



Eating, Growing, Learning

COLORADO FARM TO CHILD GUIDE



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Introduction

Dear Farm to Early Care and Education and Farm to Child Champions:

Young children who garden, cook healthy snacks, meet farmers, and taste fresh, local food are engaging in something special and important. Research supports that notion -- Farm to Child activities like taste tests, cooking lessons and gardening offer repeated exposure to healthy foods, promote lifelong healthy eating habits, and decrease obesity risk in childhood and beyond. The purpose of this guide is to cover the most important components of Farm to Child and give you a few tips to get started.

In this guide, we will cover topics such as:

- » How to get started
- » The basics: Gardening, Cooking and Tasting with Young Children
- » Finding and procuring local food for your child care program
- » Engaging parents and community members

How to use this guide:

If you are starting a Farm to Child program, we recommend you read through this guide to get an idea of where you would like to begin your journey. Then, complete the [Farm to Early Care and Education Self-Assessment](#) to discover which activity you might want to begin with and how you can add activities as you go.

For example: start with a classroom activity exploring a seasonal food, like reading a book about the life cycle of a carrot. Then, try a planting activity, like planting carrot seeds in an outdoor garden plot. Then taste test the seasonal food, like comparing the taste of purple carrots to orange carrots. Then plan a visit to a farm or a meetup at a farmers market to see where the seasonal food is grown and sold in the community. After that, explore local procurement and celebrate local foods during lunch by inviting parents to come try them too.



Who is this guide for?

Farm to Child includes an array of activities and adapts to all kinds of ECE settings such as preschools, early childhood programs, family child care homes, Head Start/Early Head Start and programs in K-12 school districts.

This guide is designed for early care and education administrators, teachers, chefs and support staff. It is also for parents, farmers, and community members. Everyone has an important role to play in growing Farm to Child initiatives! **The terms farm to ECE and farm to child are used interchangeably throughout the guide as this guide supports "Farm to" initiatives and programs that support older children and families.**

What's not in this guide?

While this guide does have some great activities and lessons, it is not a curriculum. However, there are many curricula that we love and recommend. Also, this guide does not go in-depth on every subject. There are many books and websites dedicated to gardening with children, local procurement, and hands-on education activities for children and parents.

Check out the [Colorado Farm to Child website](#) for more information, resources, and curricula that can help you, including the [Colorado Harvest of the Month Program](#).

Reality Check! ✓

We realize that if you work in an early care and education (ECE) setting, the last thing you are worried about is whether your squash trellis is tied up or whether it is time to harvest the tomatoes. You are busy answering calls from parents, filling out forms, dealing with staff turn-over, and focused on state assessment observations. In a perfect world, your Farm to Child projects will not be "extra," but will simply help you provide high quality education that aligns with the standards, tools and programs that guide your work day to day: Colorado Shines Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS), Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines (ELDGs), Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) and USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and licensing regulations. In addition, if you are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Early Head Start or Head Start program - Farm to Child can align with these requirements.

See [Appendix B](#) and [C](#) for more information on aligning Farm to Child with existing standards and indicators.

Overview of Colorado Farm to Child

Farm to Child initiatives connect young children with healthy, locally-grown foods and support farmers in their communities.

The goal of Farm to Child is to:

- » Help children develop healthy lifelong eating habits through exposure to gardening, hands-on food and nutrition education, cooking and local foods.
- » Increase access to locally grown, healthy food in meals and snacks.
- » Enhance the quality of the early child care education experience.
- » Create an environment that enables children and families to make healthier choices.

Farm to Child activities can be strengthened by:

- » Parent and community involvement
- » Staff training
- » Wellness Policies
- » Farm to Child promotions through parent communications

Farm to Child Activities include engaging children in:

- ✓ Gardening
- ✓ Hands-on cooking
- ✓ Taste Tests
- ✓ Eating locally-grown food in meals and snacks
- ✓ Meeting local farmers
- ✓ Standards-aligned food and garden lessons

Benefits of Farm to Child programs may include:

- ✓ **Fostering Academic Growth**
Children learn better by doing - gardening, cooking and food activities connect with math, science, literacy and much more.
- ✓ **Advancing Equity**
Farm to Child programs increase access to high-quality learning environments.
- ✓ **Better Nutrition**
When young children grow, explore and taste new vegetables, they are more likely to eat and love them.
- ✓ **Enhancing Family Health**
Farm to Child activities create the space for families to share, learn, and build healthy habits together.
- ✓ **Supporting the Local Economy**
Colorado is at the forefront of the organic agriculture industry, which includes nearly 270 certified farms and ranchers with more organic agriculture certified acres than any other state. Colorado's diverse agricultural industry is a critical driver in the state's overall economy contributing 41 billion dollars.

Source: CO Food and Ag Profile



In 2019, a survey of over 250 child care centers and homes highlighted that 59% actively engage in gardening!

Reference: McCloskey, M., Kesterson, H., Mena, N., Dellaport, J., & Bellows, L. (2020). P5 "Understanding Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) Efforts in Colorado." *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 52(7). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2020.04.050>

Farm to Child activities align many existing ECE standards and indicators. See examples:

Alignment of Farm to Child with Early Care Standards and Programs		
Sample Standards, Indicators, and Goals		Example Activity
Colorado Early Learning Development Guidelines	Cognitive Development4.1 The developing understanding of number and quantity.	Children taste a variety of apples, vote on their favorite and record the results.
Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale - 3rd Edition (ECERS-3)	Language and Literacy 5.1- Helping children expand vocabulary.	Teachers are heard talking to the children about the garden and what the children are doing. The teacher names the items growing (radish, carrot, collards) and describes the tools (trowel, spade, watering can) by explaining their use.
Quality Rating Improvement System	Child Health Promotion	Children taste vegetables from the garden.
USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	Best Practice: Incorporate seasonal and locally produced foods into meals.	Each week, highlight one item from Colorado's Harvest of the Month on the lunch menu.
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)	10.D. – Health, Nutrition, and Safety Policies and Procedures: The program has written policies to promote wellness and safeguard the health and safety of children and adults. Procedures are in place that address the providing of adequate nutrition for children and adults, 2.G.07 Curriculum Content Area for Cognitive Development: Science	Evidence could include the implementation of a wellness policy that included language about how the school promotes fresh, local food in meals and classroom activities. Scientific concepts include things such as life cycles of organisms, structure and property of matter, weather, seasons, time, light and shadow.
Head Start (View <i>Growing Head Start Success with Farm to Early Care and Education</i> full list of performance standards, Early Learning Outcomes and activities here .)	Sub-domain: Gross Motor Goal IT-PMP 4. Child demonstrates effective and efficient use of large muscles to explore the environment.	Have children help carry gardening tools into the garden space, navigating different surfaces and moving around garden beds.

You can include Farm to Child activities in as little as 10 minutes a day. See these examples with suggested Colorado ELDGs.

Sample Week				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Read "Plant a Little Seed" by Bonnie Christensen. (LL4)	Children observe a variety of seeds with a magnifying glass and sort them by size and shape. Sing the Flower Song." (IT-ATL 3)	Discussion: Children observe the contents of their lunch and search for seeds - or fruit that holds the seeds. (PDH1)	Children take one seed and place it in a damp paper towel inside a ziplock bag. Count the days until germination. (IT-ATL9)	Children taste a variety of seeds and record results. (CD3, CD4)

Farm to Early Care and Education in the US and Colorado

Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) initiatives connect young children with healthy, locally-grown foods and support farmers in their communities. Farm to Child activities are on the rise nationally and in Colorado.

Colorado first initiated this work in ECE settings in 2016 with a USDA Team Nutrition grant to implement Cooking Up Healthy Options with Plants (CHOP); a three-pronged intervention of culinary training, gardens and nutrition education. The intervention continued through 2019. Over the course of three years Colorado trained 147 people, representing 71 ECE centers or homes with a child impact number of 8,427 children.

In 2019, over 45 stakeholders and partners engaged in early childhood obesity prevention strategies in ECE settings convened to discuss how to advance Farm to Child in Colorado. The input informed an initial understanding of what ECE providers and partners need to initiate Farm to Child activities.

Also between 2019 and 2021, CDPHE received CDC funding through the Association of State Public Health Nutritionists, and with leadership from the Colorado Farm to ECE Coalition membership, implemented strategies to increase the number of children with experiences with local foods. The Farm to ECE Implementation Grant (FIG) strategies advanced Colorado's understanding of and ability to expand Farm to ECE.

Colorado Farm to Child Roadmap

In 2021, the Colorado Farm to ECE Coalition, in collaboration with individuals and focus groups across the state, established a three-year Farm to Child Road Map with strategic plan.

[Link to the Roadmap](#)



Local food = grown or raised in Colorado.

Beneficial because local foods are fresher (i.e., recently picked) and safer (i.e., less hand off of the food from the farmer to you), have seasonal variety, usually less harmful to the environment keeping green space and not transported far distances, and purchasing local helps support the local economy.

Share your progress!

Keep us posted on your progress and include these hashtags in your social media posts.

#CoFarm2Child #CDPHE #farmtoece
#eatinggrowinglearning

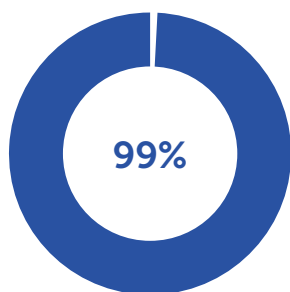
Colorado Farm to ECE Survey

In 2019 a survey of over 250 early child care education professionals in Colorado found that 59% were actively engaged in gardening activities, 57% provided nutrition education, and 37% were participating in purchasing local foods.

