



Culinary Skills for Local Foods

Insert Name of Presenters
Peer Leadership Network



National Farm to School Network - Nourishing Kids and Communities

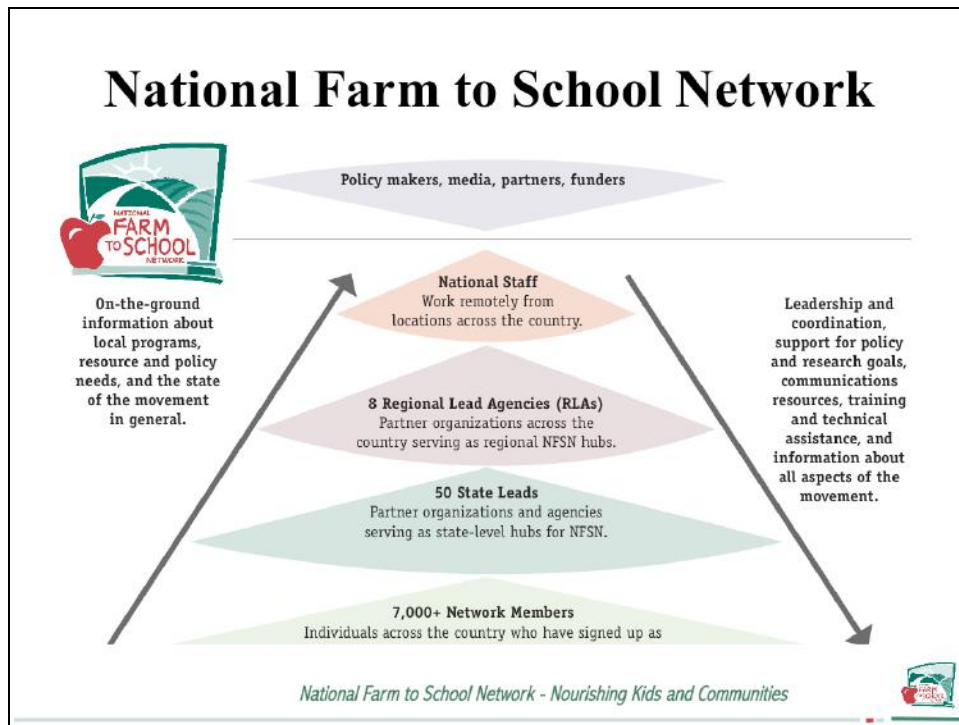


Notes to Presenter:

Introduce yourself

- Who are you?
- Where are you from?
- What is your background?

Who is the target audience of this training?- explain if the audience is not already aware



Note to Presenter: Please read the full description below while on this slide:

- This training is brought to you with support from the National Farm to School Network.
- Established in 2007, National Farm to School Network seeks to create strong and just local food systems that ensure the health of children, farms, the environment, the economy and communities. NFSN provides vision, leadership and support to connect and strengthen the Farm to School movement, which now includes more than 12,500 schools spanning all 50 states.
- National Farm to School Network (NFSN) provides vision, leadership and support to connect and strengthen the Farm to School movement across the country. NFSN sets national priorities and policy goals, generates a research agenda, creates and aggregates resources, provides technical assistance, convenes gatherings and promotes the movement. NFSN includes national staff, eight Regional Lead Agencies, 50 State Leads, a 16-member Advisory Board and thousands of on the ground Farm to School supporters.

Farm to School Peer Leadership Network

Goal: Strengthen farm to school training and technical assistance for stakeholders through peer learning.

- 20 Peer Leaders selected in 4 stakeholder groups:
 - Farmers
 - Child Nutrition Directors
 - Educators / Teachers
 - Early Child Education Providers
- 12 peer trainings developed and shared nationally
- Peer leaders available to provide one-on-one assistance
- The Peer Leadership Network is a project of the National Farm to School Network
- The project is supported by Newman's Own Foundation

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- This training is part of the Peer Leadership Network supported by the National Farm to School Network

Training Outline

1. What is Farm to School?
2. Why Do Culinary Skills Matter?
3. Knife Skills
4. Batch Cooking for Maintaining Quality
5. Preparing Fresh Vegetables
6. Extending the Season for Local
7. Additional Resources





What is Farm to School?

