



How To Host Your Own Elementary Eat-In Ontario Harvest Celebration Updated for 2011!

Join Us in Celebrating Eat-In Ontario!

The following is a collection of ideas and activities for teachers, parents, students and other school community members to draw on as they celebrate Ontario's Harvest and encourage active participation in their school's Eat In Ontario event.

Introduction To Eat-In Ontario:

What: *Eat-In Ontario* is a province-wide fall harvest celebration with fun-filled activities, using fresh local produce to teach students of all ages the joys of cooking, growing and tasting good, healthy food. This event is part of FoodShare's *Recipe for Change* initiative, a partnership in which we aim to build Food Literacy across Ontario by delivering hands-on, curriculum-linked activities. This initiative will get students active in their own learning about where their food comes from and how to grow, cook, and enjoy nutritious food as part of an active and healthy lifestyle—transforming classrooms, school yards, and appetites across Ontario.

When: The official date is **September 30th, 2011** – but you can celebrate local food any time!

Why: *Eat-In Ontario* is not only fun, but it's also a great way to promote local food with your students. Local food education encourages a more sustainable food system where consumers know their producers, the farmland is preserved and the food is fresh! Enjoying more local food also helps support our local economy and local farmers. See "What You Need to Know About Local Food" in the Extras section of this guide for more information.

How: *Eat-In Ontario* can be as simple as crunching into a locally grown fruit or vegetable, or as special as your own day-long fall harvest celebration in class. Here in Toronto, FoodShare has registered around 500 students from JK to Grade 12 to celebrate on the front lawn of Queen's Park with local food tastings and fun, hands-on Food Literacy workshops to complement. You too can host an *Eat-In Ontario* with your students at your own school with this "How To" guide in addition to our free *Eat-In Ontario* curriculum-linked lesson plans online (www.foodshare.net). **Don't forget to register your class!** We want to know about all the amazing *Eat-In Ontario* activities that happen across the province. You can register by email at recipeforchange@foodshare.net.

New for 2011: This year, *Eat-In Ontario* falls just one week before Ontario's provincial election, the perfect time to have your students fully understand what a future of "saying yes to food" would look like. We encourage you and your class to incorporate Food Literacy and election education to make your *Eat-In Ontario* even more meaningful. Join FoodShare when we "say yes to food" this coming election!

Interactive Eat-In Ontario Activities:

- **Organize Your Own Eat-In Ontario Harvest Celebration! – Page 4**

Your students will love being a part of the province-wide fun! Try our quick and easy harvest celebration activities!

- **Taste Locally Grown Produce And Cast Your Vote! – Page 8**

Eat it raw or cook it up – just make sure you taste some delicious local food this fall! Find out what your students really think when they vote on their favourites and at the same time, learn about the upcoming Provincial election!

- **Local Food Party Platter Platform – Page 10**

Students will learn all about party “platforms” when they make a pitch for their own unique selection of local fresh produce ingredients.

- **Prepare A Signature Salad Using Local Produce – Page 11**

Local Food Chef – Are you Ready!? One of FoodShare’s most popular workshops, Signature Salads will get students of all ages excited about preparing (and eating!) fresh, local ingredients... trust us.

- **Local Food Sensory Detective Work – Page 13**

So simple, but possibly the most fun... Students will get to use their sense of smell, touch and taste to explore local food more closely than ever!

- **Fun With Media, Local Food And Recipe For Change – Page 14**

Create colourful posters, flyers, e-cards or banners with your students to showcase their favourite local foods, or for older students, what part of Food Literacy education most “a-peels” to them.

- **Perform A Great Big Crunch – Page 17**

1, 2, 3... Crunch! Find some Ontario apples to crunch into with your students – they’ll love the synchronized silliness of it all and won’t even notice how much they’re learning about Ontario’s most popular fruit!

- **Create Your Own Harvest Of The Month – Page 19**

Include fun facts, Ontario farmer profiles, healthy recipes, book reviews and more into your very own Harvest of the Month newsletter. Or, even better, integrate it into your school’s regular newsletter or email updates!

- **Let Worms Eat Your Lunch – Page 20**

Did you know that worms make great classroom pets? Your students will love building this worm bin and learning about the cycle of scraps to compost to food!

Extras:

- **Event Planning Tips and Hints for your *Eat-In Ontario* - **Page 21****
Get ideas for your own Eat-In Ontario by reading some of our catering and event planning tips.
- **What You Need To Know About Local Food – **Page 25****
The who, what, where, how and why of local food.
- **Facts About Ontario Politics – **Page 27****
Fill your class activities this September with fun facts before the election.
- **Apple Tasting & Judging Graph - **Page 28****
Use this graph and adapt it to create a unique judging chart. List adjectives, find averages and create interesting shapes for each food you try!
- **Write Or Create Mail For Your MP Or MPP – **Page 29****
Even younger students can have their say when it comes to food! Sign, write, decorate and illustrate to showcase why they think good healthy food is so important.
- **Invite A Guest To Come And Speak To The Class – **Page 30****
When it comes to food, there are so many choices for guest speakers... Remember to think from “field to table” when learning about the people in our food system.
- **Go On A Local Food Walking Tour Or Field Trip – **Page 34****
Field trips can be as simple as walking around your school’s community. There are markets, gardens, stores and farms to be explored!

Organize Your Own *Eat-In Ontario* Harvest Celebration!



Your students will love being a part of the *Eat-In Ontario* province-wide fun! Celebrations can be as simple as crunching into some tasty, local food or a day-long event; it's up to you!

What? An *Eat-In Ontario* harvest celebration should be a celebration of all things local! It's an opportunity to get together, enjoy some fresh food and teach students of all ages about the importance of being aware of what we eat.

Where? If you're heading outdoors and are lucky enough to have green or open space at your school with access to shade, electricity (if cooking on site) and plenty of play-space, then you don't have to go anywhere! If not, get in touch with your school board's permit office to see what's available or perhaps make use of some local park space. Note: parks may require permits too!

Otherwise, any indoor space large enough to comfortably hold the students you intend to host should do the trick (e.g. classroom, school hall, auditorium, gymnasium...).

