ALBRECHT AND FARMERS ANDREW MARCHESE AND CHRIS TURSE. WHENEVER POSSIBLE, WE GET HIGH-RESOLUTION PORTRAIT SHOTS OF OUR FARMER AND CHEF. WE USE THESE PHOTOS FOR POSTERS, HANDOUTS, AND PUBLICITY.

Kale Tasting

Chef: Chris Albrecht

Restaurant/Institution: Eno Terra, Kingston

Farmers: Andrew Marchese and Chris Turse

Farm: Double Brook Farm, Hopewell

Items Tasted: Raw kale and kale soup

Month Held: March

Tasting Exercises: The children tasted raw kale and then tried kale soup.

Chef Chris' Tuscan Kale, Potato, and Leek Soup

Makes 6 quarts, or 24 one-cup servings

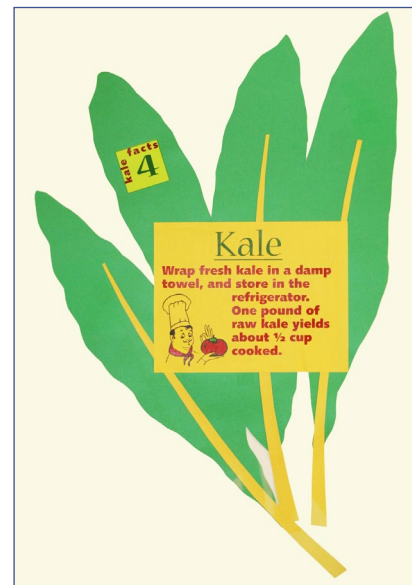
Three tips will set you on the path to success with this hearty soup: First, to ensure that leeks are cleansed of grit, rinse them well under running water, then cut into coins and allow to soak in cold water for a couple of hours, agitating them occasionally. Second, after peeling and dicing potatoes, prevent discoloration by submerging them in cold water until time to add them to the soup. Third, kitchen twine, used to tie the herbs together, is untreated and is available from kitchen supply stores. If labeled kitchen twine is unavailable, simply add herbs to the pot and fish them out later. Do not substitute other twine.

- 1 bay leaf
- 6 thyme sprigs
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup white onion, diced
- 2 cups leek rounds, ¼-inch thick, white and lightest green part only, cleaned, drained and patted dry
- 8 cups peeled and diced white potatoes
- 2 cups heavy cream (substitute half-and-half or milk for a lighter version)
- Cold water
- 6 cups rough-chopped Tuscan kale
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground white pepper to taste
- Grated Parmesan or cheddar or crumbled Gorgonzola) if desired

1. Using 12- to 24-inch length of kitchen twine, tie bay leaf and thyme sprigs together, leaving a tail to tie to the handle of the pot. Set aside.



OUR KALE DESCRIPTOR POSTER. WE DISTRIBUTE DESCRIPTOR POSTERS TO EACH CLASSROOM WHERE THEY ARE USED BY TEACHERS TO TEACH VOCABULARY, OBSERVATION SKILLS, AND DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS. THE DESCRIPTOR POSTERS ARE 11 INCHES BY 17 INCHES. WE HAVE INCLUDED AN 8-1/2 BY 11-INCH VERSION IN THIS SECTION FOR EASY PRINTING. CLICK ON THE GRAPHIC ABOVE TO DOWNLOAD THE FULL-SIZE VERSION FOR PRINTING AT YOUR LOCAL COPY SHOP.



OUR KALE CUT OUT POSTERS: TEN CUT OUT POSTERS—EACH WITH A DIFFERENT KALE FACT—ARE PUT UP IN THE SCHOOL HALLWAYS A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE TASTING AND ARE LEFT THERE FOR THE WEEK AFTER THE TASTING. THIS HELPS TO BUILD ANTICIPATION AND TO REINFORCE THE TASTING. WE NUMBER THE POSTERS SO THAT THE CHILDREN ARE AWARE THAT EACH POSTER HAS A DIFFERENT FACT. THE POSTERS ARE CUT OUT OF COLORED POSTER BOARD.