Farm to school is the practice of sourcing local food for schools or preschools and providing agriculture, health and nutrition education opportunities, such as school gardens, farm field trips and cooking lessons. Farm to school improves the health of children and communities while supporting local and regional farmers.

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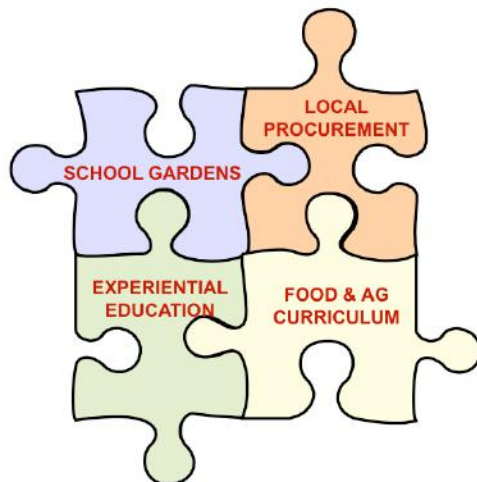
Note to Presenter: Please read the full description below while on this slide:

Farm to school is the practice of connecting schools (K-12) and early care education settings with local food producers with the objectives of serving local, healthy foods in school cafeterias; improving student nutrition; providing agriculture, health and nutrition education opportunities; and supporting local and regional farmers. Farm to school implementation differs by location but always includes one or more of the following: (1) local foods are procured, promoted and served in the cafeteria; (2) students participate in classroom education related to agriculture, food, health or nutrition; (3) use of outdoor education spaces and school gardens where students engage in hands-on learning; and (4) broader community engagement through field trips and service learning; engaging family and community members in farm to school activities at home and at school; and procurement, promotion and serving of local foods at community businesses and organizations.

- Farm to school acts as an educational tool for students, teachers and parents about agriculture.
- Farm to school provides new or expanded market opportunities for farmers

F2S can help with development of economic base of your community. It also helps to create an economic impact for all farmers. Farm to school also circulates money in the local economy.

Farm to School: A Holistic Approach



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Broadly, Farm to School initiatives connect schools, local farms, and communities as part of the movement to strengthen local food systems and reinvigorate local economies. A subset of initiatives called “farm to preschool” conduct similar activities in preschools, early care centers, head start programs.

F2S has 4 distinct components – Local or regional procurement, School gardens, food and ag curriculum, and experiential education such as farm tours, cooking demonstrations, taste tests.

The Farm to School approach – when taken in it’s entirety is the **HOLISTIC APPROACH WE NEEDED TO PROMOTE**. Not just one of these **STRATEGIES, BUT ALL OF THEM TOGETHER** to enable lasting change.

Why Culinary Skills Matter

- Improve staff efficiency
- Boost work satisfaction
- Increase pride in final product
- Ability to control quality of ingredients / final products
- Maintain nutritional content of meals
- Save costs, potentially, from gaining new skills
- Potential benefits to staff health

It matters because food matters

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Notes to Presenter

Culinary Skills Apply to All

General public:

- Prepare foods efficiently and effectively
- Learn to cook - personal self care

School Food Service:

- Help meet new federal regulations by preparing more fruits and vegetables
- Create a learning environment in the school cafeteria
- Improve attitudes toward Nutrition Department, and overall positive advertising for the district by improving school meals

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Culinary skills are important beyond the realm of school food service. When an individual has good culinary skills, he or she is able to prepare healthy meals at home for him/herself and family. It's a boon to your health to have good culinary skills. Beyond the general environment, culinary skills are very important in the school food service world for a variety of reasons.

Kitchen Basics: Knife Skills



Knife skills are:

- Essential skill for any one who cooks
- Crucial for preparation of local farm fresh produce efficiently and safely

Secure your Cutting Board



Image from stellaculinary.com

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Before you begin cutting anything, make sure you have a secure work surface. A cutting board that isn't secured properly can easily slide around, making it dangerous and difficult to cut quickly and accurately.