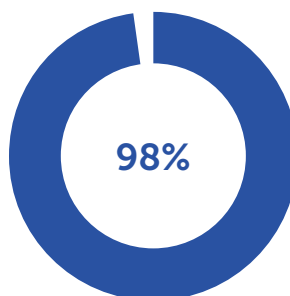
Reference: McCloskey, M., Kesterson, H., Mena, N., Dellaport, J., & Bellows, L. (2020). P5 "Understanding Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) Efforts in Colorado." *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 52(7).
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2020.04.050>



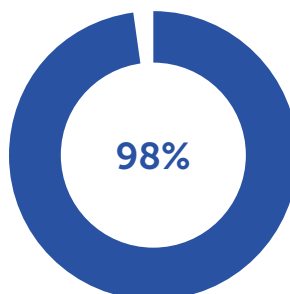
Motivations for wanting to add or expand Farm to ECE activities



Helping children develop healthy eating habits



Children connecting with nature via gardening



Opportunities for children to try more fruits and vegetables

Colorado Farm to Early Care and Education Coalition

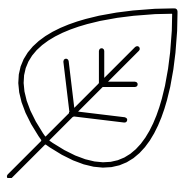
The Colorado Farm to ECE Coalition is a network that joins stakeholders in early care, food, farming, and health to share resources, support Farm to ECE and create dialogue for building statewide programming. Currently 20 organizations actively support Farm to ECE in Colorado. Members of the Colorado Farm to ECE Coalition include:

- » Boulder County Public Health
- » Colorado Child and Adult Care Food Program
- » Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA)
- » Colorado Department of Education (CDE)
- » Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)
- » Colorado Office of Early Childhood
- » Colorado State University Extension
- » Colorado Master Gardener program
- » Culture of Wellness in Preschools
- » Early Childhood Council
- » Early Learning Ventures
- » Frontline Farming
- » Healthy Community Food Systems
- » Integrated Nutrition Education Program
- » Nourish Colorado
- » San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition
- » Share Our Strength Cooking Matters
- » Sprout City Farms
- » Slow Food Denver
- » Valley Roots Food Hub

Connecting with the Farm to Child Community in Colorado

There are several ways you can connect with the Farm to Child Community in Colorado.

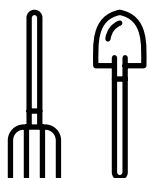
Campaigns



October Farm to Child Month

Each year, Colorado CACFP provides resources, lessons, and newsletters to celebrate locally grown fruits and vegetables.

For more information, join the [CACFP](#) Newsletter:



Farm to Summer Challenge

Each year in July the Colorado Department of Education offers the TASTE, TEACH, CONNECT, Farm to Summer Challenge.

For more information: [Farm to Summer Week Challenge](#)



Mountains Plains Crunch Off

Each October, organizations around the state of Colorado join together to Crunch into local produce.

Visit the [CDE Farm to School website](#) for more information.

You can subscribe to the newsletter [here](#).



CACFP Week

CACFP Week is a national education and information campaign sponsored annually during the third week of March by the National CACFP Sponsors Association. The campaign is designed to raise awareness of how the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program works to combat hunger. This week is a great time to promote how your Farm to Child efforts can increase and improve participation in CACFP.

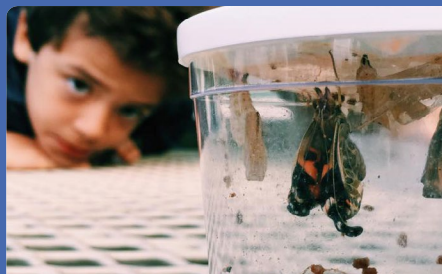
Newsletters

[Sign up](#) for the CACFP Newsletter, featuring monthly Farm to Child content.

Social Media

Share your activities

#COFarm2Child #CDPHE #farmtoece
#eatinggrowinglearning



Getting Started: Setting your Farm to Child Goals

Farm to Child offers many strategies to improve the health of children, increase the quality of educational experiences, and promote valuable family engagement opportunities.

Gather your team and follow these first steps to develop a lasting initiative in your community:

Step 1: Consider your time, talent, and treasures.

Start where you are, with what you have.

People and Time — Who in your community has the capacity to contribute to Farm to Child activities? Who are the Farm to Child champions? Teachers, administrators, parents, grandparents? What unique skills or knowledge exist within your community? Local farmers, local chefs? How can relationships with local organizations or institutions contribute to farm to school activities? Master gardeners, colleges/universities?

Space — What space do you have inside or outside that can be utilized for Farm to Child activities? A room with large tables for cooking, a covered outdoor area, a picnic table? Are there places in your community that could be utilized for Farm to Child activities? A local farm, farmers market?

Tools — What tools do you have available for Farm to Child activities? Books about plants or food, planting or garden supplies, refrigerator, or food preparation tools?

Money — What monetary resources are available within your program/site or community? Local businesses that could provide in-kind donations, budget line items, available grants, parent group fundraisers?

Step 2: Decide on a focus area.

With your available resources in mind, choose 1-2 areas to focus on.

- Edible Gardens
- Taste Tests
- Hands-on Cooking Activities
- Classroom Food Garden Lessons
- Farmer Visits or Farm Field Trips
- Local Food in Snacks and Meals
- Wellness/Farm to Child or ECE Policy
- Parent and community engagement
- Staff training



Step 3: Develop an attainable goal.

Within your focus area, develop attainable goals for a reasonable time frame.

	WHAT?	WHEN?
WE WILL	build two raised beds	before the beginning of the school year.
	go on one farm field trip	before the end of the school year.
	do one seasonal taste test	sometime this month.
	offer locally grown apples at least once	with lunch in the fall.

Step 4: Make a plan of action (Who, What, When).

Determine which small steps will help you reach your goal. For example:

WHO	WILL DO WHAT ACTION	WITH WHAT RESOURCES	BY WHEN
Angela	will set up a meeting with the local Master Gardener	to determine the best site for two raised beds	before the end of the month
Steve	will research local farms that visit schools or offer field trips	and send suggestions and possible dates to the director	by the end of next week
Damon	will look for books about apples	in the school library	and send a list to teachers by the end of this week
Liliana	will visit the farmers market	to talk to local farmers about wholesale prices and possible delivery of produce	this Saturday

Step 5: Promote your work.

Share the actions you take and the goals you set with your community. Ideas include sharing information on parent and community announcements or the marquis or sharing photos on bulletin boards, in parent newsletters, on your website or on your social media pages. You can also invite local media to visit your program during the Farm to Child activities.



Getting Started: Setting your Farm to Child Goals (Worksheet)

What are your Current Resources?

People and Time	
Space	
Tools	
Budget	

What is Your Focus Area?

Edible Gardens

Taste Tests

Hands-on Cooking Activities

Classroom Food / Garden Lessons

Farmer Visits or Farm Field Trips

Local Food in Snacks and Meals

Wellness/Farm to Child Policy

Parent and community engagement

Staff training

What is an Attainable Goal?

In _____ (time frame), we will _____ (goal).

What is your Plan of Action towards that Goal?

	Who	What	By When
Step 1			
Step 2			
Step 3			

How Will You Share Your Work?

Announcements

Bulletin Board

School Marquis

Parent Newsletters

Emails

Website

Social Media

Local Media

Farm to Child: Addressing Social and Racial Equity

Many Colorado organizations and individuals are committed to addressing root causes of food system inequities as a means of creating viable food systems solutions that combat disparities existing among children and their families. Racial equity in the food and educational system will be achieved when race and other socio-economic factors no longer determine food systems outcomes.

These outcomes include access to food system jobs and opportunities, access to farmland, access to healthy and nutritious food as well as access to good labor practices and fair wages. In addition, we believe children, families and child care staff should have daily, affordable access to healthy, fresh foods.

School gardens and kitchen classrooms are environments that support students' identities and reflect diversity, equity, and justice. The instructional strategies that are utilized through Farm to Child activities support diverse learning styles and allow for deep exploration. A comprehensive Farm to Child program engages families and communities in meaningful ways.



Here is a look at some of the practices that will be identified throughout this guide.

Instruction

- » Promoting children's engagement
- » Differentiating activities for all children
- » Providing collaborative learning opportunities
- » Connecting to the real world

Classroom Culture

- » Honoring children's experiences
- » Practicing listening skills and building positive relationships
- » Building trust in new experiences together
- » Setting up child-centered environments
- » Developing child-guided community agreements
- » Providing meaningful roles and responsibilities for children

Family and Community Engagement

- » Inviting caregivers to share their cultures and traditions
- » Incorporating family and community wisdom
- » Connecting families together through events or projects
- » Using local resources
- » Engaging in service projects in neighborhood

What other ways can you incorporate social and racial equity into your initiative?



Chapter 2:

Exploring Gardening with Young Children

Introduction: Gardening with Children

Hands-on gardening activities are engaging, sensory learning experiences that show children where food comes from. These activities could include planting seeds on a windowsill, watering plants in an outdoor garden, or harvesting fruits and vegetables when ripe.

Gardening is always an experiment — sometimes it works better than others and that is part of the fun! Take time to ask questions, explore, and make discoveries about the natural world alongside the children.

Research shows that gardening supports children's physical, social, and emotional development.



Physical Development and Motor Skills

Children develop both gross and fine motor skills through meaningful garden tasks. (Colorado *ELDGs, PDH1)



Social and Emotional Development

Children work cooperatively with others to complete large garden tasks. (*SD2)



Approaches to Play and Learning

Through exploring and asking questions, children build interest and curiosity about the natural world. (*AL2)



Communication, Language and Literacy

New vocabulary is developed through unique and meaningful real-world experiences. (*LL4, IT-SE5)

The following overview will get you started!