Words that describe

Kale

FLAVOR • COLOR • TEXTURE

bitter
frilly
spruce-green
hearty
peppery
curly
spinachy
tough
woody
black-green
cabbagey
dusty mauve
sweet
sulphurous
blue-green
tender
earthy
purple-tinged
leathery
slate-green



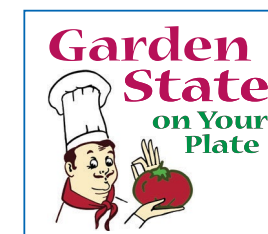
- Heat vegetable oil in an 8-quart heavy-bottomed pot. Add onions and leeks to pot with a sprinkle of salt. Cook over medium-low heat until they are soft and sweet but have not developed color.
- Add potatoes and enough cold water to cover, then increase heat to medium until soup reaches a boil. Reduce heat to simmer and cook until potatoes are tender, about 20 minutes, adding more water to keep potatoes covered.
- Meanwhile, in microwave or on stovetop, heat cream to steaming, then add to soup, stirring to combine.
- Heat soup just until it begins to simmer. Remove from heat; discard herbs. Puree in a food mill or blender until smooth. Chill.
- Reheat soup to steaming, remove from heat, add chopped kale and puree again, leaving some coarseness to the kale. Serve immediately, garnished with cheese, if desired. Refrigerate leftovers.

Kale Facts used on our posters and handouts

- Kale is in season from fall to spring. Farmers begin planting kale seeds for fall harvest in Mid-July through late August.
- Kale is related to broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collard greens and kohlrabi.
- New Jersey ranks 4th nationally in kale production. Farmers in southern New Jersey grow the most kale in the state.
- Kale is a good source of vitamins K and C, the B-vitamin folic acid, and beta carotene.
- Kale and its dark green relatives contain substantial amounts of calcium, but our bodies wouldn't absorb it without the magnesium that is also present.
- Scotch or Scotch Curled (*Brassica oleracea*, *Acephala* group) kale is a primitive cabbage. Siberian or *Napus*, (*Brassica napus*) kale is a relative of the rutabaga.
- Kale flavor turns sweeter after several nights of 20-degree temperatures.
- Scotch Curled kale varieties include Vates Blue and Winterbor, as well as the bright-red Redbor hybrid and the Italian heirloom Lacinato.
- Lacinato kale varieties include Nero Di Toscana, White Russian and Winter Red.
- Harvest the smaller leaves of the kale plant; they are more tender and the flavor is more mild.
- Wrap fresh kale in a damp towel, and store in the refrigerator. One pound of raw kale yields about 1/2 cup cooked.



OUR KALE HANDOUTS: (FULL SIZE VERSIONS OF SIDES 1 AND 2 OF THE ENGLISH VERSION ARE ON THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW) HANDOUTS GO HOME IN EACH STUDENT'S BACKPACK A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE TASTING. WE ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO TALK WITH THEIR CHILDREN ABOUT THE TASTINGS.





Garden State

on your plate

MARCH 2012 • LINKING FARM TO SCHOOL

Hello, parents!

Chef Christopher Albrecht from Eno Terra restaurant in Kingston and Chris Turse, horticulture manager at Double Brook Farm in Hopewell, are providing freshly harvested kale and the hearty soup made from them.

But soup isn't the only vehicle for this nutritious, delicious vegetable. Try this at home: First, cut thickest parts of stems out with a sharp knife. Stack leaves, then roll them, cigar-style, parallel to the stem. Slice leaves into thin ribbons perpendicular to the stem.

To blanch kale, put a pot of water on to boil – add salt until it tastes like the ocean. When the water boils, add kale. Remove in a minute or so – as soon as it turns limp. (At this point, kale can be cooled and stored in the refrigerator, or packed into freezer-safe containers and frozen for later use.)

Two quick recipes for blanched kale: Add to hot olive oil with smashed garlic, a sprinkle of kosher salt, and, after removing from heat, a splash of red wine vinegar or fresh lemon juice. Or: Add to onions sauteed in olive oil and chunks of browned smoked sausage.