To secure your cutting board, wet a small kitchen towel and wring out any excess water. Lay the towel on top of your counter top and place your cutting board on top of the towel. This will keep your cutting board secure while doing your prep.

How to Hold a Chef's Knife Using a Professional Grip

- Proper knife grip will:
 - Give you more control
 - Improve accuracy
 - Improve safety
- Professional Grip
 - Pinch knife blade at handle connection (between thumb and index or middle finger)



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How to Hold a Chef's Knife Using a Professional Grip



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Read to Audience:

- Proper Grip gives you more control and accuracy in cutting

How to Hold a Chef's Knife Using a Professional Grip

- Use middle or ring fingers to bolster the knife
 - Single finger or double finger grip
 - The bolster is the vertical piece of blade that connects directly to the handle
- Wrap the rest of your fingers around the handle of the knife
 - Helps provide support
 - Avoid excess tension

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Notes to presenter:

Toggle Between this slid and the previous photo if needed

Read to Audience:

Wrap the rest of your fingers around the handle of the knife

- These fingers are here more for support; the focus of your grip should be on pinching the blade
- keep your grip nice and loose to avoid excess tension which could hinder accuracy

Techniques to Avoid

The “hammer grip” – makes it harder to control the movement of your knife



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Read to Audience:

Shown here is a common, but improper, method for holding a chef's knife, which is called the "hammer" grip. Avoid holding your knife in this way. The “hammer” grip causes your wrist to become out of alignment with your palm and fingers, making it harder to control the movement of your knife.

How to Use Your Guide Hand

- Maximize safety and reduce risk of cutting yourself
- Produce more accurate cuts
- Improve speed



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Read to Audience:

Learning how to expertly use the guide hand you will not only improve the overall accuracy of your knife skills, but it will also keep you from cutting yourself.

The picture here shows the proper use of your guide hand technique while slicing a tomato. The fingertips are curled, and the side of the knife resting against the knuckles on the middle finger. Keeping this constant contact with the first knuckle, and having your finger tips curled slightly behind your knuckles, this will insure you always know where the blade of your knife is and be in control of its direction at all times.

This will not only produce more accurate cuts, but it will improve your speed up your speed also.. after mastering this hand technique, you should be able to make slices with your eyes closed or while looking away. This because you're relying on the contact between your guide hand and knife blade to know where your blade is going.

Photo from Google Images

What to Avoid With Your Guide Hand



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Read to Audience:

The images in the slide show two things you do not want to do when using your guide hand. The photo on the left shows a guide hand with fingers that are way too flat. This grip will not only lead you to slicing the tips of your fingers, but it also doesn't help to guide your knife. This defeats the whole purpose of having a guide hand. In the second photo, you can see that my thumb is protruding forward, in the way of the knife blade.

Kitchen Basics: Batch Cooking for Quality



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What is Batch Cooking?

- Preparing a menu item in small enough quantities so that it will be at its peak of quality when placed on the serving line
- This preparation schedule avoids holding any food for a long time
- Also called *just-in-time-preparation* and *cooking to the line*



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Note to Presenter:

Let the audience read the definition of Batch Cooking. Reference the interchangeable names for batch cooking, also “Just in Time Preparation and Cooking to the Line.

Read to Audience:

- Foods should always be cooked using a just-in-time schedule.
- Almost anything can be batch cooked. A few exceptions include marinara sauce, gravy etc.
- The goal is to place the menu item on the service line exactly when it is needed for service-at its peak of quality! The longer a processed item is held, the more the quality is compromised.

Emphasize preservation of quality, nutritional content and also saves money!! If an item is not as popular as we thought it would be, we can scale back the amount we planned to prepare and not waste food. If a food item is taken more than we planned, we can prepare additional batches to meet the demand.