Also, every county has a Cooperative Extension Office. You can find your local extension office by going to: www.extension.colostate.edu

The garden provides a real world context for exploring math, science, social studies, and art ideas.



Math

Mathematic concepts of number, patterns, shape, and measurement have essential meaning in the natural world. (*CD4)



Science

Children build knowledge related to the living things they share their environment with. (*AL1)



Creative Development

The natural world provides inspiration for exploring colors and visual art. (*AL2)

*See [Appendix B](#) for Colorado Early Learning Development Guidelines.

Growing an Indoor Garden

Growing indoors can be a fun and easy way to teach children about how plants grow!

Whether indoors or out, plants need four things to grow:

- ✓ Soil
- ✓ Water
- ✓ Light
- ✓ Air



Here are some things you may need to grow indoors and give your plants everything they need:

- » Recycled containers with drainage holes (yogurt cups, tin cans, milk cartons, etc)
- » Potting soil or compost
- » Small cup or spray bottle to water plants
- » Saucer to place under container to catch excess water
- » A sunny windowsill

Give it a try!



Grow a Bean in a Bag

This method is great for watching seeds grow (or germinate.) Seeds can grow in small bags for children to take home or large plastic zip bags for the classroom window.

What to Plant

Lima beans (or other large seeds like spinach, squash, cantaloupe.)

Where to Plant

In a plastic zip bag with a folded, damp paper towel

How to Maintain



Soil
No soil is needed for seeds to germinate.



Water
Keep towel damp by spraying with water when needed.



Light/Air
Hang the bag in a window with masking tape.

Next

When the plants have outgrown the bag, they can be carefully planted in a larger container with the roots in soil and the stems and leaves stretching up.

Grow Vegetables or Herbs in a Container Garden

Many vegetables and hardy herbs can be grown by seed in a container garden inside.

What to Plant

Seeds for crops with shallow or short roots (such as lettuce, radishes) or hardy herbs (such as basil or dill.)

Where to Plant

In containers with small holes so it will drain (yogurt cups, milk cartons, etc). Simply poke a few small holes in the bottom of a container.

How to Maintain



Soil
Plant the seed slightly under the surface of potting soil.



Water
Water when the top of the soil feels dry, excess water will drain.



Light/Air
Place on a sunny windowsill.

Next

If the plants outgrow their container, they can be carefully planted in a larger container.

Grow Peas on a Fork Trellis

Children love watching the tendrils of pea plants wrap around a trellis as the plant grows up!

What to Plant

Pea seeds

Where to Plant

In containers with drainage holes (yogurt cups, milk cartons, etc) and with a fork to serve as a trellis for the peas to grow up.

How to Maintain



Soil

Plant the seed slightly under the surface of potting soil.



Water

Water when the top of the soil feels dry, excess water will drain.



Light/Air

Place on a sunny windowsill.

Next

The shoots and pods of the pea plant are yummy to try!

Sprout Sweet Potatoes Vines

While these are not edible, it is fun for children to see that some plants don't grow from seeds. These vines regenerate from other parts of the plant!

What to Plant

Organic sweet potato with four toothpicks around the middle (note: organic sweet potatoes may be more likely to sprout. Some conventionally grown sweet potatoes have been sprayed to retard sprouting.)

Where to Plant

In a clear cup of water, with the pointy end down in the water and the blunt end out of the water.

How to Maintain



Soil

No soil is needed for the sweet potato to sprout.



Water

Refill the water in the cup when necessary.



Light/Air

Place on a sunny windowsill.

Next

After 1-2 weeks, roots and vines will begin to grow.



Outdoor Gardening: Where, When, and What to Plant

Growing a garden outdoors is a great way to learn alongside children. Plants may thrive and you can celebrate together. If they don't, you can work together to figure out why! Either way, gardening connects us to the seasons in the natural world and builds an appreciation for the farmers that produce the foods that we eat.



Getting Started Gather Your Garden Team

Invite staff, parents, and community members to be a part of deciding where, when, and what to plant. It is valuable to gather input and ideas from the broader community. Also, different members of the community may be able to offer time, energy, money, or in-kind donations to planting and maintaining the garden.

Deciding Where to Plant

Find the perfect place for your garden! Consider these three things:

Available Sunlight:

It is important that the location of the garden receives as much sunlight as possible throughout the day — between 6-8 hours ideally. On a sunny day, visit the garden a couple times throughout the day to see where the shade falls from trees and buildings. Any area that is not in the shade for most of the day would be a good one for the garden.

Proximity to Water:

Consider where the nearest water source is — whether it is an outdoor spigot or hose or if the watering cans will come from inside.

Accessibility:


The best location for a garden is a space that is easy for young children to walk to. Choose a spot that children, families and staff already walk by every day — even if it's small.


Next: Once the location is chosen, seeds can be planted directly in the ground or raised beds can be built up above the ground.



Raised Beds

Raised garden beds are built up above the ground using wood logs or cedar for the sides of the bed (not pressure treated lumber) and then the beds are filled with soil and compost. Many of the materials for a raised bed can be donated by a local farm, nursery center, or hardware store. For more detailed information including sample materials list, see [Appendix](#).

 **Pros:** Fewer weeds, easier to reach, defines garden space, keeps feet out of the garden


 **Cons:** Needs consistent watering

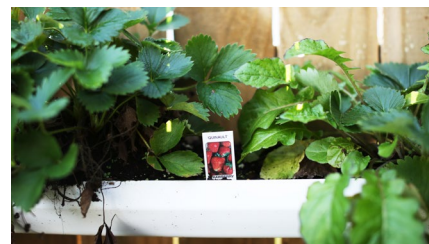


In-Ground Beds

Seeds can also be planted directly in the ground once any grass or ground cover is raked away. In this case, it may be help to test the soil that you will be planting in. The local extension office can provide a soil testing kit and the results will explain what could be added to your soil from more nutrients, such as compost.


 **Pros:** Affordable, requires less watering


 **Cons:** More likely to grow weeds, may be stepped on without defined borders



Container Gardens

Gardens can be grown in containers big and small — pots, wagons, an old sandbox, gallon milk jugs. Plants will grow in just about any container that is deep enough and has drainage holes for excess water.

 **Pros:** Affordable, uses containers you already have, allows for creativity

 **Cons:** Needs consistent watering, remember to make holes for drainage

Deciding When and What to Plant

There are many options of what can be grown in a garden. Here are some hardy favorites that are easy to maintain:



Herb, fruit, and berry gardens are perennial plants that come back year after year. The plants selected for the seasonal garden, on the other hand, will complete their life cycle within just a few months of either the warm or cool season.



Herb Garden

An herb garden is perfect for young children because herbs have distinct smells, tastes, and textures. The herbs we chose below are hardy and prolific so many children can harvest from them. Additionally, we chose herbs that are perennial and remain for years and years and require little maintenance.

Favorites: mint, rosemary, thyme, oregano, lavender, sage, chives



Fruit or Berry Garden

Fruit and berry gardens give young children the opportunity to see a flower turn into a fruit protecting the seeds inside. They do not produce quite as much as other edible plants but they are fun to taste when they ripen! They also remain in the garden for years.

Favorites: strawberries, blueberries, fruit trees like figs and apples



Flower Garden

Flower gardens are beautiful and attract birds and bees to the garden. Flowers of every color of the rainbow can be planted. Some flowers will grow taller than young children and some are even edible!

Favorites: nasturtiums (edible), sunflowers, butterfly bush



Seasonal Garden

A seasonal garden is one that is planted and lasts only for the season, until the frost comes or until it gets too hot for the plants to survive. See some of our favorites below:

Cool Weather Crops:
Plant in the fall or early spring

- » Leafy greens (lettuce, kale, chard, spinach)
- » Radishes
- » Carrots
- » Broccoli
- » Sugar Snap Peas

Warm Weather Crops:

Plant after last frost in mid-April

- » Bell peppers
- » Cucumbers
- » Tomatoes
- » Okra
- » Cantaloupe
- » Sweet Potato

Additionally, you can choose to plant either seeds or seedlings that have been started by a local farmer or nursery.



Seeds



Seedlings



Pros: Cheaper



Cons: Small to work with, lower germination rate, longer time to harvest



Pros: Greater success rate, shorter time to harvest



Cons: More expensive

For more detailed information on what to plant and when, use the [Colorado Vegetable Guide](#) provided by the Colorado State University (CSU) Extension. You may also reference the [Colorado Produce Chart](#). (see [Appendix H](#)).


How to Plant, Care, and Harvest with Young Children

Children learn responsibility when they care for a garden. There are many ways for young children to participate in the care of the garden. Most garden activities are easiest and most engaging when done in small groups of about four children at a time.



Here some examples of how children of different ages can help with garden tasks:



	1 YEAR OLDS	2 YEAR OLDS	3 YEAR OLDS	4 YEAR OLDS	5 YEAR OLDS
Planting	Touch and feel variety of seeds	Sort seeds by size and shape	Plant large seeds where directed	Plant small seeds where directed	Plant small seeds by measuring or using a guide
Adding Compost	Touch and feel different types of soil	Use hands to spread soil in bed	Use hand rakes to spread soil in bed	Use trowels to move soil in bed	Use trowels, containers to move soil for one area to another
Removing Weeds	Explore root systems of weeds pulled	Pull weeds with help of teacher	Pull weeds marked with flour	Identify weeds by matching a picture	Assist with thinning beds
Watering Plants	Explore water through play	Count the rainy days	Pour water from a filled yogurt cup onto plant roots	Fill a yogurt cup with water, walk to the bed, pour onto plant roots	Fill a small watering can with water, walk to the bed, pour onto plant roots
Harvesting Produce	Touch and feel variety of harvested plant parts	Sort or order harvest by size or shape	Harvest produce identified by teacher	Identify produce to harvest by matching a picture	Independently harvest a certain number of ripe produce
Washing Produce	Explore water through play	Gently pat dry washed produce	Gently wash produce in running water and pat dry	Scrub root vegetables with an unused toothbrush	Wash leafy green vegetables in a salad spinner

Planting with Children

Young children can participate in planting seeds and seedlings. Here are some tips:

Mark Your Space

Children work best with their own personal space to work, around the perimeter of the garden bed.