See you in the cafeteria,
Princeton School
Gardens Cooperative
www.psgcoop.org

Garden State on Your Plate is back for more tastings of farm-fresh produce.

Joining with businesses around town, the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative is celebrating Eat More Kale month, and once you and your children taste this delicious and nutritious green, you will be celebrating with us.



CHEF CHRISTOPHER ALBRECHT AT DOUBLE BROOK FARM WITH FARMERS ANDREW MARCHESE AND CHRIS TURSE

KALE TALK

Talk with your family about the kale tasting!

Did you like the texture of raw kale? Did the stem taste different than the leaf? How many different kinds of kale did the chef show you?

Your comments requested: We want to know how your children like these tastings and the farmer visits from Garden State on Your Plate. Please send us a note at info@psgcoop.org.

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Three tips will set you on the path to success with this hearty soup: First, to ensure that leeks are cleansed of grit, rinse them well under running water, then cut into coins and allow to soak in cold water for a couple of hours, agitating them occasionally. Second, after peeling and dicing potatoes, prevent discoloration by submerging them in cold water until time to add them to the soup. Third, kitchen twine, used to tie the herbs together, is untreated and is available from kitchen supply stores. If labeled kitchen twine is unavailable, simply add herbs to the pot and fish them out later. Do not substitute other twine.

Tuscan Kale, Potato & Leek Soup

Christopher Albrecht, Eno Terra Restaurant, Kingston, NJ

Makes 6 quarts, or 24 one-cup servings

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 bay leaf | 2 cups heavy cream (substitute half-and-half or milk for a lighter version) |
| 6 thyme sprigs | Cold water |
| ¼ cup vegetable oil | 6 cups rough-chopped Tuscan kale |
| 1 cup white onion, diced | Kosher salt |
| 2 cups leek rounds, ¼-inch thick, white and lightest green part only, cleaned, drained and patted dry | Freshly ground white pepper to taste |
| 8 cups peeled and diced white potatoes | Grated Parmesan or cheddar or crumbled gorgonzola) if desired |

- Using 12- to 24-inch length of kitchen twine, tie bay leaf and thyme sprigs together, leaving a tail to tie to the handle of the pot. Set aside.
- Heat vegetable oil in an 8-quart heavy-bottomed pot. Add onions and leeks to pot with a sprinkle of salt. Cook over medium-low heat until they are soft and sweet but have not developed color.
- Add potatoes and enough cold water to cover, then increase heat to medium until soup reaches a boil. Reduce heat to simmer and cook until potatoes are tender, about 20 minutes, adding more water to keep potatoes covered.
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OUR CHEF AND FARMER PHOTOS: HERE ARE OUR PORTRAIT SHOTS OF CHEF ROB HARBISON AND FARMER TANNWEN MOUNT. THESE PHOTOS WERE PROVIDED BY PRINCETON UNIVERSITY AND TERHUNE ORCHARDS. IF YOU CAN'T AFFORD A PHOTOGRAPHER, ASK YOUR FARMER AND CHEF IF THEY HAVE PUBLICITY PHOTOS THAT YOU CAN USE. BE SURE THEY ARE HIGH RESOLUTION. WE USE THESE PHOTOS FOR POSTERS, HANDOUTS, AND PUBLICITY.



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Apple Tasting

Chef: Rob Harbison

Restaurant/Institution: Princeton University Dining Services, Princeton

Chef: Rick Piancone

Restaurant/Institution: Princeton University Dining Services, Princeton

Farmer: Tannwen Mount

Farm: Terhune Orchards, Lawrenceville

Items Tasted: Raw apples and apple compote

Month Held: April

Tasting Exercises: Children tasted slices of raw apple and apple compote while farmer Tannwen Mount talked with them about growing and tasting apples.

Chef Rob's Apple Compote

Makes about 3½ cups, or about 7 servings

This apple compote can be eaten warm or cold. It makes a great topping for pancakes, waffles, or a filling for crepes. With the substitution of cranberries it goes nicely as a sauce for pork or turkey.