When? It's really up to you when you want to host your school's harvest celebration, however this year's official *Eat-In Ontario* date is **Friday, September 30th 2011**.

Why? An *Eat-In Ontario* harvest celebration is a great way to boost the food literacy focus within your school. Engaging students to become interested in where their food comes from, and the journey it takes to get from field to table.... Oh yeah, and it's fun!

How? All you need to do is register your school's event by emailing us at recipeforchange@foodshare.net. We'd love to hear about the activities you're doing with your school and see any accompanying photos! For event planning tips, see "extras".

Quick Activity Ideas for your Eat-In Ontario Harvest Celebration:

Leading up to the day:

Promotional Resources:

- Include the students in deciding how to best promote the event (if including more than one class, or inviting parents etc). Ideas include posters, emails, PA announcements, newsletter inserts or short videos.
- Engage in art/graphic activities to create resources to promote the event.

On the Day:

Physical Activity:

- Local Egg and Spoon race
 - Use boiled eggs (to avoid sticky accidents) on a teaspoon and let the students race each other
- Pollen Pick-Up Relay race
 - Have busy bees dodge obstacles to reach their flower destination, pick up the pollen and make it back to the hive

Gardening and Compost:

- Have the students investigate a finished versus an unfinished compost using magnifying glasses. They can draw what they see, and describe the difference between the two using their senses.
- Have a worm showing, and provide students with the opportunity to hold a worm!

Math:

- Guess how many beans/peas/berries in the jar!

Tasting Food:

- Taste-testing of local produce (read on for more details)
- Perform a *Great Big Crunch* (read on for more details)

- Have the students shake plastic containers of whipping cream (with a marble in it for quicker results) to make butter. Once you've poured off the buttermilk, the remaining butter can be mixed with fresh, finely chopped herbs.
- Have a cooking demonstration of a local, healthy recipe and then taste it. Students can contribute by measuring out ingredients according to recipe directions ahead of time.

Arts and Crafts:

- Cut out apples of different sizes and colours (red, pink, orange, yellow, green) from recycled felt or paper. These can be pinned onto shirts or onto a classroom bulletin board for a colourful display.
- Make buzzing bees from wooden pegs and yellow and black yarn (tied in a bow to create "wings")
- Make 3D sculptures from food (e.g. Mr. Potato Head, pasta necklaces)
- Make "FoodPrints" – after tracing the outline of the student's footprints onto paper, make a footprint collage. You could use old cooking magazines, drawings, or free-hand cutouts. Explain how eating local food can reduce the effect on our environment (reduce the size of our "FoodPrint" or "ecological footprint").
- Make a fall food collage, using cut-outs from magazines, or drawings. You can use the Ontario Fruits and Vegetables Availability Guides from Foodland Ontario to guide your choices (www.foodlandontario.ca).
- Decorate/paint recycled objects to use as planters (e.g. pop cans, yoghurt containers).
- FoodLand Ontario have great seasonal food colouring pages: <http://www.foodland.gov.on.ca/english/kids.html>

Drama, Dance and Music:

- Have a Rotten Apple Dance Party! For more information, go to our website to view the workshop outline! (www.foodshare.net)



Displays:

- Display any classroom work done by the students in classes related to local food, nutrition and agriculture.
- Include some promotional material created by the students – don't forget to do some in French and any languages your students speak at home.
- Seasonal food centre-pieces or displays:
 - E.g. different sized and coloured pumpkins, corn stalks, scare crows

Special Guests:

- Read on for more ideas on guest speakers.

Literature:

- Story corner using children's storybooks about food, culture, traditions. For Field to Table Schools' book resource list, email us at recipeforchange@foodshare.net.
- Use food-related book covers to create original stories with your class. Have students sit in a circle and pass the book cover along to make a progressive (and usually hilarious) story!

Fundraising:

- Try and get a local produce basket donated by a local retailer to raffle-off (e.g. cheese, breads, condiments, vegetables, fruit).
- If it's a big event, sell food and beverages prepared on site such as smoothies, freshly squeezed juices, sandwiches, wraps, salads, vegetable soups, barbequed veggie or local meat kebabs, corn on the cob, mini whole-wheat muffin pizzas with vegetables and low fat cheese, frozen yoghurt pops, fresh fruit salad, granola, yoghurt and fruit parfait, spiced carrot whole-wheat muffins. Food safety standards will have to be followed, as per any school event.

Taste Locally Grown Produce and Cast Your Vote:

For more information about the how, what, where and why of local food, see “extras”.

Okay, so now you have your fresh, seasonal produce item (e.g. corn, squash, garlic, etc.), and you're ready to do some tastings! You can go about this with your class in the following ways:

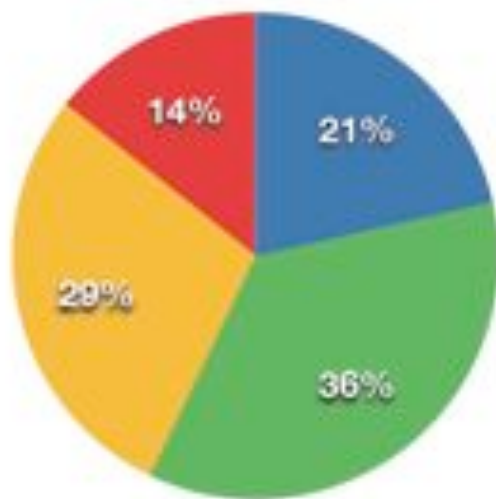
- 1. Eat it raw.** The simplest and often the healthiest way to taste fruits and vegetables. Of course, this doesn't apply to all produce items but we'd highly recommend trying to include at least some raw items on your tasting menu. Raw fruits go without saying. Raw vegetables such as beans, carrots, thinly sliced beets or radishes, peppers, broccoli and celery make tasty dippers. *You could serve with a simple hummus dip of blended chickpeas, tahini, olive oil and garlic.