- Primary goal of school nutrition providers is to serve students food of the highest quality possible in appearance, flavor, texture, and nutritional value.
- Batch cooking accomplishes this goal by preparing food in small batches as needed through the serving period in order to preserve food quality, ensure food safety, and prevent waste due to leftovers. Also known as cooking

Goal: serve students high quality food

Batch cooking assures high quality food by

- Preparing food in small batches
- Preserves quality and ensures safety
- Prevents waste
- It's about **PLANNING** and **PREPARATION**

Batch Cook for Quality

- Helps hold in essential vitamins and minerals
- Children reap health benefits!



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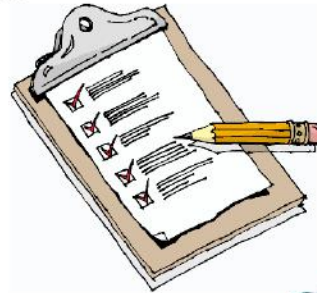


Read to Audience:

- Overcooking and holding vegetables and fruits for extended periods of time will cause nutrients such as Vitamin C and B Vitamins to be destroyed or greatly reduced.
- Overcooking and holding vegetables for too long in heat will also affect the taste and texture; increasing bitter flavors and mushy textures. Not very desirable!

Planning Production Schedules

- The Production Schedule:
 - Serves as a guide for successful meal production
 - Should be reviewed the day before the meal is prepared and served
 - Determines the proper equipment to use
 - Establishes the recommended cooking or reheating time



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Read to Audience:

Batch cooking is more than just preparing products exactly when they are needed. There is a planning component that is very important to Batch Cooking.

Your **Production Schedule** is very important for making Batch Cooking a success.

How Batch Cooking Can Affect Quality

Batch Cooking

- Roasted potatoes are crispy and hold their shape
- Local breads and buns are soft and warm
- Sliced local pears are crisp and maintain a fresh color
- Broccoli is bright green, tender yet firm, slightly crisp, flavorful

Cooking and Holding Too Early

- Potatoes are limp, soggy, fall apart
- Breads are hard and burned
- Sliced pears are dry, mushy and brown
- Broccoli is limp, mushy, discolored (olive green or grey), edges turn yellow and brown



Planning Exercise

Early Bird Cafeteria staff worry that they won't have lunch ready on time so they prepare and have it in the warmer by 10:00 am. They then eat their lunch at 10:00 am, take temperatures, clean the kitchen, and wash pots and pans. School food service starts at 11:15 and lasts until 12:15. The food has been held for 2 hours and 15 minutes.

- What is the quality of the food?
- What could be done to improve the schedule?

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Note to Presenter: If you have less than 1 hour for your presentation, please delete this slide. If you have more than one hour for your presentation, consider using this slide and engaging the training group in discussion.

Which Foods Benefit from Batch Cooking?

- Most foods benefit from being batch cooked
 - Almost all vegetables should be batch cooked to conserve nutrients and quality
 - Can you name some foods that do not need to be batch cooked?