5 Stayman's Winesap apples, peeled, cored and diced

1 cinnamon stick

½ cup water

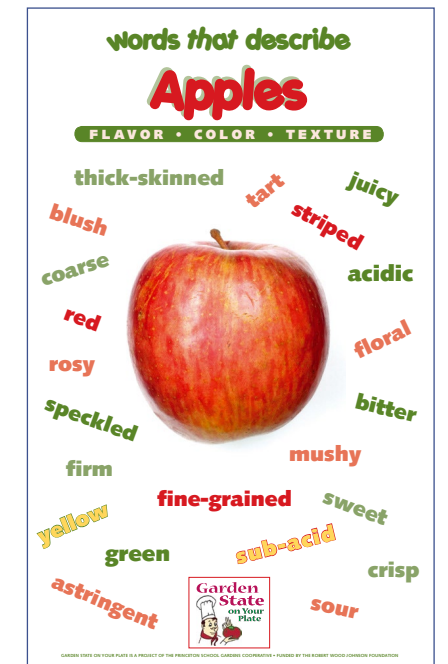
3 ounces strawberry preserves

¼ cup honey

1. In a large saucepan, bring apples, cinnamon stick, and water to a boil and simmer until apples are tender, about 15 minutes.
2. Add preserves and honey; cook for five minutes more. Remove from heat.

Simple Apple Recipes

To make homemade applesauce, begin with a mix of naturally sweet apples, like Red Delicious, Gala, Fuji, Winesap, McIntosh, Yellow Delicious and Mutsu. Cut and core the apples. Place them in a heavy-bottomed saucepan with about 1 inch of water or apple cider. Cook at medium heat until apples are very soft. Push pulp through a colander or food mill. Three to four pounds of apples produce about 1 quart of applesauce.



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words that describe

Apples

FLAVOR • COLOR • TEXTURE

thick-skinned

tart

juicy

blush

striped

coarse

acidic

red

floral

rosy

bitter

speckled

mushy

firm

sweet

fine-grained

yellow

sub-acid

green

crisp

astringent

sour

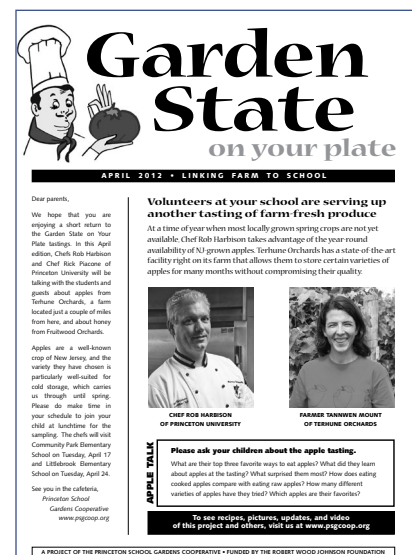


Lower the fat in home-baked goods with this simple trick: Drain applesauce overnight in a coffee filter, then use the puree as a substitute for up to half the fat in cookie or cake recipes.

Prepare your own pie filling by peeling, coring and chopping 8 apples of different varieties. Add about ½ cup of sugar, about 1 teaspoon cinnamon, about ¼ teaspoon fresh-grated nutmeg and a dash of salt. Cook in a heavy-bottomed saucepan until soft. Add about 1 teaspoon vanilla. Let cool, and use as desired, or freeze until you're in the mood to bake.