- 2. Cook it up (but keep it real).** Try and keep cooking and processing to a minimum when preparing local food tasters. You want to preserve the natural flavour as much as possible for the purpose of the activity so usually a light steam or a quick boil will do.
- 3. Compare and Contrast.** Now the fun begins. Generate a list of descriptive culinary words (e.g. tangy, rough, flaky, sour, bitter...) before asking your students to use not only their senses, but also some of those new culinary words to describe what they taste. It's fun to compare different varieties of the same vegetable too, for example, different coloured heirloom tomatoes, red vs. yellow peppers, arugula vs. spinach greens, etc. You could also do

comparisons between local and imported items (e.g. local, raw honey vs. factory-made honey). We like to use a tasting graph adapted from *Slow Food* (www.slowfood.com) to guide sensory tasting education sessions with students (see “extras”). They can be re-drawn and adapted to your tasting activity too!

4. Cast Your Vote! What better way to learn more about class majority, or democracy, than with food! Allocate a different local fruit or vegetable to represent an existing or made up political party (e.g. Liberal Leeks, The National Dandelion Party, Conservative Cucumbers, Green Kales...). Cast your votes before graphing the results and announcing the winning “party”. Tastings, voting and graphing could happen often to ensure regular changeover of the party “in power”, and so that students try lots of different fruits and vegetables and also to encourage seasonal changes.



- Liberal Leeks
- Conservative Cucumbers
- The National Dandelion Party
- The Green Kales

Local Food Party Platter Platform!

Have students pick from a range of colourful, fresh local ingredients to create their own personal “party platter”.

Students can make a pitch (or outline their party “platform”) to the class, explaining why their party platter is the best choice. Students could talk about the *appearance, smells, textures, nutritional quality, taste* and *versatility* of their platter!

Extra Activities:

- Create as many recipes as possible using the ingredients on the party platter and make recipe cards
- Sketch the party platters and decorate the classroom
- Use the ingredients to make a *Signature Salad* (read on for activity write-up)
- Set a trading challenge, for example, allow students to trade with their classmates up to 4 times to see who can get the most fruits or vegetables of the same colour on their platter
- We’d love to see photos or copies of your party platforms to share with other Eat-In Ontario participants – so send them along to recipeforchange@foodshare.net



Prepare a Signature Salad Using Local Produce:

You Will Need:

- An array of different seasonal fruits and vegetables: e.g. Mixed greens, carrots, tomatoes large and small, cucumber, red onion, apples, pears, etc.
- A few salad dressing ingredient options: e.g. Olive oil, canola oil, apple cider vinegar, balsamic vinegar, plain yoghurt, honey, mustard, maple syrup, salt and pepper, etc.
- Some protein-rich options: e.g. pressed cottage cheese, tofu, chickpeas, kidney beans, pumpkin seeds, boiled egg etc.



Workshop and Recipe Directions:

Criteria

- Begin by discussing the *food guide* with your students. You can order copies in various languages from *Health Canada's* website (www.hc-sc.gc.ca).
- As a class, set the criteria for your *Signature Salads*, for example:
 - a. The salad must be presented well, with at least three different colours. One of the colours must be green and one must be orange.
 - b. More than three ingredients must be local. Visit *Foodland Ontario* for an availability guide: www.foodland.gov.on.ca.
 - c. The salad must contain at least one protein-rich choice.
 - d. The salad dressing must be made from scratch, using a combination of tart, sweet and salty flavours. You can use the *Tasting and Judging Graph* (see “extras”) to help you decide which ingredients have each of these flavours.

Getting to Know Your Ingredients

- When you're ready to start your salads, address each food separately, talk about how and where it's grown and how to prepare it (e.g. a carrot is a root vegetable that grows

underground. You can eat it raw or cooked, either in small rounds or as “sticks” by cutting it like this....).

- Once the students have an idea of each of the foods they have to choose from, it’s up to them to create their own masterpiece, however they like, according to the set criteria.

Dressings

- Salad dressings can be done all together, as small groups or in pairs. A good dressing should have a combination sour, sweet and salty (or “vinegary”) – being brought together by an oil or fat (preferably unsaturated). For those that prefer creamy dressings, try a plain yoghurt or silken tofu (in the blender). Dressings can be shaken in jars, whisked in bowls or blended in mixers.

Wrap-Up and/or Judging

- The end result is an individualized, healthy salad that students will enjoy (because they made it!).
- There is also an opportunity here to turn kitchen activities into an “Iron Chef” style salad-making contest. This could be as simple as *introducing a judge* to taste the students’ salads and evaluation according to the agreed criteria.
- Students can make a “pitch” for their salad, promoting why it’s so healthy, how they stuck to the criteria and why their salad dressing is the most delicious. Link this back to politicians during a rally, debate or campaign trail, promoting why the public should vote for them.



Local Food Sensory Detective Work

Make a List

First, create a list of adjectives that students can use to describe ingredients, for example, *bumpy, rough, smooth, sweet, salty, bitter, crisp, acidic, spicy...*

Touch

1. Take some of the produce items (say, 3) and place them individually in brown paper bags, recycled gift bags or simply under a tablecloth, as long as they're out of sight.
2. Have the students reach into the bag or under the cloth/towel and try and guess which fruit or vegetable it is, just by feeling it.
3. Depending on how difficult it is, you may need to give some clues, for example (tomato):
 - a. It grows on a plant in the warmer months
 - b. It can be red, yellow, orange, purple and sometimes even stripy!
 - c. It can be really big, or really small, depending on the variety
 - d. It makes a delicious spaghetti sauce, etc.
4. Ask students to describe what they feel before guessing – a lemon may feel bumpy, round, rough, hard, etc.

Smell

1. This activity is best suited to herbs and spices.
2. Using small canisters, resealable containers or ziplock bags, hold a variety of unlabelled herbs and spices.
3. Have the students smell each one, trying to guess what it is.
4. Sometimes students won't know the actual name of the herb or spice, but will recognize it's scent, for example, "*My mom uses this in her pumpkin pie!*" – recognition alone is okay too.
5. It's also fun to have the fresh version of the herb available too. So the children can try and match them up and make comparisons between the raw and processed versions.