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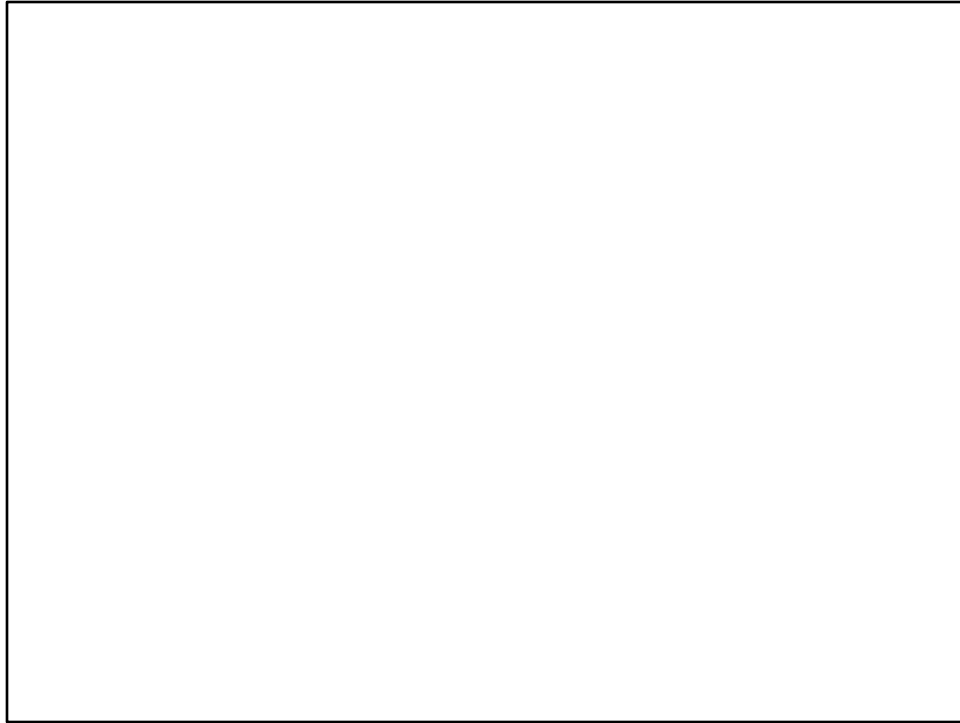


Read to Audience:

Use quality as an indicator to decide which foods should be batch cooked. Quality refers to characteristics that an individual food possesses that make it desirable, such as bright green, crisp/tender broccoli versus overcooked, mushy grey-green broccoli that smells bad and tastes bitter. How foods are cooked and at what temperature foods are held affects quality.

Many foods, almost all foods can benefit from being batch cooked.
Some foods that do not necessarily benefit from batch cooking are:

- Marinara sauce
- Sloppy joes
- Turkey and gravy



Read to Audience:

Determine each important step in preparing the item and calculate how much time each step will take. The total standard time is the total of all the steps and the time it takes to complete the steps for one batch of a recipe. To determine your schedule, subtract the total standard time of preparation from the time the serving line begins to get the batch starting time. Complete this process for each serving line. See next slide for an example.

Steaming Fresh Vegetables



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Fresh Green Veggies – Preparation Techniques



- Steaming vegetables assures:
 - Optimal color and appearance
 - Retention of nutrients
 - Enhanced taste and texture

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Note to Presenter:

Read the definition of steaming “A moist-heat cooking technique in which heat is transferred from steam to the food being cooked by direct contact.”

Read to Audience:

The longer that vegetables are exposed to heat, the more nutrients they lose, and the more discolored and soggy they become. To solve the problem of mushy vegetables, vegetables can be steamed and then shocked.

When you are cooking fresh green vegetables such as, green beans, spinach, broccoli, brussel sprouts, or peas, you want them to be cooked through, but still firm enough to slightly resist your bite.

You want them "tender crisp"!

Blanching and Shocking Veggies

- **Blanching:** Food is plunged into boiling water and removed after a brief, timed interval
- **Shocking:** Quickly placing blanched food items into an ice bath or under cold running water to halt the cooking process

You'll end up with beautiful, firm, bright green veggies!



Read to Audience:

When serving green vegetables cold, on salads, or on the salad bar you can blanch them and then shock them in cold water to bring out the vibrant green color.

Boil them for a minute or two to bring out the color and then place them in an ice bath to stop the cooking process.

Steaming Large Quantities

- Cut veggies into small pieces
- Use a perforated pan
- Fill pan half full
- Batch cook vegetables as much as possible
- Drain the excess liquid
- Season
- Serve Immediately



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Photo Credit NABIL K. MARK from <http://www.centredaily.com>
<http://www.centredaily.com/2013/09/07/3775250/well-seasoned-manageable-menu.html>

Read to Audience:

- Cut or trim your vegetables into smaller pieces first. Large chunks are hard to steam quickly.
- Use a perforated pan and don't fill it more than half full. Put the perforated pan in a larger pan with water in the bottom (like a double boiler). Cook vegetables the shortest amount of time for the desired tenderness.
- Batch cook vegetables as much as possible. Vegetables are best when they are held for less than 20 minutes.
- Drain the excess liquid from the cooked vegetables and season with herbs and spices. Serve immediately.