Apple Facts used on our posters and handout:

- More than 30 apple varieties are grown in New Jersey. Peak apple season in New Jersey is from September 1 to October 25.
- New Jersey ranks 15th in acreage and 13th volume of apples produced, the USDA says. That's 65,000,000 pounds of apples grown every year.
- Winesap is the oldest apple grown in New Jersey, dating back to the late 1700s. They are dull, dark red apples over a greenish background. They are tart, with a rich, wine-like flavor.
- Other popular apples grown in New Jersey are Red Delicious and Golden Delicious, McIntosh, and Granny Smith.
- Stayman's Winesap is a seedling of Winesap, and was originally grown in Kansas in the 1870s.
- Stayman's Winesap apples are juicy, firm and crisp. They are medium to large with smooth greenish-yellow skin mostly covered with stripes and splashes of red and crimson. They ripen in October.
- Winesap is the parent of many other apples, including Blacktwig, Arkansas Black, and Kinnaird's Choice.
- Apples are a member of the rose family, as are pears, peaches, plums and cherries.
- About 25 percent of an apple's volume is air – which is why they float.
- Americans eat, on average, nearly 20 pounds of apples per year.
- Apples are high in antioxidants, which prevent illness, and they are high in dietary fiber. They also contain some calcium and potassium.



OUR APPLE HANDOUTS: (FULL SIZE VERSIONS OF SIDES 1 AND 2 OF THE ENGLISH VERSION ARE ON THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW) HANDOUTS GO HOME IN EACH STUDENT'S BACKPACK A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE TASTING. WE ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO TALK WITH THEIR CHILDREN ABOUT THE TASTINGS.



Garden State

on your plate

APRIL 2012 • LINKING FARM TO SCHOOL

Dear parents,

We hope that you are enjoying a short return to the Garden State on Your Plate tastings. In this April edition, Chefs Rob Harbison and Chef Rick Piacone of Princeton University will be talking with the students and guests about apples from Terhune Orchards, a farm located just a couple of miles from here, and about honey from Fruitwood Orchards.

Apples are a well-known crop of New Jersey, and the variety they have chosen is particularly well-suited for cold storage, which carries us through until spring. Please do make time in your schedule to join your child at lunchtime for the sampling. The chefs will visit Community Park Elementary School on Tuesday, April 17 and Littlebrook Elementary School on Tuesday, April 24.

See you in the cafeteria,
Princeton School
Gardens Cooperative
www.psgcoop.org

Volunteers at your school are serving up another tasting of farm-fresh produce

At a time of year when most locally grown spring crops are not yet available, Chef Rob Harbison takes advantage of the year-round availability of NJ-grown apples. Terhune Orchards has a state-of-the-art facility right on its farm that allows them to store certain varieties of apples for many months without compromising their quality.



CHEF ROB HARBISON
OF PRINCETON UNIVERSITY



FARMER TANNWEN MOUNT
OF TERHUNE ORCHARDS

APPLE TALK

Please ask your children about the apple tasting.

What are their top three favorite ways to eat apples? What did they learn about apples at the tasting? What surprised them most? How does eating cooked apples compare with eating raw apples? How many different varieties of apples have they tried? Which apples are their favorites?

To see recipes, pictures, updates, and video of this project and others, visit us at www.psgcoop.org

Apple Compote

from Chef Rob Harbison, Princeton University

Makes about 3½ cups, or about 7 servings

This apple compote can be eaten warm or cold. It makes a great topping for pancakes, waffles, or a filling for crepes. With the substitution of cranberries it goes nicely as a sauce for pork or turkey.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 5 Stayman's Winesap apples, peeled, cored and diced | 3 ounces strawberry preserves |
| 1 cinnamon stick | ¼ cup honey |
| ½ cup water | |

1. In a large saucepan, bring apples, cinnamon stick, and water to a boil and simmer until apples are tender, about 15 minutes.
2. Add preserves and honey; cook for five minutes more. Remove from heat.

Simple Apple Recipes

To make homemade applesauce, begin with a mix of naturally sweet apples, like Red Delicious, Gala, Fuji, Winesap, McIntosh, Yellow Delicious and Mutsu. Cut and core the apples. Place them in a heavy-bottomed saucepan with about 1 inch of water or apple cider. Cook at medium heat until apples are very soft. Push pulp through a colander or food mill. Three to four pounds of apples produce about 1 quart of applesauce.

Lower the fat in home-baked goods with this simple trick: Drain applesauce overnight in a coffee filter, then use the puree as a substitute for up to half the fat in cookie or cake recipes.