Mark the Spots

There are many ways to mark where the seeds or seedlings should be planted, such as placing a spot of baking flour on top of the soil. Also, a "guide" can be made out of cardstock with holes punched (the intended distance away from each other) so children can drop seeds through the holes.

No Tools Necessary

The holes for most seeds and seedlings will not be deep enough to need trowels. Children can simply use one finger to make a tiny hole that is either as deep as the seed is high or as deep as the root ball is long.



Harvesting

With some care and patience, the garden will be ready to harvest!

Young children can participate by using both hands to gently harvest the vegetables that are ripe and ready.

Teachers can show them how to gently harvest and then they can try!



Washing

Produce will need a little water and scrubbing to get the dirt off.

Young children can participate by washing vegetables gently with their hands in running water and then patting them dry with a paper towel. Root vegetables can also be scrubbed with an unused toothbrush and leafy green vegetables can be washed in a salad spinner.



Maintenance Tasks with Children

Adding Compost and Soil

Compost is organic matter that is rich in nutrients for plants. It is beneficial to add to garden beds at the beginning of the season.

Young children can participate by using child-size digging tools and containers to move soil from one area to another and then use their hands to spread the soil in the garden bed.

Removing Weeds

It can be challenging to identify weeds (or unwanted plants) from the garden. When you find out which plants are weeds, they should be removed to allow space for the surrounding plants to have space to thrive.

Young children can participate by pulling up the roots of the plants.

Adults can help by sprinkling baking flour on the weeds so they are easy to find for children.

Watering

There are many ways to water a garden — like waiting for rainfall, hand-watering, setting up a sprinkler attached to a hose, or installing a drip irrigation system. See the appendix for more information on each.

Young children can participate by checking how damp the soil feels to decide if the garden needs water. Then, children can use small watering cans (or other containers like yogurt cups) to carry water from the source to the garden and carefully pour water on the soil near the plants roots.

This method of watering one small cup at a time is not the most efficient but children enjoy the practice with their gross and fine motor skills.

Simple Outdoor Gardening Activities by Educational Standards

Outdoor activities are designed to build curiosity and encourage exploration. These activities help children make discoveries about the world around them. By spending time outside, children can experience the seasons as they change. They observe the effect that the changing weather has on all of the living things - the plants that grow, the animals that help them, and humans that eat them too!



Give it a try!

Outdoor Observation



Gather - Sit or stand with all students in a circle in an open place outdoors.

Ask - "What is the same and what is different from our last visit to this space?"

Observe - Give children a few silent seconds to just listen and look to the world around them.

Share - Provide time for children to share what they observed.

Here are some other activities for each age level that can be done outside in a garden area with minimal materials or planning. See [Appendix B](#) for more information on aligning with the Colorado Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines.

	1-2 YEAR OLDS	3 YEAR OLDS	4 YEAR OLDS	5 YEAR OLDS
Mathematic Cognitive Development	Use size words to describe things found in the garden	Find objects of different shapes in the garden	Count the number of worms found in the garden	Sort fallen leaves by color, shape, or size
Science Cognitive Development	Observe, explore with the senses (sight, touch, smell), and show curiosity about the garden	Use a magnifying glass to look closer at things in the garden	Record observations of plants and animals through drawings and dictation	Explore water, soil, sand, and mud and build understanding of what plants need
Communication, Language Literacy	Listen to and follow simple directions for garden tasks	Ask and answer questions about what is observed in the garden	Describe garden activities using expanded sentences and details	Build vocabulary through activities, books, and conversations about the garden
Creative Development	Listen to rhymes, finger plays, songs, and stories about the garden	Describe what colors are seen in the garden through the different seasons	Do a yoga sequence to show how plants grow	Use crayons to draw lines/shapes and watercolors to fill in color of plants in the garden
Physical Development and Motor Skills	Develop balance and coordination bending and standing to/from the garden bed	Use tools like trowels to determine their purpose	Use fingers to sort seeds by color, shape, and size	Practice safety rules around the garden

Tips for Behavior Management in the Outdoor Garden

Young children love exploring outside! You may need to help refocus children's attention, energy level, and volume level from what they are accustomed to on the playground, to an energy level and volume level that is more appropriate for an outdoor classroom where plants are growing, animals are living, and children are learning.

Here are some tips to help children make decisions that are best for the growing and learning environment outdoors:

Dividing into Small Groups

All tasks are easier to accomplish and more engaging for children when they are completed in small groups of 5-6 children. See more in "How to Plant, Care, and Harvest with Young Children" on [page 21](#).

Naming the Space

Name the outdoor garden space something that reminds children that is different than the playground space. Names could be the Garden, the Outdoor Classroom, the Living Laboratory, etc.

Gathering Together

It is important to have a gathering space near the garden so children know exactly where to go when they arrive in the space and exactly where to go when they are called back to the space. Ideally, it is an area where students can sit or stand in a circle and see each other.

Starting with a Quiet Activity.

To set the tone, ask children to sit in a circle and listen quietly for garden sounds. (1 minute for every year they are is about right.) How many can they hear? Hold a finger up for every new sound they hear.

Setting Boundaries

If there is not a fence around the garden area where children can explore, be sure to show children exactly what the boundaries are before they leave the whole group to explore on their own or in small groups.

Modeling Safety

Always ensure adult supervision and model tasks for children, particularly when tools are being used.

Practicing a "Call Back"

Decide on a fun call and response for the garden. Then when children hear the teacher make the call, they'll know to come right back to the circle.



Tips for Safety in the Outdoor Garden

Young children should always be closely supervised in the garden. Here are some tips to help keep children safe while they are exploring outdoors:

Washing Hands

Because the garden is growing food that we will eat -- children should wash hands **before** and **after** visiting the garden. If possible, set up an outdoor washing station to make handwashing easy.

Wet and Lather

Wet hands using warm running water. Lather soap up to elbows.

Rub and Scrub

Rub and scrub for 20 seconds, on the backs of hands, wrists, between fingers, under fingernails.

Rinse and Dry

Rinse under warm running water. Dry with paper towels. Turn off running water with a paper towel, not bare hands

Reviewing Allergies

Review all known allergies with the school nurse and parents and prepare a school protocol in case of emergencies. Also, be alert to any signs of allergic reactions. This will be further discussed in "Tasting with Young Children."

Avoiding Stinging Insects

Practice identifying bees and other stinging insects with children. Be aware of their favorite habitats and ways to avoid them as well.

Using Water

Make sure you have a potable (safe to drink) water source to irrigate your edible garden.

For more information on how to test your water see www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/lead-drinking-water-schools-and-childcare-facilities

Avoiding Chemicals

We recommend gardening with organic methods. Be aware of what is in your potting soil, fertilizers, pest control, and weed control. If you do use chemicals, keep them out of reach of children at all times. Even organic chemicals and fertilizers can harm children if consumed.



Using Tools

Even young children can use small hand tools with appropriate supervision. Slowly introduce each new hand tool to children with the steps below.

Note: Many garden tasks do not require tools.

Divide into Small Groups

Small groups of 5-6 children are ideal for hands-on activities, particularly when the tasks involve using tools such as trowels.

Mark Your Space

It is important for children to know their boundaries for their bodies and for their tool, including where to place their tool when it is at rest.

Model the Task

With the children's attention focused on the teacher, model the task that children will complete independently. Remind students that tools are designed for specific tasks and they are not to be used as toys.

Supervise Closely

Tools should be used with direct supervision of an adult at all times.

Store Appropriately

When tools are not in use, they should be stored out of reach of children.

When long-handled tools or power tools are necessary, they should be used when children are not nearby.

Eating Garden Produce

Teach children to never eat any plants without permission from an adult. Additionally, be careful to ensure that children do not eat soil or any other natural elements from the garden.

For information on poisonous plants please see [Appendix G](#). Additionally, you may visit the CSU Extension, Guide to Poisonous Plants website, [linked here](#).

Benefits of Gardening with Children

There are numerous benefits to gardens as part of the outdoor learning environments for everyone! Recent research suggests that interaction with our natural environment is restorative to our wellbeing.

Outdoor gardens provide children (and everyone) access to breathe fresh air, sit on the earth, touch the soil, and grow food from a seed or small plant. When outdoors in the garden, children use their large muscles and fine motor skills to dig holes, plant seeds, remove weeds, and water plants.

They experience the feel of and observe the changes of Colorado's weather and seasons. They learn about the smell and feel of plants; and the lifecycle and parts of plants.

Outside, children are more likely to be physically active. Infants and toddlers have time to develop their gross or large motor skills. Increases children's play and imagination, improves reasoning.

Being outside in the garden promotes positive mental health. Children and adults build relationships and memories of being in the garden. Working in the garden can provide delightful experiences as well as disappointments which foster learning, independence, and self-efficacy in growing one's food. Studies show increased access and exposure to nature are associated with overall positive mental health and improvements in ADD/ADHD* symptoms.