Taste

1. Simply repeat the Local Food Tasting activity, but with blindfolds!



Fun with Media, Local Food and *Recipe for Change*

Local Food

- Pick a seasonal, local produce item to study in class. You could research the following things:



- Where and how it's grown/produced in Ontario
- Who it's grown by (visit the *Ontario Fresh Farm Marketing Association* website: <http://ontariofarmfresh.com/locator/>)
- What nutritional value it has
- How to prepare it
- What it tastes like

- Use principles of a healthy lifestyle to promote that produce item in various media formats to demonstrate an understanding of it's origin, it's journey from field to table and its benefits as part of a healthy, balanced diet.

Recipe for Change

FoodShare's *Recipe for Change* is an initiative to mobilize policy makers, students, educators and key decision makers to help actively integrate cooking, gardening, composting, nutrition and food literacy into provincial curriculum and school practice from JK to grade 12.



We want to improve the health of Ontario children by changing the grade 12 Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) to include food literacy so that all students learn how to make healthy food choices, access at least one healthy meal a day at school, and increase their physical activity through food activities such as gardening, cooking, and composting at school.

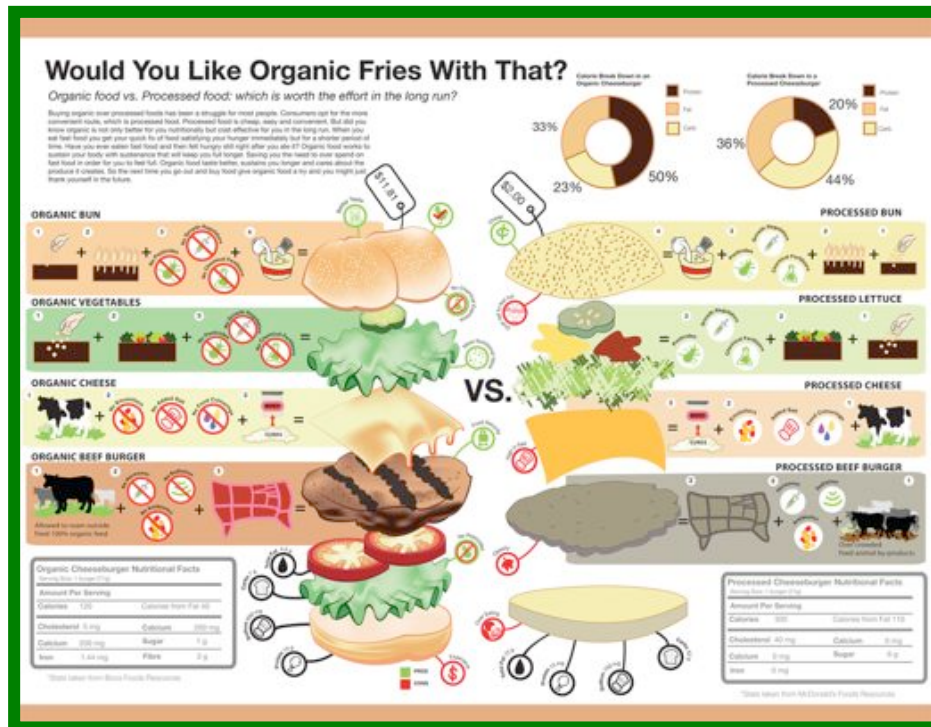
- Eat-In Ontario is just one way to get involved with *Recipe for Change*, for more ideas to get students of all ages involved visit our website (www.foodshare.net)
- Write us a letter and tell us what your *Recipe for Change* is – or you can request *Recipe for Change* postcards for your class by emailing recipeforchange@foodshare.net. These postcards

are self-addressed (to FoodShare) so that your students can tell us all about their own personal *Recipe for Change* and send them back!

- Next you could either let your students decide for themselves, or take a class “bean poll” to determine what different features of *Recipe for Change* your whole class thinks is most important. You could choose from some or all of the following:
 - Learning about good, healthy food and nutrition
 - Learning how to shop for good, healthy food
 - Learning how to cook a variety of healthy meals
 - Learning how to compost food scraps
 - Learning how to grow food at home or at school
 - Understanding the importance of sharing food with family, friends and the community
 - Knowing where our food comes from and how the food system works
 - Understanding how our food choices effect the environment
 - And, for older students, becoming active around Food Security and Social Justice issues
- Graph the results using a “pie” chart (e.g. pumpkin pie) to show the most important to least important. You can then talk about percentages, majorities and perhaps even portion sizes!



- Now it's time to use the principles of *Recipe for Change* to promote the initiative in various media formats. Students can either focus on what's most important to them, or what's most important to the whole class as determined by the "bean poll".
- To see how students from Sheridan College's Bachelor of Applied Illustration Program represented their chosen food issue, visit Sustain Ontario's website (www.sustainontario.com/good-food-ideas-for-kids). Here's one example from student, Alan Dungo titled, "Would You Like Organic Fries With That?"



Perform a *Great Big Crunch*

Originating in 2008, FoodShare's *Great Big Crunch* is an example of a simple, fun idea gone viral. In 2011, over 112,000 students participated in the annual crunch, held just before March break - but you can *crunch* any time!



Participating in *The Great Big Crunch* can be as easy as purchasing a bag of delicious local apples and coordinating a classroom or school-wide synchronized crunch. No matter how you crunch, you'll be sending a message to your students about the nutritious and delicious benefits of apples.

You Will Need:

Enough apples for all of your students:

1. Bags of local apples can be found in most grocery stores for under \$5 a bag. If necessary check with your local grocer and see if you can negotiate a better price or donation for your event. Make sure, when possible, you are buying local apples and supporting the hard work of local apple growers.
2. Alternatively you can ask students to bring in their own apple and have some extra apples on hand for any student that does not bring one in.

Some apple facts, trivia and activities:

Review FoodShare's website for extra tips and ideas including how to introduce and coordinate the crunch, activities for the classroom, and delicious recipes to try (www.foodshare.net/school-crunch.htm).

How to Get Crunching:

1. Introduce your students to *The Great Big Crunch* by telling them that they are a part of a cross-Canada, record-setting annual event promoting the healthy crunch of apples! Or perhaps this will be practice for next March's *crunch*.
2. Distribute apples to each of your students ... but don't crunch yet!

