

HOW-TO:

Host a Local Food Tasting in School Cafeterias

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS



A “Farm to School” taste test introduces students to fresh, nutritious foods while teaching them about locally grown fruits and vegetables.

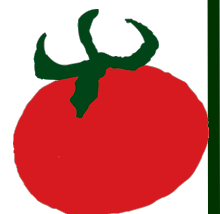
Taste tests are fun & memorable experiences for students, creating positive food environments & involving them in the choice to enjoy fresh fruits & vegetables in their school meal. Taste-testing events also help build community among school food service providers & the school community members that volunteer to host the activity.



REMEMBER:

- Good communication is the key to a successful event. Farm to School staff at Farm Fresh RI will help you connect with your cafeteria staff to start planning a taste test.
- Collaboration with the district Food Service Director or kitchen manager is imperative; you must partner with them to plan any cafeteria taste test. The ability to accommodate a taste testing activity depends upon many variables, including cafeteria space, schedule, budget and labor.
- Your cafeteria staff knows best what may or may not be possible in your school cafeteria.

Let the Farm Fresh RI—Farm to School staff help you plan!



LET'S GET STARTED!

1. Call/email Farm to School staff @ Farm Fresh RI & let us know:

- school & district where you'd like to host a taste test*

2. We're your allies, so we'll:

- connect you to the district's Food Service Director
- identify ideas & resources to help you feel comfortable hosting the taste-testing

3. Preparing for your cafeteria visit:

- find out about the local farm that grew the featured product*
- learn some fun, kid-friendly facts about the featured item, such as "*The longest carrot ever grown was 19ft. long!*"
- consider recruiting fellow parents, teachers or school administrators in the taste test activities.
- review general food safety guidelines*

4. You're at the school, now what?

- sign-in at the main office at least 20 minutes before lunch starts.
- immediately find your cafeteria contact who will help you get the lay-of-the-land. They will supply you with a local food sample, gloves & a place to be in the cafeteria. (*Depending on the location, you may host a table or visit students at their tables*).
- wash your hands thoroughly (& make sure they're dry) before putting on gloves.

5. Praise & Smile!

- smile & encourage students to try the samples.
- give students who taste a sticker as an incentive*

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[*www.farmfreshri.org](http://www.farmfreshri.org)

has profiles on
every RI farm!

***Food Safety Review**

<http://bit.ly/21aNUCR>

Be Mindful of:

- Food Safety
- Food Allergies
- Food Etiquette

Trying new foods can be scary! Praise those brave souls who go beyond their comfort zone!

*If your Food Service Director doesn't have stickers, ask Farm Fresh RI!

CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESS:

School's Address:

Principal's Name: _____

Kitchen Staff Name: _____

of students enrolled: _____

Lunch Period Start & End Time: _____

Each grade level has lunch at:

Follow us & tag us!



/RIFarmToCafeteria



/RIFARM2CAF



/harvestofthemoth

PRE-SAMPLING PREP

- Learn something about the farm where the sample was sourced
- Look up some fun/nutritional facts on the sample to share with the students
- Bring any materials you'd like to share w/ the students (ex. visual aids, pictures...)

SET-UP

- Check in at office & say 'Hi' to the principal on your way to cafeteria!
- Set up a table w/ materials from the Food Service Director
- Make sure your hands are clean, gloved, & your hair is pulled back

DURING TASTING

- Share local samples at your table or offer to students sitting at their tables
- Praise those brave souls who try it!
- Take pictures!

AFTER TASTING

- Thank the Food Service Director
- Check in w/ office to make sure it's OK to share pictures you have taken.
- Email & let us know how it went! Send us pictures or tag us on social media!



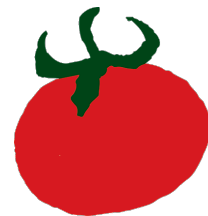
When the stickers don't work, entice them w/ your words!

"We'll taste it together! 1,2,3...TASTE!"

"Just take a teeny, tiny mouse bite"

Encourage those who don't want to taste, to explore the sample!

What's its shape, texture, color...



Online Resources:

<http://growing-minds.org/farm-to-school-taste-tests/>

http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/team-nutrition/pdf/homegrown_taste-test_guide.pdf

[Guide to Taste Testing Local Foods in Schools](#) (VT FEED)