Research describes that adult study participants report gardening-based activities reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety and cite other emotional, social, physical, vocational and spiritual benefits.

Reference: "Gardening as a mental health intervention: a review"
Jane Clatworthy, Joe Hinds, Paul M. Camic
Mental Health Review Journal Vol. 18 No. 4, 2013

*Attention deficit disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder





Chapter 3:

Exploring Cooking and Tasting with Young Children

Introduction: Cooking and Tasting with Children

Hands-on cooking activities are engaging, sensory, learning experiences that motivate young children to try new foods. These activities could include washing produce, preparing produce (like tearing leafy greens or using other manual tools without blades), measuring ingredients, or mixing ingredients for dressings. Children can also participate in arranging and serving foods before taste testing.

Tasting new foods can be exciting and sometimes challenging! Take time for children to be a part of the preparation, to ask questions, to explore, and they'll be ready for a new tastes!

Research shows that cooking with young children supports their physical, social, and emotional development.

The kitchen classroom provides a real world context for exploring math, science, social studies, and art ideas.



Physical Development and Motor Skills

Children develop both gross and fine motor skills through meaningful cooking tasks.



Math

Mathematic concepts of number and measurement have essential meaning while cooking.



Social and Emotional Development

Children work cooperatively with others to complete multiple steps.



Science

Children build knowledge related to motion and matter.



Approaches to Play and Learning

Through exploring and asking questions, children build interest and curiosity about the food they eat.



Social Studies

Through cooking, children build a connection to their greater community.



Communication, Language and Literacy

New vocabulary is developed through unique and meaningful real-world experiences.



Creative Development

The preparing and sharing of food is a familiar story for dramatic play.

The following overview will get you started!

If you need more resources go to the [Appendix](#). Finally, safety is the most important thing to consider with young children. Please review the ["Tips for Safety while Cooking and Tasting"](#) before getting started.

Hands-on Cooking for Young Children

“Cooking” with young children is often focused on the preparation of raw, seasonal fruits or vegetables. Children can wash produce, make bite-sized pieces, combine ingredients, and arrange the dish to be served. The snacks could be salads, skewers, boats, or roll-ups. Children can also participate in measuring and mixing ingredients for a dip or dressing.

Cooking tasks for young children include:

0-1 YEAR OLDS	2 YEAR OLDS	3 YEAR OLDS	4-5 YEAR OLDS
» Observe, engage, and connect with adults and older children as they prepare foods	» Carry vegetables » Gently wash leafy vegetables » Tear leafy greens » Arrange vegetables on dish	» Scrub root vegetables with brush » Pour liquids » Use a whisk to stir liquids » Shake a closed jar	» Squeeze citrus » Slice herbs with scissors » Measure liquids » Serve food

What will we need?

For basic recipes with young children, like the ones provided on the next page, not many tools are needed. Here is an example list to get started:

For washing:

- » Colander
- » Unused toothbrushes

For cutting:

- » Cutting boards
- » Scissors
- » Nylon knife (for teacher)

For dressings:

- » Measuring cups
- » Measuring spoons
- » Jar with lid
- » Whisk
- » Blender

For serving:

- » Platter
- » Napkin

What will we cook?

Start with what is seasonal! Seasonal produce is less expensive and when it's purchased from local farms, it is as fresh as possible — making it taste better and more nutritious.

Cool Weather Crops:

- » Leafy greens
- » Radishes
- » Carrots
- » Broccoli
- » Turnips

Warm Weather Crops:

- » Tomatoes
- » Bell peppers
- » Cucumbers
- » Okra
- » Corn



How will we cook?

Explore the Ingredients

- » How would you describe what this vegetable looks like to someone that has never seen it before? What color is it? What does it feel like? What does it smell like?
- » Where do you think the food came from? How did it grow? What did it need to grow? Who grew it? How did it get to our school?
- » Do you think you've ever seen this vegetable before? Here at school, in the garden, at home, at a grocery store, at a restaurant? What does it remind you of?

Cook Step-by-Step

- » Watch the teacher show you the task.
- » Practice the task while your teacher helps.
- » Finish all by yourself!

Recipes for Young Children

Children in early care can participate in the preparation of many snacks - particularly those that involve washing, preparing, arranging raw produce and making a dip or dressing.

Here are some general ideas - be creative!

Dips and Dippers

Children can help with mixing a dip or dressing and may be able to cut the veggie dippers or break bread into dipping-sized pieces.

Salads

Children can help with mixing a dressing and assist with tearing leafy greens for a salad. They may be able to cut the other veggies into bite-sized pieces as well. Salads can be themed with ingredients that represent every color of the rainbow or every part of the plant.

Boats

Instead of eating veggies and a dressing from a bowl, it can be eaten from an edible "boat" like a halved bell pepper or a halved and hollowed out cucumber or summer squash.

Wraps and Roll-ups

Veggies and dressing can also be folded or rolled up into a lettuce leaf or tortilla like a taco or burrito.

Skewers

Add different fruits to make pattern.



Easy Recipes for Young Children

Here are some examples for easy recipes that feature local foods. See notes to incorporate these recipes into your CACFP meal pattern.

Minty Melon Salad



Prep Time: 10 minutes

Yield: 6 cups

Ingredients:

- » 1 tablespoon honey
- » 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- » 6 cups cut melon cubes (watermelon, honey dew, cantelope)
- » 1/4 cup chopped fresh mint

Directions:

1. Stir honey and lemon juice together in a large bowl.
2. Add melon and mint and stir to coat.

CACFP Crediting Information:

Serve 1/2 cup of Minty Melon Salad with 1 oz of Brown Rice Crackers.

Tomato Basil Corn Salad



Prep Time: 10 minutes

Yield: 3-4 cups of salad

Ingredients:

- » 6 ears of corn, shucked
- » 3 large tomatoes diced (or 1 pint grape tomatoes, cut in half)
- » 1/2 cup small-diced red onion (1 small onion)
- » 3 tablespoons cider vinegar
- » 3 tablespoons good olive oil
- » 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- » 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- » 1/2 cup julienned fresh basil leaves

Directions:

1. Cut the kernels off the cob, cutting close to the cob.
2. Toss the kernels in a large bowl with the red onions, vinegar, olive oil, salt, and pepper. Just before serving, toss in the fresh basil. Allow to marinate for 20 minutes for the best flavor. Can be made and refrigerated overnight.

CACFP Crediting Information:

Serve 1/2 cup of Tomato Basil Corn Salad with 1/2 oz of mozzarella cheese.

Kale with Raspberry Vinaigrette



Prep Time: 15 minutes

Yield: 6 cups of salad

Ingredients:

- » 2 tablespoons raspberry jam
- » 1/4 cup rice vinegar or apple cider vinegar
- » 1/3 cup olive oil
- » salt and ground black pepper to taste
- » 2 large bunches of kale, stemmed and torn

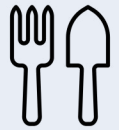
Directions:

1. Vigorously whisk together the raspberry jam, vinegar, and olive oil until thoroughly combined; season with salt and black pepper.
2. Rinse torn stem in a colander under running water. Pat kale dry with paper towels and transfer to a large mixing bowl.
3. Pour raspberry vinaigrette over kale, and with clean hands, massage the vinaigrette into the kale until the kale turns a deep green color (2-3 minutes).

CACFP Crediting Information for three to five year olds:

Serve 1/2 cup of Kale Salad with 1/2 ounce of Whole Wheat Crackers equals one vegetable and one grain.

Veggie Wrap



Prep Time: 10 minutes

Yield: 10

Ingredients

- » 2 large size avocados, pit removed
- » 2 teaspoons fresh lime juice
- » dash garlic powder
- » salt and pepper to taste
- » 1 pint grape tomatoes, cut in half
- » 2 cups shredded carrots
- » 10 ounce baby spinach
- » 10 taco sized whole wheat tortillas

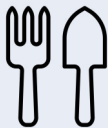
Directions:

1. Scoop the flesh of the avocados from the skin using a spoon, and place into a mixing bowl. Add lime juice, garlic powder, salt and pepper and smash the avocados with a fork until a paste is formed.
2. Arrange tortillas on a cutting board or plate and spread, 1 tablespoon of avocado mixture on half of each tortilla. Top with remaining vegetables and roll up to enjoy!

CACFP Crediting Information for three to five year olds:

Each wrap contains a minimum of one whole grain, one vegetable and one fruit serving.

Fruit Dippers with Honey Yogurt



Prep Time: 10 Minutes

Yield: 2 cups of dip

Ingredients:

- » 2 cups vanilla yogurt
- » 1/2 cup honey*
- » 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- » Assorted fresh fruit (such as apples, bananas, pineapple and/or strawberries), cut into wedges or bite-size pieces

Directions:

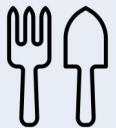
1. Combine yogurt, honey and cinnamon in small bowl; stir to blend.

CACFP Crediting Information for three to five year olds (snack):

Serve 1/2 ounce of yogurt with 1/2 cup of fruit equals one meat/meat alternate and one fruit.

**Honey should not be served to children under the age of one.*

Cucumber Hummus Boats



Prep Time: 10 minutes

Yield: 24-30 3" boats

Ingredients:

- » 2 10-ounce containers of prepared hummus**
- » 6-10 cucumbers, sliced in half lengthwise, seeds scooped out with a spoon
- » 2 pints grape or cherry tomatoes, cut in half or quartered

Directions:

1. Fill empty cucumber boats with hummus.
2. Top with cut tomatoes.
3. Cut cucumbers into 3-4" pieces per serving.

CACFP Crediting Information for three to five year olds (snack):

Serve 1/2 cup of cucumber with 1/2 ounce of hummus**= one vegetable and one meat/meat alternate

***Commercially prepared hummus must have a Child Nutrition label or Product Formulation Statement that specifies how to credit the hummus toward the meat/meat alternate and/or fruit/vegetable component(s) based on the serving size.*

Tasting with Young Children

Taste tests are intended to encourage adventurous eaters that grow to love the taste and texture of healthy, seasonal fruits and vegetables. They are simply an introduction to foods the children may see again soon at meal and snack time, growing in the garden, or on the grocery store shelves so students can build familiarity and meaningful experiences with those foods.