Prepare your own pie filling by peeling, coring and chopping 8 apples of different varieties. Add about ½ cup of sugar, about 1 teaspoon cinnamon, about ¼ teaspoon fresh-grated nutmeg and a dash of salt. Cook in a heavy-bottomed saucepan until soft. Add about 1 teaspoon vanilla. Let cool, and use as desired, or freeze until you're in the mood to bake.

APPLE FACTS

- More than 30 apple varieties are grown in New Jersey. Peak apple season in New Jersey is from September 1 to October 25.
- New Jersey ranks 15th in acreage and 13th volume of apples produced, the USDA says. That's 65,000,000 pounds of apples grown every year.
- Winesap is the oldest apple grown in New Jersey, dating back to the late 1700s. They are dull, dark red apples over a greenish background. They are tart, with a rich, wine-like flavor.
- Other popular apples grown in New Jersey are Red Delicious and Golden Delicious, McIntosh, and Granny Smith.
- Stayman's Winesap is a seedling of Winesap, and was originally grown in Kansas in the 1870s.
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"Garden State on Your Plate: Linking farm to school," is a Farm to School pilot program administered by the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative and funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The pilot, an effort under way at Community Park and Littlebrook elementary schools, is designed to feed students' needs for fresh food and to begin to link for them the food they eat to the Garden State and to the larger world. Further, we hope that it will restore bonds between schools, the community and local farmers – and through a documentary that was filmed of the process, offer other schools and parents support for beginning similar programs.

Princeton Young Achievers After-school Program

Kale Tasting

Chef: Christopher Albrecht

Restaurant/Institution: Eno Terra, Kingston

Farmer: Chris Turse

Farm: Double Brook Farm, Hopewell

Month Held: March

Items Tasted: raw kale, raw kale salad

Tasting Exercises: Because Farmer Chris could not attend the first tasting, Chef Chris took the children out to the school garden at Community Park School. In the garden, Chef Chris encouraged the children to sample different greens. At the second tasting, Farmer Chris talked with students about growing kale and the different varieties of kale. He brought an entire kale plant—roots and all—for the children to examine. Chef Chris talked about cooking with kale and showed children how to prepare kale for salad by tearing kale off stems and into small pieces talk about different kale varieties. The children helped prepare a raw kale salad that they all ate together.

Ice Cream Tasting

Chef: Gab Carbone

Restaurant/Institution: bent spoon, Princeton

Farmer: Mike Rassweiler

Farm: North Slope Farm, Lambertville

Months Held: April and May

Items Tasted: several flavors of ice cream made with pasture raised eggs

Tasting Exercises: Farmer Mike talked told the children why raising chickens outdoors on pasture is good for their health and well-being. Chef Gab talked about why pasture-raised eggs make creamier ice cream. She showed the children how to use handheld, ball-shaped ice cream makers, which the kids took turns shaking to make ice cream. The children then tasted several ice creams and sorbets made with locally grown fruit.

Soil and Seeds:

Instructor: Fred Bowers

Company: Princeton Soil Institute, Princeton

Farmer: Jess Niederer

Farm: Chickadee Creek Farm, Pennington

Month Held: April

Items Tasted: Soil (smelled)

Tasting Exercise: Fred brought soil samples from different locations (swamp, forest, meadow, garden and urban) as well as a few different types of mushrooms. The children examined the soil using sight (with magnifying glasses), touch, and smell. They smelled the mushrooms to help them identify the contribution that fungi and actinomycetes make to soil aroma. Farmer Jess brought seeds and plants and asked the children to match the seed to the plant. The children also used magnifying glasses to examine seeds. Jess sent each child home with a basil plant and care instructions.