Before the crunch, encourage your students to:

- Think about how the apple was grown. Picture it first as an apple blossom flower on the tree in spring, being pollinated by bees and then transforming into a fruit, ripening in the sunny weather.
- Imagine what the orchard looked like, the growers who work there, and the workers who harvest and wash the apples.
- Think about the journey the apple took from the orchard to the grocery store. Were your local apples transported to you by bike, car, truck, train, plane or ship?

Share some fun apple facts

- Apples are the most varied food on Earth with 7500 varieties grown throughout the world.
- Canadians eat an average of 86 apples per year!
- 60% of our apples are eaten out-of-hand; the remainder are processed.
- The science of apple growing is called *pomology*.
- The largest apple ever picked weighed 3 pounds!
- Apples are a member of the rose family.
- It takes energy from 50 leaves to produce one apple!
- Fresh apples float because 25% of their volume is air.
- It takes four apples to make one glass of pure apple juice!
- China is the largest producer of apples!
- With the skin on, apples are a great source of both fibre and vitamin C.



For more great apple facts, visit our Great Big Crunch website!

Have a Great Big Crunch Countdown

- Make sure to emphasize the fun of crunching all at once!
- For an even *bigger* crunch invite students to crunch into the P.A system, a microphone or in a hallway, gymnasium or auditorium.
- Don't stop at the first crunch – keep crunching until the apples are finished.

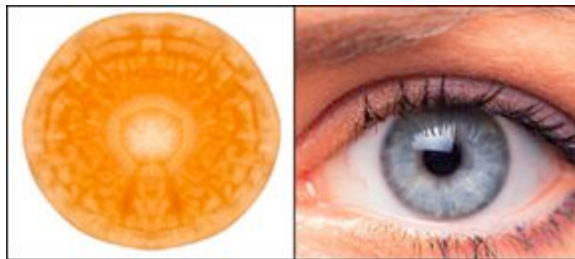
Create Your Own Harvest of the Month

Join FoodShare in celebrating local food every month!

Simply choose a local food produce item to investigate and research the following with your class:

- Nutrition facts
- Fun facts
- History
- Where and how it grows
- Farmer profile
- Growing tips and hints
- Book reviews
- Classroom activity ideas
- Craft ideas
- Healthy recipes

You can request FoodShare's backlog of *Harvest of the Month* newsletters and/or the template for your own by emailing recipeforchange@foodshare.net.



Let Worms Eat Your Lunch

Here at FoodShare, we believe that good healthy soil is as important as good healthy food. We encourage you to get your students excited about getting their hands dirty while looking after your new class pets.

You Will Need:

- A container with a lid (e.g. rubber maid storage bin)
- An electric drill or nail and hammer to punch holes
- Newspaper torn into strips
- Cardboard, toilet paper rolls or egg cartons torn into strips or pieces
- Partially completed compost to begin the process and provide key microorganisms
- Food Scraps cut into tiny pieces
- Spray bottle with water
- Worms*



1. Begin by preparing your worm “home”. You will need to create air holes in the container to allow airflow. This can be done by drilling or hammering small holes in the lid and also the upper half of the container’s base. Don’t make the holes too big to avoid worms escaping. If the holes do become too big, you can line them with fine mesh.
2. Your students may like to decorate the bin.
3. Begin by placing newspaper in the bottom of your bin.
4. Follow with the partially completed compost.
5. Bury the cut food scraps (about ¼ cup per week should do it) into the soil.
6. Add the torn cardboard, toilet paper rolls or egg cartons.
7. Spray the mixture with water so that it feels like a wrung out sponge – damp but not wet.
8. Allow this mixture to sit in your bin for a week or two and then it is ready for your worms!
9. Add about ¼ cup of food scraps per week.
10. Keep your worms moist and soon you will have some nutritious worm castings for your garden!

*You can purchase worms from Cathy Nesbitt, at *Cathy Crawley’s Composters*. Visit her website at:

www.cathyscomposters.com or phone on: 1-888-775-9495.

Extras:

Event Planning Tips and Hints for your *Eat-In Ontario*:

How do I prepare suitable foods for the celebration?

There are a few things to consider when preparing food for a harvest festival:

- Consult your school's **nutrition policy** for guidelines surrounding the production of food for students or visit the Ontario Ministry of Education website (www.edu.gov.on.ca) to review the new "**PPMI50**" guidelines for schools and cafeterias if you plan to *sell* your food.
- Use as many **locally produced ingredients** as possible for each recipe. Read on for more guidelines on sourcing locally.
- Include foods from each of the **four food groups** and minimize excess sugars, fats and salt (as per *Canada's Food Guide* and the new PPMI50 guidelines).
- Be sure to adhere to **food safety standards** as outlined on the *Health Canada* website (<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca>). To summarize,
 - Always cook food to the safe internal temperature. You can check this using a digital food thermometer.
 - Wash your hands and surfaces often with warm, soapy water.
 - Always refrigerate food and leftovers promptly at 4°C or below.
 - Make sure to always separate your raw foods, such as meat and eggs, from cooked foods and vegetables to avoid cross-contamination.
- Be aware of any **allergies or intolerances** in your class. The most common allergies seen in children are nuts, eggs, soy and milk. Only in severe cases would it be necessary to omit any of these ingredients entirely from the day's menu, however, it's easy enough to skip the nuts from any recipe to be sure.
- Be conscious of any **cultural or special dietary needs** in your class. Some examples of common restrictions are:
 - *Vegetarian* – no animal flesh (sometimes includes eggs)

- *Vegan* – no animal products at all, including eggs, honey and dairy
- *Lactose-free* – minimal milk from cows, goats or sheep. Hard cheese and yoghurt is relatively low in lactose. Soy products are an easy alternative for those who are sensitive.
- *Celiac Disease/Gluten Intolerance* – no gluten (wheat, rye, barley and oats). It is safe to include maize (corn), quinoa, millet, sorghum, teff, amaranth, buckwheat, rice, and wild rice instead.
- *Diabetes* – not too much sugar or carbohydrate-containing foods at once (includes candy, sweets/desserts, potatoes, sweet potatoes, corn, pasta, bread, rice, cereals, grains, dairy and fruits). Keep portions modest for these foods as per *Canada's Food Guide*. Special menus are not necessary for students with Diabetes.
- *Kosher* – no meat and milk combinations, kosher meats only. Strict kosher food needs to be prepared in a certified kosher kitchen.
- *Halaal* – Halaal meats only, no pork, bacon, ham or gelatin
- *Hindu* – no beef or sometimes vegetarian

Who should prepare the food for our *Eat-In Ontario* celebration?