It is important to maintain a neutral and welcoming environment for all children to choose whether they want to engage in the taste testing or not. A child should never be forced or even strongly encouraged to try a food if the child does not want to. Allowing the child to participate at the table will increase exposure without creating a negative experience around the new food item. Negative experiences can have consequences on a child's relationship with food and willingness to try foods in the future.

How will we Taste?

After the tools and tables are cleaned up and after the snack is served with all children seated, it is time to taste!

It is often preferred to lead children in tasting all together on the count of three. This gives each child the chance to taste quietly and form their own opinions before sharing them. Then, here are some steps to leading children to share what they tasted:

Share Describing Words

How would you describe the fruit or vegetable?

Sweet, spicy, sour, bitter?
Crunchy, soft, juicy, gooey?

Share Opinions

What did you think of the fruit or vegetable?

"I love it!"
"Delicious"
"Interesting"
"It's not my favorite."
"I don't like it yet."
"I may try again another time."

Collect Data

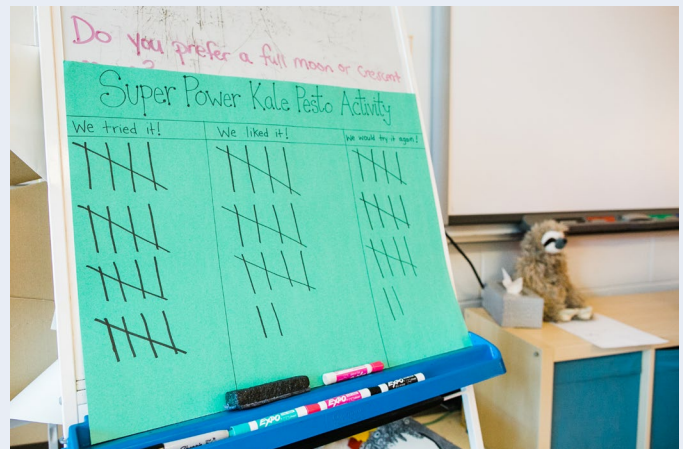
Would you try this fruit or vegetable again?

Yes, Maybe, No



Following a taste test, data can be collected by raising hands, making a sticker chart, drawing a bar graph or pictograph.

Beyond building knowledge of number and quantity in children, it is valuable feedback for the teacher, staff, and parents on the children's current taste preferences.



Tips for Behavior Management while Cooking and Tasting

Young children love working with food and tools! For many children it is very empowering to choose and prepare their own foods. With the high levels of excitement, it may be necessary to monitor and refocus children's attention and energy level. Here are some tips to help children make decisions that are best for the cooking and tasting environment:

Naming the Space

When food and cooking tools are present, the classroom space or the class time can be named something that reminds children of the shift in expectations, such as the Kitchen Classroom or Tasting Time.

Gathering Together

It is important to have a gathering space near a demonstration table where, when requested, children can sit comfortably to watch and listen to instructions.

Dividing into Small Groups

Hands-on tasks are easier, safer, and more engaging for children when they are completed in small groups of 5-6 children. Consider other independent tasks small groups of children can be involved in while one group is engaged in a hands-on activity with the teacher. Activities may include reading books about food, drawing a picture of their favorite food, or sorting foods by attributes.



Start with a book! Culinary and Food Safety Resources

The Quick Bite Culinary Videos offer short 5 minute videos to enhance culinary knowledge, skills and safe practices in the kitchen. Visit [this link](#), to learn more.



Tips for Safety while Cooking and Tasting

It is important for young children to be closely supervised while engaged with tools and while eating. Here are some tips to help keep children safe while they are cooking and tasting:

Preparing to Cook

Wash Hands

Wet and Lather

Wet hands using warm running water. Lather soap up to elbows.

Rub and Scrub

Rub and scrub for 20 seconds, on the backs of hands, wrists, between fingers, under fingernails.

Rinse and Dry

Rinse under warm running water. Dry with paper towels. Turn off running water with a paper towel, not bare hands.

Clean Space and Tools

Clean, rinse, sanitize all surfaces (including the sink) used for food prep and eating.

Clean, rinse, sanitize all tools and utensils used for food prep and eating.

Wash Veggies

Wet

Wet with cold running water.

Rub or Scrub

Rub delicate vegetables gently or scrub root vegetables with a brush.

Dry

Pat vegetables dry.

Storing Food

Follow proper food safety storage guidelines for any food that is stored for any amount of time before serving or food that is leftover after serving.

Tasting

Eliminate choking hazards

Sit to Taste

Eating while seated prevents choking.

Try Small Bites

Each bite should be small enough for small mouths but large enough to encourage chewing to prevent choking.

Cooking

Avoid Allergens

- » Review all known allergies with the school nurse and parents.
- » Prepare a school protocol in case of emergencies.
- » Be alert for allergic reactions including, tingling or itching in mouth, or slight swelling of lips or tongue.
- » Avoid dairy when possible, or offer alternative such as oil-based dip or dressing.
- » Avoid gluten when possible, or offer alternative such as rice crackers.

Supervise Tool Use

Many cooking tasks for young children do not require tools but children can use small hand tools with appropriate supervision. Introduce each new hand tool to children slowly with the steps below. When heat or blades are necessary, they should not be used when children are nearby.

Divide into Small Groups

Small groups of 5-6 children are ideal for hands-on activities, particularly when the tasks involve using tools.

Mark Your Space

It is important for children to know their boundaries for their bodies and for their tool, including where to place their tool when it is at rest. Ideally each child would be sitting in their own chair and have a cutting mat to work on.

Model the Task

With children's attention focused on the teacher, model the task that children will complete independently. Remind students that tools are designed for specific tasks and they are not to be used as toys.

Supervise Closely

Tools should be used with direct supervision of an adult at all times.

Store Appropriately

When tools are not in use, they should be stored out of reach of children.



Chapter 4:

Procuring Local Foods for the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Buying local food can be a rewarding experience for your staff, students and families. By purchasing local food you are keeping dollars circulating in your community. In addition, Colorado grows food year-round, and there are many options for buying fresh produce, dairy, grains, meat, eggs, and beans. If your center participates in USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), you are allowed to purchase local food. However, there are a few guidelines that you will need to follow.

Local Food For Little Eaters- A Purchasing Toolbox for the Child and Adult Care Food Program is a document that covers important information such as:

- » Capitalizing on the Child and Nutrition Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to Support Local Food Purchasing
- » Meeting CACFP Meal Patterns and Best Practices with Local Food Purchasing
- » Supporting Culturally Relevant Programming Through Local Food Purchasing
- » CACFP Local Food Purchasing Procedures
- » Purchasing Local Food from Broadline Distributors
- » Purchasing Local Food from Food Hubs
- » Purchasing Local Food from Farmers and Farmer Cooperatives
- » Purchasing Local Food from Farmers Markets
- » Tips for Local Food Purchasing Success

You can find this document at
<https://www.canr.msu.edu/foodsystems/uploads/files/Local-Food-for-Little-Eaters-CACFP-Guide-2021.pdf>

Meeting CACFP Meal Patterns and Best Practices With Local Food Purchasing

Local food purchasing initiatives can be a tool for meeting CACFP meal pattern requirements. The CACFP meal pattern, which was updated in 2016 and implemented in 2017, sets standards for meals served by programs that receive funding. Many of these standards support increased fruit and vegetable consumption, and meeting these standards can be aided by purchasing local food. See [Appendix A](#) and [B](#) for a guide to the updated CACFP Meal Patterns.

The new CACFP meal pattern standards include several best practices related to fruits and vegetables that could be met through local purchasing. Although only one best practice explicitly mentions local food, others can be easily met by participation in farm to ECE and the increased purchase and use of local foods.



CACFP Best Practices Relevant to Local Food Purchasing

	Incorporate seasonal and locally produced foods into meals.	The USDA understands that the incorporation of local food into CACFP can play an important role in creating a healthy environment. Because of this, purchasing local foods is a best practice in the CACFP meal patterns; it is seen as a strategy to better meet CACFP standards and improve program quality.
	Make at least one of the two required components of snacks a vegetable or fruit.	This best practice emphasizes increasing the number of eating experiences in a day in which children are exposed to fruits and vegetables. Local food purchasing provides access to fresher and more varied fruits and vegetables that can help providers increase the amount of fruits and vegetables they serve.
	Serve a variety of fruits and choose whole fruits more often than juice.	Purchasing locally can increase access to a wider variety of fruits and vegetables. Additionally, fruits purchased seasonally and locally often come in a greater variety of colors.
	Provide at least one serving each of dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas, starchy vegetables, and other vegetables once per week.	Purchasing local food can increase access to a wider variety of fruits and vegetables of different colors. ECE program staff can work directly with local growers to plant different varieties or colors of common produce, such as purple cauliflower, yellow carrots, or a wider variety of dark leafy greens.

Micro-purchasing

The micro-purchase threshold is a simpler way to purchase small quantities of local food. Your program can simply find a vendor and purchase its product without getting competitive price quotes. You should still keep receipts and/or document these micro-purchases.

