



Roots to Harvest

Local Food Literacy Through School Meals

February 22nd, 2017

Local Food Literacy in the Cafeteria



Get Excited – about local food and working with community including growers

Build Relationships– find your champions



Find Funds – Look for outside funding sources, inside funding partners and community partners



Get Students Involved – before you start with planning and later in food preparation

Train Cafeteria Staff – this helps to get buy-in while building important skills –



Start Small - and build momentum

Answer FAQ: “Students need to not only learn about local foods in the classroom, they also need to be able to purchase food that is in season from the cafeteria. Are there opportunities or examples of cafeterias that are using more local foods in their menus and/or involving education in their mandate?”



AWESOME FOOD FROM
LOCAL FARMS COMING TO
A CAFETERIA NEAR YOU

FORM TO CAF

THUNDER BOY

Successes:

- **Learning opportunity for students** – large-scale, fresh, ownership, curriculum links
- **Good quality food** – feel good about serving it
- **Busy** – longer line ups , more money
- **Well advertised** - buzz created in school and caf
- **Staff and students excited to eat in the cafeteria**

Challenges

- **Purchasing from local producers**
- **Extra work** – need student support
- **Seasonal availability**





Screaming Avocado Cafe



- A collection of students, staff and friends @ Stratford Northwestern Secondary School.
- Offers healthy and delicious daily lunches to the student and staff. Our students using locally sourced ingredients
- Feeds up to 300 patrons every lunch hour
- Innovative high school culinary arts program that has grown to include over 200 students per year; a large kitchen classroom; 3000 square feet of organic garden; an organic greenhouse; a six acre school farm initiative; a culinary club with national and international experiences;
- <http://screamingavocado.blogspot.ca/>

Good Food Cafes – Food Share

PREVAILING CAFETERIA MODEL

Heat and serve production – supports a minimum number of jobs

Students tastes are ignored – food served rarely looks or tastes good and is often culturally inappropriate to the student body

Food is often processed and purchased pre-assembled – supports a minimum number of jobs

Jobs involve repetition and little autonomy

Foods are purchased to maximize profits, without regard for source

SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL CAFETERIA

Scratch and speed-scratch production – supports a maximum number of jobs

Student engagement helps students pick menus of their choice

Emphasis on whole, fresh and local ingredients – supports a maximum number of jobs

Jobs offer opportunities for skill development and creativity

Locally-produced foods are purchased where possible



A collaboration between cafeteria staff, foods teachers, students, local producers and distributors.

Mission

- To position Get Fresh Café as hub for school food activities
- To offer innovative meal and snack options
- To ensure healthy choices are the first choice
- To always explore local and Ontario options first
- To provide collaborative opportunities for student learning
- To market and sell food with the end goal of being a self sustaining business entity



Connecting Cafeteria and Classroom

- Best hooks –
 - Eating
 - Working with a chef
 - Contributing to school community
- Benefits
- Ways to link food lit to cafeteria meals



Alternative Avenues for Local Food in Schools: Ingredients for Success

- Farm to Caf
- Field to Fork
- Friday Fry Day
- Focus on Garlic
- Local Food Month – Oct/June
- School gardens

<http://ecosource.ca/about-us/publications/>

ALTERNATIVE AVENUES

Local Food Pilot: Farm to Caf



School Name
Sir Winston Churchill
CVI, Superior CVI,
lunch special in
Hammarskjöld High
school.

School Name
Roots to Harvest
Schools, Thunder
beaches and

School Program
Food and Nutrition
eachers and
Cafeteria

The Farm to Caf (F2C) program is a collaborative project that provides a \$5 local lunch special in high school cafeterias. Partners include teachers and students in the foods and nutrition classes, cafeteria managers, the Lakehead Public School Board and Roots to Harvest, a community food organization in Thunder Bay. Stakeholders set a menu and schedule, cafeteria managers order food, and the foods and nutrition classes help prepare meals with fresh and local ingredients which typically take more time than regular cafeteria menu items. Students work alongside cafeteria staff to prepare and serve 50-70 meals to students and staff at each school, one day each month.

This project emerged out of a decision in 2013 by several food and month, teachers and Roots to Harvest to address the need for healthy local food in the cafeterias and for more hands on cooking time for students in Food and Nutrition (F2C). Considerable effort was needed to establish ordering and delivery procedures that accommodate the existing order and delivery infrastructure of both the local producers, distributors, and cafeterias.