Here at FoodShare, we believe that learning how to cook good, healthy food should be a part of every student's education. We encourage you to include your students in the menu planning, preparation, and clean-up of the food for your celebration.

Who is going to eat the food?

Hopefully everyone! Depending on whom you decide to invite to your celebration, it is assumed that everyone present will be able to sit and enjoy the food together.

It's very powerful if parents, volunteers, teachers, staff and students all eat the same food together. This will also encourage those students who are otherwise "picky eaters" to get involved and try new foods.

How should the food be served?

It's a good opportunity to get creative with packaging of food. Of course the goal is to reduce waste from the event. Some alternative ideas could include:

- Large leaf plates or wrapping (e.g. rice salad parcels) – non edible
- Lettuce leaf or steamed green leafy veg leaf – edible
- Recycled glass bottles or jars for individual servings (e.g. for soup)
- Hollowed out melon halves for bowls (e.g. for fruit salad)
- Bring-your-own plate/Tupperware/cutlery
- Brown paper bags (at least they can be composted)
- Newspaper wrapping (e.g. for a roasted vegetable salad)
- Use foods that don't require plates (e.g. fresh fruit, veggie skewers, sandwiches)
- Make it a fun activity to let the student's imagination run wild – who knows what they'll come up with!



If disposable plates, cups and cutlery are absolutely necessary, ensure that they're 100% recyclable. Extra recycling bins would be a good idea for the day. On that note, ensure extra compost bins are available for organic leftovers too.

It's up to you how you want to present the food. It really depends on how many people are present at the celebration.

1. *For a small number* (e.g. a class): having a "picnic blanket buffet" would be easy. It is attractive to look at, be accessible and encourages interaction, co-operation and discussion over the food.
2. *For a larger group* (e.g. a grade): You may want to take the above suggestion and split the plates into several mini-blanket buffets (i.e. one per class). The other option would be to have a line-

up and people serving each item onto the plate. This may be a good option to ensure portion-control if you feel you may run out of certain items.

3. *For a large group* (e.g. a whole school): Separate stations may be a good idea for very large groups as it won't be possible to ensure that everyone gets to try everything. You could have stalls, just like a farmers market, where people can line up. This will reduce the crowdedness that would arise with a table or blanket buffet. Alternatively, you could stagger the times when students eat (e.g. grades KG-3 first, followed by 4-5 and ending with 6-8).

Signage and labeling of food will be a very important part of the day. Let the students create decorative labels of each food item, what's in it (e.g. Halaal), where it came from and perhaps how far it traveled (in kilometers/miles) to get there. A world map with food origins mapped out is a great visual resource to show how far conventional food can travel.



What You Need To Know About Local Food

How to define the term “local food” with your class

The term “local” can often mean different things for different cities or for different types of produce (i.e. local cheese can often take in a broader range than vegetables). *Local Food Plus* (www.localfoodplus.ca) defines local as “produced, processed and distributed within the province (i.e. Ontario) in which they are consumed”. The term “100 kilometre diet” is also often used to describe a local diet but doesn’t really apply to Ontario, as the US/Canada border is within this limit, meaning that purchase of produce produced within this range would not actually be supporting local farmers. A lot of Ontario’s produce is grown within the *Greenbelt*, a collection of over 7000 farms. For maps and statistics, you can see their website (www.greenbelt.ca/).

Background to the “Local Food Movement”

“A collaborative effort to build more locally based, self-reliant food economies – one in which sustainable food production, processing, distribution, and consumption is integrated to enhance the economic, environmental and social health of a particular place” (*Agriculture and Human Values*, 2002). Those who prefer to purchase and consume locally produced food often call themselves “Locavores”.

The Local Food Movement is considered part of the broader “Sustainability Movement”. *Local Food Plus* believes a food system is sustainable when it achieves the following conditions:

1. Financially viable for all stakeholders
2. *Primarily local and regional*
3. Ecologically responsible in its operations
4. Socially responsible
5. Respectful of humans and other species

Why choose a local food systems?

As an alternative to global corporate models, local food systems link consumers directly with producers (i.e. “bypassing the middle-man”). This enables the consumer to play a bigger, more direct role in the quality control of produce by building relationships with local farmers.

Find out what's growing locally!

Foodland Ontario has a user-friendly website (www.foodland.gov.on.ca/) for fun food facts, what's in season and nutritious recipe ideas. Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Availability Guides are also available for order on their website. You could also use the Greenbelt's Fresh Food Finder to get more information: <http://greenbeltfresh.ca>.

How to know what you're looking for (and then look for it)

Firstly, it's a good idea (and perhaps a considerable time-saver) to check if your local supermarket, grocer or deli already has a wide variety of Ontario-grown produce. If it's not clearly labeled, you can check with the manager of the store to find out. This is important to do anyway, to make stores aware that this is something of interest and worth pursuing in the future.