Micro-purchasing was designed to make it easy for CACFP sites to try out new purchases or a new vendor relationship. For example, a program can use the micro-purchase method to purchase seasonal produce from a farmers market or support a special event. If an ECE program plans to regularly purchase local food from the same vendor, it should use the small purchase method.

Also, micro-purchases should be distributed equitably among qualified suppliers. For example:

- » A center is using micro-purchasing to buy strawberries from a local farmer. If the center would like to buy strawberries locally again, it should check to see if there are any other local strawberry farmers in the area before selecting the same farmer to purchase from again. If there are multiple local strawberry farmers in the area, the center should receive quotes to compare prices.

Informal Procurement (Small Purchase)

For food costs that fall under the \$250,000 small purchase threshold, ECE programs may use simple, informal methods to ensure that their vendors' prices are competitive. To use the informal purchasing method, follow these steps:

1. Write specifications for all items. Local is not allowed to be used as a specification; however, programs can include other specifications that are characteristics of local food, such as the following:
 - » Vendor is able to deliver products.
 - » Vendor is able to provide location of origin for all products.
 - » Vendor is available for farm tours or educational visits to the center.
 - » Freshness requirements for product.
2. Record the date, vendors, and quotes received for a minimum of three vendors. Quotes can be obtained verbally but need to be documented in writing using the Small Purchase Documentation Form (see [Appendix C](#)).
3. Prepare a documentation sheet that indicates the awarded vendor. See the Agreement to Furnish Foods for the Child and Adult Care Food Program Form ([Appendix D](#)).

Using Micro-Purchases

Colorado Farm to School/ECE Month in October celebrates the bountiful harvest of Colorado throughout the month with fun activities and new recipes to engage our littlest eaters.

Use the [Colorado Produce Calendar](#) to celebrate a signature Colorado food every month like spinach, peaches, and squash. If a program chooses to highlight the Colorado food once during the month, program staff can use the micro-purchase method for local produce if the total cost is less than \$10,000. It must be a one-time event not typically included in the program's planned food purchases.

Using Informal Procurement

Baxter's Child Development Center in Grand Rapids, MI, uses the small purchase threshold to order local fruits and vegetables from a regional food hub. The center documents prices for five frequently purchased products and provides prices from the three vendors of its choice, including the food hub. The center also considers the following:

- » The vendor's distance from the center and availability to deliver
- » The ability to source all of its needed produce
- » A stated priority to support small and minority-owned businesses whenever possible



Tips to Promote Local Food

Buying local food is a great way to get fresh, delicious food into your snacks and meals and support your local farmers. But don't stop there! Make sure to tell the world (especially your staff, parents, and students) all about these new ingredients.

Here are some of our favorite ways to promote local food:

Meet the Farmer!

Children treat local farmers like celebrities! Ask farmers to talk to students about their farm and show the children photos. If the farmer is unable to visit the school, ask if the farmer can FaceTime or Skype, or send a video for the children to watch! You can even ask children to draw picture for the farmer to thank them for the food they grew. If your program takes field trips, consider visiting a local farm if it is appropriate.

Many children don't actually know what real farmers look like-- so showing them photos of farmers-- of different ages, racial backgrounds and genders - is a great opportunity for children to explore who is growing their food!

Promoting Harvest of the Month!

Once a month, you can feature one new product from a different farmer. This will help teach the children, parents and staff about your initiative and they will get excited to learn about the new farmer and item every month. We've seen some programs ask kids to wear green for Broccoli Day or a director dresses up like a carrot! Visit the [Colorado Farm to Child website](#) to access the Colorado Harvest of the Month resource online. Additionally you can see [Appendix A](#).

Include a photo of the farmer

Include photo of a farmer on the days when their produce is being served! When serving the food, remember to help children remember the connection- Farmer Susan grew these turnips for you!



Mark “Local Food Day” on your meal calendar!

Even if you are only serving one local item every month, you can get children prepared by including it on your meal calendar with a special icon. Some early care programs will even include a photo of the farmer on the meal calendar, or fun facts about the local produce.

Explore and Taste Test

If you plan to serve sweet potatoes for the first time, make sure the children have a chance to learn about sweet potatoes at least a week before hand. Take a raw sweet potato and pass it around for them to touch. Perhaps give them a small taste. Show them a video of how it is grown.





Chapter 5: Engaging Families, Staff, and Community

Strategies for Family Engagement

Engaging families in a meaningful way can start with sharing with them what the children are experiencing at the center and ideas for how it can be supported at home. Then, create multiple ways for families to get involved by asking questions and inviting families to participate.

Ask and Listen

Every family has experience with food and has something to share.

Here are some questions to start the conversation:

- » What food memories are special to your family?
- » What experience, knowledge, or skills could you share?
- » What would you like to see planted in the garden this season?
- » What is your opinion on these upcoming plans and how would you like to be involved?

Invite

Invite families to participate.

Invite families to join you at school for...

- » Mystery reader in the garden (during the school day)
- » Garden tours for families (on evenings or weekends)
- » Garden workdays — seasonal events or regular maintenance groups like “Wednesday Weeders and Waterers”
- » Cooking or tasting activities
- » Garden and Harvest Parties

Invite families to meet you in the community for...

- » Farmers market visit
- » Community garden visit
- » Farm visit



Best Practice:

It's important to offer different types of opportunities at different times of the day and week. This will help meet the needs of families' schedules.

Share

Share photos and messages about what the children are experiencing in school and how it can be supported outside of school.

- » **What was planted or tasted in meals** — photos
- » **How to try it at home** — send recipe cards home with simple instructions and accessible ingredients, where to find the ingredients at the farmers market
- » **Why it is a valuable experience** — explain how trying new things, nourishing our bodies, supporting our farmers, caring for our Earth



We love using “I tried it!” stickers as a way to send the message home to parents that their child was adventurous and tried a new food! It can prompt conversations between parents and children about fruits and vegetables.

How to Share

Consider all of the ways your center is currently connecting with families and how photos and messages can be included in those.

- » **In Person** — school marquis in front of the center, front desk, bulletin boards inside the center
- » **Print** — menus, newsletters, flyers in take home folders, bulletin boards, information at front desk
- » **Online** — social media accounts, email newsletters, websites, text trees

Show Appreciation and Celebrate!

Don't forget to say thank you! When parents arrive to volunteer, consider offering snacks and water. Give shout outs to parent volunteers in newsletters and display photos of parent volunteers in the classroom. Send home thank you cards. Finally, make time to celebrate even the smallest victories — the Fall garden harvest, an adventurous taste test, or October Farm to School month!

Strategies for Staff Engagement

Getting your staff excited about Farm to Child activities is one of the most important steps for sustaining your work! Take time to listen to staff members about their ideas and focus on starting with easy activities where they will see success. While you can always begin Farm to Child initiative with one person, your program will be much stronger, more sustainable and more fun with at least 4-7 core staff members who are leading and participating in activities.

Offer Ways to Participate

There are many different ways to start participating in Farm to Child programs and each staff member may have a different interest or capacity to try a new project. Offering many different ways to get involved ensures that everyone can find something that excites them. Here are some examples:

- » Read a book about the life cycle of an apple tree
- » Sing a song about the changing seasons
- » Collect and sort different fallen leaves
- » Journal or draw what you find outside
- » Taste test strawberries in the spring
- » Plant a bed in the garden in the fall

Also, ask questions of the staff so all voices are heard before making decisions.

- » Why are you interested in this? What are you excited about?
- » What about this makes you nervous?
- » What help do you need?
- » What experience, knowledge, or skills could you share?
- » What would you like to see planted in the garden this season?
- » What would you like to taste test with your class this season?
- » What is your opinion on these upcoming plans?

Offer Ways to Learn

Provide a variety of ways for teachers to learn together - to access relevant information, resources, and to build skills.

Teamwork

When possible, create time for teachers to plan and reflect together on what has worked and what might work in the future.

Peer-to-Peer Learning

Teachers can share photos or demo quick Farm to Child activities or taste tests for staff during staff meetings.

Professional Development Opportunities

Explore the professional development opportunities in your area and consider sending staff for hands-on training.

Resources

Provide selected relevant resources for teachers to access exactly what will work for the age level they teach and the materials they have available.

Celebrate Success

Don't forget-- even the smallest achievements deserve attention and celebration!

What to Share

Share photos and messages about what the children are experiencing with their teacher.

How to Share

Consider all of the ways your center is currently communicating with their staff, families, and broader community.

- » **In Person** — school marquis in front of the center, bulletin boards inside the center
- » **Print** — newsletters, flyers in take home folders.
- » **Online** — Social media accounts, email newsletters, websites, text trees



Strategies for Community Engagement

Non-profit organizations, local businesses, the extension service, and the Master Gardeners have a lot to offer local Farm to Child programs. Share with them what is happening at your center, invite them to come see it in action, and give them opportunities to help!

Share What's Working

What to Share

Share photos and messages about what the children are experiencing at their school.

How to Share

Consider sharing directly with individual organizations but also with the broader community when it's possible.

- » **In Person** — community bulletin boards
- » **Print/TV/Radio** — local newspapers, magazines, radio segments, news segments
- » **Online** — neighborhood groups (Facebook groups, NextDoor, Yahoo Groups), social media accounts (using hashtags, locations, or mentions), email newsletters, websites

Invite to the Garden

Invite community members to join you at school for different events...

- » **Mystery reader in the garden** (during the school day)
- » **Garden tours** (on daytimes, evenings, or weekends)
- » **Garden workdays** - seasonal events or regular maintenance groups like "Wednesday Weeders and Waterers"

Ask for Help

Individual community members and local organizations can contribute in different ways. Here are some different things you can ask your community for:

Expertise — Organizations like the Master Gardeners or individuals like local chefs are experts and can help answer any questions that you have or come be a guest teacher for the class.