Roots to Harvest takes teachers leveraged the learning opportunities around local though food literacy cafeteria managers order food, and field both the local producers, distributors, and experience with local food through the Farm both the local producers, distributors, and connections that deepen their understanding of local food.

"It's only October and I've had 14 cooking days with my grade 10s. I would never be able to cook that much on my food budget. The F2C project gives us more opportunities to cook, which is where the kids really shine."

Nancy White, Food and Nutrition teacher at Superior CVI

Ingredients for Success:



Student friendly recipes. Familiar tastes and textures (i.e. hamburgers and pulled pork) are preferable to less familiar tastes for young people and the specific audience Sir Winston Churchill.



Find the win win. Students fill the "labour gap" created by using more fresh and whole foods in the cafeteria so it is a win win for the school and the cafeteria managers.



Embed project in the whole school. Promotions before the event and feedback from students on flavours and combinations are part of the program (i.e. announcements, free taste tests, etc.).



Community collaboration and relationships with young people. Building relationships between cafeteria managers and teachers so that meal prep tasks can be delegated between the cafeteria and classes effectively.



Integrate food recipes, and local food into the program. Purchasing local food from Thunder Bay producers is a key component of the program. At the same time, students learn about the foods, prepare them, and serve.

Wrapping up

- Where to find money to help?

<http://www.foodandfarming.ca/taste-your-future-contest/>

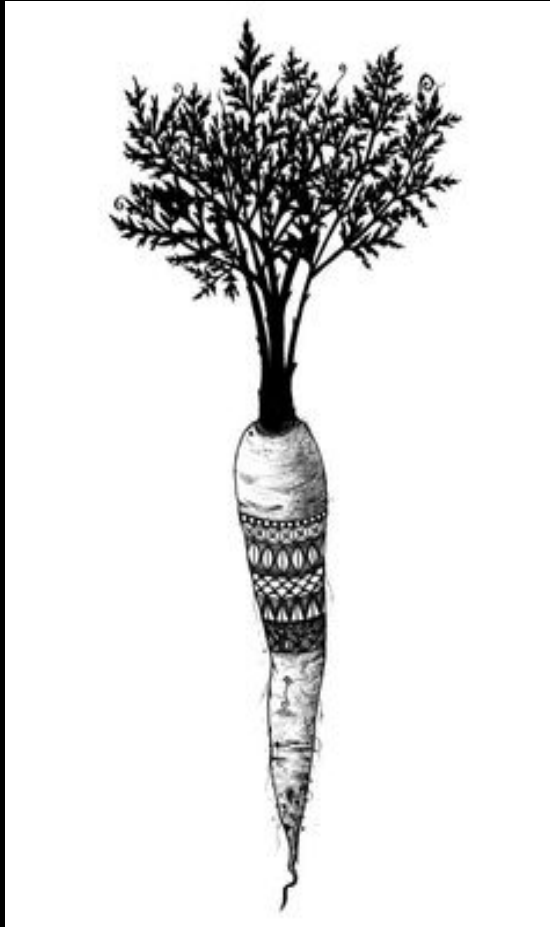
[http://www.greenbeltfund.ca/local food literacy grant stream](http://www.greenbeltfund.ca/local_food_literacy_grant_stream)

Resources

- FoodShare - www.foodshare.net/programs
 - GBC <http://foodshare.net/program/crunch/>

Where to Look for More information

- Alternative Avenues (provides examples of how schools have brought local food to their schools): <http://ecosource.ca/wp-content/uploads/Alternative-Avenues-to-Local-Food-in-School.pdf>
- Sustain Ontario's Local Sustainable Food Procurement Toolkit (provides policy language and other tools for Broader Public Sector): <https://sustainontario.com/2015/12/02/28067/news/new-toolkit-initiating-sustainable-food-procurement-policies-in-your-region>
- OntarioFresh.ca <https://ontariofresh.ca/>
- A Fresh Crunch in School Lunch: The BC Farm to School Guide: <http://farmtoschool.phabc.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2015/10/F2Sguide-2nd-edition-singles.pdf>
- CSAs, Local Farms, Farmers' Markets, Buying Groups – **Thunder Bay Superior Seasons**



For more information contact
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Or search us on Facebook:
Roots to Harvest

Go to our website!

www.rootstoharvest.org