Extending the Season for Local Products



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There are a variety of ways to preserve products to extend the season. These photos are examples of pickling, but canning and freezing are also excellent options.

Why Schools Want to Preserve Local Produce

- Students learn that foods can easily be preserved and enjoyed outside of the growing season
- Pay local employees, thereby keeping local economy stronger
- Maintain nutrient content of foods
- Increase purchases of local foods



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Read to Audience:

Why might you want to consider this aspect of Farm to School? It can definitely add another aspect or layer to your Farm to School program. If you have been looking for another challenge and want to help build your local economy this could be for you. Preserving local foods is like doubling down on a good bet! You not only keep your local dollars in your economy by purchasing from your local farmer, but you also keep more dollars local when you are paying your staff to do the food processing that is done by large food manufacturers in other parts of your region and transported to your distributor.

This is also part of the lesson to teach students in addition to being more connected to where their food comes, they learn to understand the local economics of our food choices.

Lastly, preserving foods locally improves nutrient content of foods. The sooner food is either cooked or preserved, the higher the nutrient content of the food. Additionally, when you preserve the food in your kitchens, you decide what ingredients are used and you can eliminate less healthy ingredients that food manufacturers use such as food dyes. Yellow dye is frequently used in any type of pickle or pickle relish, yet tumeric is a great natural coloring agent and adds flavor to your food.

Who is Preserving Local Produce?

- Rural School
- Urban Schools
- Schools with gardens
- Schools receiving donated product
- Any school that wants to...



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Read to Audience:

There are many different schools and institutions testing out the details, cost effectiveness and viability of preserving local produce. We will discuss some of the reasons why schools have been involved in it, but essentially any school can decide to take this project on, from a small rural school that has a large garden plot, to small urban schools that have to go out to “recover” crops from farmers fields for a small fee – or possibly even free.

This is a lost art of cooking, some schools are deciding to introduce students in home-ec type classes from produce from the school garden.

With the quantity of food we need in our programs, the level of difficulty in doing large amounts of preserving is obviously restrictive. With that being said, this part of Farm to School is like all other aspects – considering starting out small and finding out what works for your school.

When and Where are Schools Preserving Local Produce?

- During summer months
- During normal school days with students
- During work shifts
- Non-school days
- After normal work shifts
- In kitchens of all sizes and capacities



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Read to Audience:

So how are schools doing this? School kitchens are either very empty during the summer months or busy making meals for the summer feeding programs. It can work in either scenario. Either your kitchen schedule is wide open to plan for any type of preserving or you can plan for preserving in smaller quantities into existing summer work schedules.

Again, working with students is a great way to expand their knowledge and experience with local foods. If you want to try tomato sauce, students from a home-ec class could come down to slice the tomatoes and learn about roasting tomatoes (this is a great way to prepare tomatoes for tomato sauce - we'll talk about this more a little later).

The harvest season carries well into the school year which means that some of this can – or even must - be planned for during normal school/work days. The process can often times be broken into different stages or steps which can be broken up and incorporated into a normal work day – or near normal shifts. Work can also be planned on a non- school days.



Read to Audience:

The best way to start is with low hanging fruit! With the right tools, skills and plans vegetables like pickles, tomatoes, and herbs can easily be preserved for use throughout the school year.

There are options for what type of produce you can use for this project. You can purchase local foods from your farmer. It is important to plan your needs and review these quantities with your farmer so they can plan their harvest. For some produce, there comes a time when there is a narrow window of time to finish the harvest, i.e., before a freeze. A farmer might be willing to sell you large quantities for a reduced price or possibly even free if you can find volunteers to pick the produce. This is an example of recovering or rescuing crops. There is much of what farmers grow that is lost at the end of the season – they don't want to see it go to waste.

Some farmers are also willing to sell their “seconds” as a way to recover some sales that would otherwise be lost. Grocery stores, restaurants and CSA's all want the perfect looking peppers or cucumbers, and the odd-shaped ones often go to waste.