If this isn't an option, you can purchase local food from the following suppliers:

- *Farmer's markets* - indoor or open-air, in neighbourhood parks, market halls and parking lots – farmers' markets bring fresh, local seasonal food to the city. Visit Farmers' Markets Ontario to find yours: www.farmersmarketsontario.com.
- *Food co-ops* – Worker or customer-owned businesses that provide grocery items for their members. Co-ops can be retail stores or buying clubs.
- *CSA (Community-Supported Agriculture)* – Individuals purchase a small share of a farm and, once the growing season begins, receive or pick-up seasonal food each week.
- *Food Stands* – A temporary or mobile store front preparing and selling a variety of foods and beverages to customers. You'll often see food stands at special events, sporting events, street parties or festivals.
- Visit *Sustain Ontario's* website for local food groups near you!
<http://sustainontario.com/resources/ontario-eats-local>

If all else fails, simply look for the following labels on your food:



Local:

Local and Sustainable:



Or, "**Grown in Ontario**" (i.e. in the supermarket fresh produce section)

Facts About Ontario Politics

- Ontario has 3 major political parties: Liberal, New Democratic and Progressive Conservative
- Up to 12 political parties ran in the last election
- There are 107 electoral districts (these are different neighborhoods that help us divide our province into areas for the sake of the election)
- There are also 107 seats in Ontario's Parliament – each electoral district has one seat, or one representative, in parliament
- The major parties run candidates in all 107 ridings
- The candidate with the most votes in an Electoral District becomes the Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) representing that district
- After the election, the Lieutenant Governor, the representative of the Queen, asks the leader of the party with the **most** seats in the Legislative Assembly to become Premier of Ontario and form a Government
- If that party has more than 50% of the seats, they are called a *majority government*
- The majority government can stay in power for up to 5 years before the next election
- The new Premier chooses an 'executive council', this group of MPPs are called the *cabinet* and they each have an area of government that they are responsible for, such as Health or Transport
- The Ministers and the other MPPs work together in the Legislative Assembly to introduce new ideas or discuss old one.

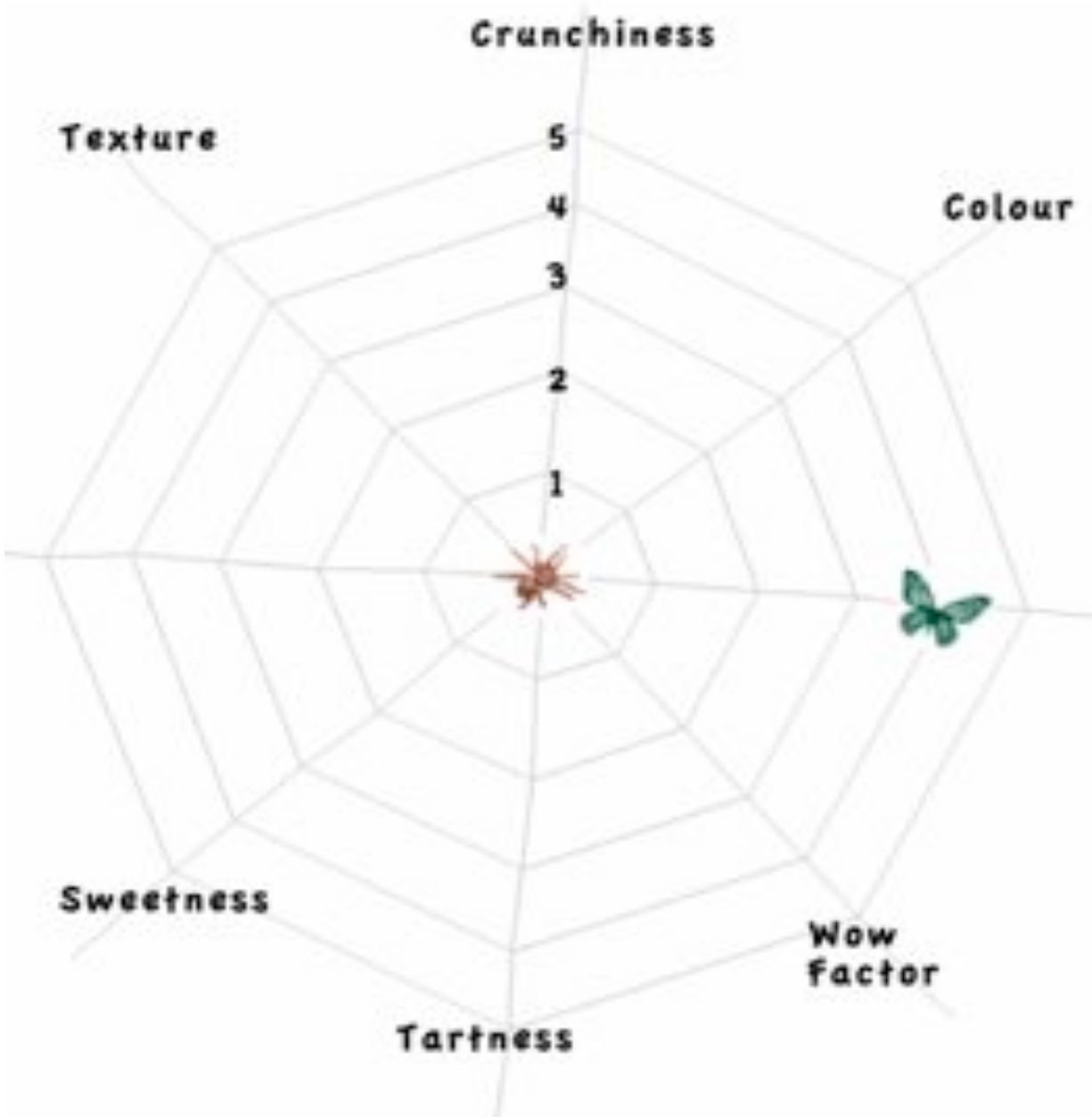
What is the Legislative Assembly?

- The building was started in 1886 and officially opened in 1893
- The Legislative Assembly is where all of the elected Ministers and members of parliament work
- They discuss proposals for new laws, bills ideas, and work together to pass, change and change new and old laws
- The Legislative Assembly is sometimes called The House of Commons, or The House
- "The House" and committees are open to the public so you can watch them on television all over Ontario
- It is located at Queens Park where FoodShare hosts its annual *Eat-In Ontario* fall harvest celebration!
- Adapted from: www.ontario.ca/en/your_government

Apple Tasting & Judging Graph:

Adapted from Slow Food.

Students rate each category on a scale of 1-5 (e.g. 1 = not crunchy at all, 5 = very, very crunchy).



Write or sign a letter to an MP or MPP

Even young students can have a say when it comes to food! Your students can sign, decorate and illustrate a letter to show how much they want to learn about good healthy food as part of their education.