Spring Vegetable Tasting

Chef: Craig Shelton

Restaurant: Americana Hospitality Group, East Windsor

Chef: Scott Anderson

Restaurant: elements restaurant, Princeton

Chef: Linda Twining

Company: Twin Hens, Princeton

Farmer: David Zaback

Farm: Z Food Farm, Lawrence Township

Month Held: May

Items Tasted: Raw potato slices, cold vichyssoise

Tasting Exercise: Farmer David talked about vegetables that can be found on the farm in the spring. Chef Craig had the children place a thin potato slice on their tongues and hold it there as their saliva broke the starch down into sugar. He then had them smell each ingredient that goes into vichyssoise. As he prepared the soup, he let each child add a pinch of salt, he then tasted the soup, and asked them each to add another pinch. At our second Spring Vegetable tasting, Chef Linda demonstrated how to saute onions and the children tasted both raw and sauteed onions to experience how the flavor changed. She talked with the children about seasoning and let the children add ingredients to the soup. The children then sampled a vichyssoise prepared by Chef Scott Anderson.

Honey Tasting

Chef: Rick Piancone

Institution: Princeton University Dining Services, Princeton

Farmer: Pier Guidi

Farm: Bamboo Hollow Apiaries, Hillsborough

Farmer: Kelly Harding

Farm: Cherry Grove Farm, Lawrenceville

Month Held: May

Items Tasted: Honey, cheese, radicchio, yogurt, ricotta, chocolate

Tasting Exercise: Farmer Pier brought in a demonstration hive and showed slides that illustrated different types of bees and jobs in beekeeping. The children then tasted three different local honeys—all from Farmer Pier’s hives—and cheese from Cherry Grove Farm. Chef Rick prepared a few simple ingredients that were used to demonstrate sweet (honey), sour (plain yogurt), salt (cheese), and bitter (radicchio) interact in food. And he then made a filling for cannoli using local ricotta cheese.



OUR GARDEN STATE ON YOUR PLATE VIDEO: AT THE END OF OUR PILOT PROGRAM WE PRODUCED A VIDEO RECAP OF GARDEN STATE ON YOUR PLATE. OUR VIDEO IS POSTED ON YOUTUBE. CLICK THE LOGO ABOVE TO VIEW THE VIDEO OR SEARCH PSGCOOP ON YOUTUBE.

Garden State on Your Plate Survey Results

Garden State on Your Plate tastings served 720 students and their parents—and teachers and staff at two elementary schools—eight times. To determine whether children were trying the tasting portions provided them, teams of parents surveyed each student during the tastings. (Those teams of parents, in addition to others who accepted our invitations to join their children for lunch, sampled the small portions.) We found that a majority of students—from kindergartners to adolescents—were willing and eager to sample the food. Some items were more popular than others, such as sweet potato chips, which, at one school, were tried by 97 percent of the students. But less popular or even never-tried foods were also tested, such as raw cranberries: In one school, 86 percent of the children sampled them.

Even more to our delight were the children’s comments. During a tasting dedicated to spinach, one entire table of students agreed that the cream of spinach soup was “even better than all the ice cream in the world.” And the soup was hot, served on an unseasonably hot day. At another tasting, a parent volunteer was told that the beet soup “is extraordinary.” At the tasting dedicated to corn, a child proclaimed about the polenta, “This is my new favorite food.” Finally, at a later tasting, after slurping up raw pea tendrils from his small sample cup, a student announced, “I want a big portion of this as my lunch!”

Additionally, we conducted a survey of parents at the end of the year, after the tastings were concluded. From the respondents, we learned that 98 percent had conversations with their children about the school tastings, and that in half of those instances, the children initiated the discussion. We also learned that close to half said they prepared at least one of the recipes from the tastings at home.

Further, we learned that children have opened themselves up to new and local foods, as well as what is cooking at home—70 percent of parents responding said that compared with the start of the school year, their children are more aware that fruits and vegetables are grown and harvested near our community; 60 percent said their children are more likely to try a new fruit or vegetable; and half of the survey participants said their children show more interest in the produce department at the store or farmers’ market and in the meals being cooked at home.

Lastly, one parent commented: “I liked the tastings because it exposed my child to some foods that I don’t prepare at home. It even surprised me how she liked some of these new foods to her since she becomes picky when encountering new foods!” From our parent survey and when encountering parents at tastings or elsewhere in the community, we heard endless feedback along these lines.