Finally, USDA programs are allowed to accept donations from community members – for example, hold a “Rhubarb Round-up” in the spring and ask families to send in all the rhubarb they can – preferably whole so you can process as you would like. Rhubarb can be easily, washed, chopped, measured and frozen for use at any time.

These examples of recipes that are fairly simple that can be done in many kitchen operations.

Some of the equipment that is handy to have is:

Robo coupe – to slice and dice the produce quickly

Immersion Blender – to puree cooked foods, like tomatoes

Sheet Trays – used to roast tomatoes

Speed Racks – to cool roasted tomatoes

Cutting Boards & Knives – to slice, dice and chop produce

Convection Ovens – to roast tomatoes

Scales – to weigh rather than measure produce

Brasing pan, steam jacket kettle or other very large pot – used to puree the roasted tomatoes

Large containers – to store pickles in cooler or refrigerator

4” hotel steamtable pans – used to freeze the portioned tomato sauce

Plastic bags – used to line the hotel steam table pans, place tomato sauce in; after frozen remove bag from pan. Stack the bags of tomato sauce in freezer for easy storage.

Pickles – Hints for Success



Cucumbers

- A bushel of cucumbers weighs 48 pounds and yields 16 to 24 quarts (an average of 2 pounds per quart)
- Use odd-shaped cucumbers for bread & butter type pickles



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Here are some tips for success for preparing cucumber pickles

In the photo on the left, a staff member is using a robocoupe to slice many cucumbers at once.

On the right, you can see the final product



A few different batches of cucumbers in process. The robot coupe is a great tool for processing these items.

Tomato Sauce

Cutting up
200
pounds of
Roma
tomatoes



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We will now show a series of photos demonstrating the process of making tomato sauce from 200 pounds of Roma tomatoes.



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Seasoning tomatoes and then sliding them into a hot oven until they are roasted



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Almost done, looking good!



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Read to Audience:

Using an immersion blender to turn the tomatoes into sauce



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Read to Audience:

Measuring sauce.

1-four inch pan = 3# 10 cans



A "Story Board" to teach the students about how the marinara sauce on their ravioli was made with locally grown tomatoes

This kitchen in the Hopkins Public School District made a story board to show and explain the process of making the tomato sauce to students.

Additional Culinary Skills Resources

- National Food Service Management Institute
 - Culinary Technique For Healthy School Meals
- Videos of Chef Cyndie Story in Florida
- Produce Safety University
- Recipe collections listed in handout

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Notes to Presenter: These resources are listed on the handout. Ask the group if they have any other favorite resources to share.



Now I would like to share some resources from with National Farm to School Network with you

National Farm to School Network’s website is www.farmtoschool.org

Join the network to receive regular news and updates on farm to school

Search the website for informational resources, webinars, events, and conferences

Click on the map and connect with your state leads and regional lead agencies who can assist you.

National Farm to Cafeteria Conference



April 15-18, 2014 in Austin, Texas
www.farmtocafeteriaconference.org

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Notes to Presenter: Read full description below while on this slide

This is an excellent conference for all things farm to school, farm to preschool and beyond. This conference is a great opportunity to connect and network with the movers and shakers of farm to school and to learn about best practices, tools, and resources.

October is National Farm to School Month

NATIONAL
FARM to
SCHOOL
MONTH



More information at www.farmtoschoolmonth.org

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Note to presenter: National Farm to School month occurs each October. If you are hosting a training in August, September or October (or if Farm to School Month is relevant to your audience) please include this slide. Otherwise, please delete this slide if it is untimely."

And we are celebrating farm to school month this October. This is a great opportunity to start your F2S activity or highlight an existing one.

Evaluation and Future Assistance

- Complete Evaluation Forms
- Future opportunity for one-on-one training with expert

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Notes to Presenter: Read below text to audience

“This training is part of the Farm to School Peer Leadership Network”

Thank You!



Name
Title
Organization
Phone
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Note to Presenters(s):

Please customize this slide with your contact information and the logo of your organization (if applicable)