Here's an example letter that could be drafted as a class first:

Dear _____,

I'm writing to tell you how much I love learning about food at school. I think that we should be able to do this each and every day! As part of FoodShare's *Recipe for Change* initiative, our class has been learning about the importance of knowing how to grow, cook and share good healthy food as well as compost the scraps.

Ontario students need your help! Please, *say yes to food in schools* so that we can all have the skills and knowledge we need to be happy and healthy.

Sincerely,



Invite A Guest to Come and Speak to the Class

With a focus on the whole food system, from *field to table*, organize a guest speaker for your class. Getting to know the people in your food system is an important element of food literacy education. Make sure that guest presenters know how to engage elementary-aged students (with hands-on, interactive presentations!) Some examples of guest speakers could be:

A Farmer or Food Producer

- Check the *Ontario Fresh Farm Marketing Association* website for farm contacts:
<http://ontariofarmfresh.com/locator/>
- Get to know the farmers at your local farmers' market. You may also find interns working at the market who might be interested in addressing a class. For your local farmers' market, check *FoodShare's* website: <http://www.foodshare.net/animators04.htm#gfm>

Possible Talking Points:

- How they came to be a farmer/producer
- A "day in the life"
- Funny stories and pictures
- Props and resources, for example, an old butter churner for the students to try
- The type of farm they run and the people/animals involved
- Some tastings of the produce grown/produced (very important!)



A Bee Keeper

- Visit the *Ontario Beekeepers Association* website: <http://www.ontariobee.com/>. You can search on their website for the beekeeper closest to your school or home!

Possible Talking Points:

- The different types of bees in a hive and how they work together
- How they build the hive in nature vs. a hive built by people
- Funny stories and pictures
- Props and resources, for example a beekeeping hat for the students to try on
- Honey tastings (you could judge the honey using a version of the apple tasting graph)

Someone who grows their own food at home or in a community garden

- Ask the students if they have a family member or friend that grows their own food. This would be a simple way to locate a local green thumb who might be willing to come and talk with the class
- Alternatively, locate your closest community garden and ask one of the participants. Many regions have a community gardening network; a quick internet search should help you find a nearby gardener.

Community Gardening Network of Ottawa: <http://www.justfood.ca/community-gardening-network/>

Sudbury Community Gardens: http://www.eatlocalsudbury.com/community_gardens.html

Toronto Community Garden Network: <http://www.tcgn.ca/wiki/wiki.php>

Possible Talking Points:

- Pictures of their garden (e.g. before and after)
- The foods they grow and how they use them
- The different types of people that garden together
- Any community swapping/cooperation stories from the garden
- Funny stories from the garden
- Tastings of the produce



A local Green Grocer

- It's as simple as asking around your neighborhood grocers for this one

Possible Talking Points:

- How and where they get their fruits and vegetables
- How they choose which fruits and vegetables to sell
- Funny stories and pictures from the store
- Favourite fruits and vegetables and how they use them at home
- Tastings of the produce

A Chef, Cook or Baker

- Call some local restaurants in your school's area to gauge interest. This would be a great opportunity to seek a food professional who is interested in using local produce in their cuisine.

- If you're within Toronto, contact FoodShare to get in touch with Slow Food Toronto chefs interested in coming to your classroom! You can get connected with chefs by emailing recipeforchange@foodshare.net.

Possible talking Points:

- How they came to be interested in food
- Their favourite thing to cook
- How they learned to cook
- How they learned about local food
- A "day in the life"
- Photos and stories from their job
- Tastings of local food



A Food Industry Employee

- A representative responsible for promoting or selling different products
- Someone who works in a processing plant in the downtown area
- A delivery driver
- A café, catering or restaurant owner
- A nutritionist or Registered Dietitian. Visit the *Dietitians of Canada* website: <http://www.dietitians.ca/>
- A food safety officer. Visit the *Public Health Ontario* website to find your local Public Health Unit: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca>

A Composter

- This could be someone that composts at home, again ask the students if their family composts
- This could also be an organization or restaurant that composts their food scraps

Possible Talking Points:

- Worms, bugs and microorganisms!
- The types of food scraps to compost
- Indoor vs. outdoor composting
- Visit FoodShare's website (www.foodshare.net) to read our *Rotten Apple Party* lesson plan

A Politician

- Ask your local MP or MPP to speak to your class or school about the joys of local food. Ask them to address the key food issues that your students elected to be the most important in the “Create Posters, Flyers, and E-Cards Promoting Local Food and Your Recipe For Change” activity.

Potential Talking Points:

- Their favourite fruit or vegetable
- The fruits or vegetables they liked as a kid
- Farms they’ve visited
- Reasons why they think good healthy food is so important...



Go on a Local Food Walking Tour or Field Trip

Find one or more of the following sights to visit on your local food walk or field trip

Greenbelt Farm

Visit the Greenbelt website to find a suitable farm field trip for your class. Use the Greenbelt's Fresh Food Finder to get more information: http://greenbeltfresh.ca/advanced_finder/1.

Community Garden or Privately Owned Vegetable Gardens

Visit a local community garden or walk by some residential vegetable gardens in your neighborhood. This will require some prior research on your part. As a group, try and identify what is growing where (or maybe the resident will be able to help you!).

1. Community Gardening Network of Ottawa: www.justfood.ca/community-gardening-network/
2. Sudbury Community Gardens: www.eatlocalsudbury.com/community_gardens.html
3. Toronto Community Garden Network: www.tcgn.ca/wiki/wiki.php

Farmers' or Good Food Market

Visit *Farmer's Markets Ontario* (www.farmersmarketsontario.com/) to see if there are any farmer's markets or good food markets near your school.



Café or Restaurant

If there is a café or restaurant near you that sources local produce, arrange for a “walk-by” where perhaps the owner or cook/chef could address the class about local food.

Foraging

It's likely that there is some food growing in or around the neighborhood of your school. There might be some fruit trees, dandelion greens or berry bushes that you could point out to the students as food growing “wild”.

Food Retailer

Visit a food retailer such as a green grocer or supermarket that stocks local produce. Preferably the site will also have some production for the students to see (e.g. bakery or deli).