Energy — Volunteer groups like the high school Beta Club or even volunteers from a local gym may be interested in helping with any heavy lifting projects like moving compost.

In-Kind Donations — Local hardware stores or grocery stores may be able to donate specific tools or food items to your program. Also, you can host a drive for individuals in the community to donate something specific like kitchen tools.

Financial Donations — Many non-profit organizations offer funding opportunities. See the [Farm to Child](#) website for current grant opportunities



Sample community resources

CSU Extension

Colorado State University (CSU) Extension is a great resource for helping you find farmers, Master Gardener volunteers, soil testing, and school garden resources. CSU Extension offers local resources through county-based offices. Find your local Extension office: www.extension.colostate.edu/field-offices/ *Colorado State University (CSU)*

Future Farmers of America

Future Farmers of America (FFA) is a group of students, teachers and agribusiness to solidify support for agricultural education. Many Colorado school districts have active FFA programs in middle and high schools. Student members are engaged in a wide range of agricultural education activities and often provide service hours for agricultural related projects in their community.
www.coloradoffafoundation.org/

Rocky Mountain Farmers Union

Rocky Mountain Farmers Union is a progressive, grassroots organization founded in 1907. RMFU represents family farmers and ranchers in Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico. RMFU is dedicated to sustaining our rural communities, to wise stewardship and use of natural resources, and to the protection of our safe, secure food supply. RMFU supports its goals through education and legislation, as well as by encouraging the cooperative model for mutual economic benefit.
<https://www.rmfu.org/>

Scouts USA

(formerly Boy Scouts of America) is a year-round program for youth in fifth grade through high school that provides fun, adventure, learning, challenge, and responsibility to help them become the best version of themselves. Eagle Scouts complete service projects, such as building gardens.
www.scouting.org

Girl Scouts

A youth organization for girls in the United States. Girl Scouts often participate in service projects.
www.girlscouts.org

Hardware Stores

National and local hardware stores frequently donate to seeds, soil and tools for school gardens. Just go in and introduce yourself and ask!

Universities and Technical Colleges

Students in early education, nutrition and dietetics often need pre-service hours. Check with your local institution to see if any students would be interested in volunteering for taste tests, gardening lessons or reading books!





Appendix

Curriculums and Activity Resources that support Farm to ECE

Title	Program of	Description	Target Age Group	Garden	Recipes	Where to find it
Curriculums And Activity Resources						
Grow it, Try it, Like it!	USDA	Activity sets introduce children to: peaches, strawberries, cantaloupe, spinach, sweet potatoes, and crookneck squash. Each activity set includes: hands-on activities, planting activities, and nutrition education activities that introduce MyPlate.	3-5	x	x	www.fns.usda.gov/tn/grow-it
Harvest for Healthy Kids	Portland State University	Activity sets introduce children to fruits and vegetables. Each activity set includes: activity plan, picture cards, teacher bites, newsletter, family newsletter in three languages, recipes.	0-5	x	x	www.harvestforhealthykids.org/
Food for Thought	Healthy and Active preschoolers, California Department of Education	Activity sets introduce children to: Fruits and Vegetables, Go-Grains, Power up with Proteins, and Spring Snacking Each activity set includes: a nutrition activity and integrates educational domains such as language arts, mathematics and science concepts.	4-5		x	www.healthypreschoolers.com/?page_id=12
Farm to Childcare Curriculum Package	Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy	Activity sets introduce children to fruits and vegetables. Each activity set includes: Circle Time, Sensory and Dramatic Play, Math and Science and Arts, descriptions to use in newsletters and menus for the highlighted food, flashcards, and family-size recipe to send home.	4-5	x	x	www.iatp.org/documents/farm-to-childcare-curriculum-package

Our First Harvest: Bilingual Pre-K Curriculum	City Blossoms	A bilingual, year-round curriculum consisting of 30 garden-related lessons plus all kinds of resources and helpful hints.	3-5	x	x	cityblossoms.org/shop/our-first-harvest
Collective School Garden Network	Western Growers Association	Activities database searchable by "Pre-K to Kinder."	4-5	x		www.csgn.org/curriculum
Growing Minds Toolkit	Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project	The toolkit contains preK lesson plans, "This Week in the Garden" activity guides, and "Farm to School Goes Home" weekly newsletters.	4-5	x	x	https://growing-minds.org/farm-preschool-toolkit/
Early Sprouts	Early Sprouts Institute	this research-based early childhood curriculum is designed to increase children's preferences for nutritious fruits and vegetables.	4-5	x	x	www.earlysprouts.org/curriculum/
Sowing Seeds of Wonder	Life Lab	This book offers hands-on activities from the educators at Life Lab that teachers can incorporate into their curriculum and instruction to help students learn and lead healthy lives.	4-5	x	x	lifelab.z2systems.com/np/clients/lifelab/product.jsp?product=236
Guide to using the Creative Curriculum for preschool to support Farm to ECE Models	Policy Equity Group	These resource, aligns Farm to ECE strategies with one of the most widely used ECE curricula—The Creative Curriculum®.	0-5			www.farmtoschool.org/resources-main/a-guide-to-using-the-creative-curriculum-for-preschool-to-support-farm-to-ece-models
Other Resources						
Guide to using the Creative Curriculum for preschool to support Farm to ECE Models	Policy Equity Group	These resource, aligns Farm to ECE strategies with one of the most widely used ECE curricula—The Creative Curriculum®.	0-5			www.farmtoschool.org/resources-main/a-guide-to-using-the-creative-curriculum-for-preschool-to-support-farm-to-ece-models
Taste Test Box	Small Bites Adventure Club	Hands-on Cooking Kit featuring local food from farmers delivered directly to schools.	4-5	x		https://smallbites.club/
Growing Head Start Success with Farm to Early Care and Education	National Farm to School Network	Overview of how Farm to ECE aligns with Head Start programming.	0-5			www.farmtoschool.org/resources-main/growing-head-start-success-with-farm-to-early-care-and-education
Georgia Farm to ECE Crosswalk	Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning	Simple tool that aligns Farm to ECE activities with ECRS-3	4-5			http://georgiaorganics.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/ECERS-3-Farm-to-Preschool-Crosswalk.pdf

Aligning Farm to Child Activities with the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines

Farm to Child activities align with the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines and support high quality learning experiences for young children. The following examples demonstrate simple activities for early care providers and their corresponding guidelines.

Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines		Example Activity
Physical Development and Health	PDH1 - The developing ability to become aware of the social and physical environment through senses (sight, touch, hearing, smell, and taste)	<p>Mystery bag: Place a vegetable in a paper bag and encourage children to describe what they feel before peeking. Encourage children to close their eyes and smell herbs like mint and rosemary one at a time.</p> <p>Host a taste test: Present a few varieties of apples or tomatoes and encourage children to vote on their favorite. By raise of hands, children vote, and then count the total votes and display the results in the classroom.</p>
Social Development	SD2 - The developing ability to respond to and engage with other children.	Do together: Children work together in the garden to plant seedlings or water plants.
Emotional Development	ED2 - The developing concept that the child is an individual operating with social relationships.	Family sharing: Child with a family member shares samples of food and a story about how their culture uses the food.
Language and Literacy Development	LL3 - The developing ability to communicate nonverbally and verbally.	Writing: Encourage children to write the first letter of their favorite vegetable, and draw a picture.
	LL4 - The developing interest in engaging with print in books and the environment.	Read a book: Explore the many books about food, farming, gardening and cooking and learn new vocabulary words like germination, vegetation, harvest, and soil. Include books from around the world.
Cognitive Development	CD3 - The developing ability to mirror, repeat, and practice the actions of others, either immediately or later.	Imitate: Digging, planting and watering seeds. Weeding and picking vegetables from a plant.
	CD4 - Number Sense - The developing understanding of number and quantity.	Seed explorations: Fill a bowl with a variety of seeds, and encourage children to organize into shapes, colors and sizes by separating them into an empty egg carton.
	CD5 - Classification - The developing ability to group, sort, categorize, connect, and have expectations of objects according to their attributes.	Color and shape hunt: Using paint swatch samples, encourage children to “find” the same colors on plants found outside. Use words to describe the plants’ color, shape, texture, and purpose.
Approaches to learning	AL1 - Initiative and curiosity. An interest in varied topics and activities, a desire to learn and independence in learning.	Food preparation: Let children remove dirt from a vegetable, clean and peel (if appropriate). Ask open-ended questions and sharing of their experiences.
	AL2 - Creativity.- The developing ability to creatively engage in play and interactions with others.	Puppet play: Engage students in retelling a story about their visit to a farm/or farmer visit to the school with a puppet, props (e.g., vegetables, pictures) and physical movement (e.g, pulling a carrot out of the ground)

Aligning Farm to Early Care and Education Activities with Standards, Indicators, and Goals

Farm to Child activities align many existing ECE standards and indicators. See examples:

Sample Standards, Indicators, and Goals		Example Activity
Colorado Early Learning Development Guidelines	Cognitive Development 4.1 The developing understanding of number and quantity.	Children taste a variety of apples, vote on their favorite and record the results.
Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale - 3rd Edition (ECERS-3)	Language and Literacy 5.1- Helping children expand vocabulary.	Teachers are heard talking to the children about the garden and what the children are doing. The teacher names the items growing (radish, carrot, collards) and describes the tools (trowel, spade, watering can) by explaining their use.
Quality Rating Improvement System	Child Health Promotion	Children taste vegetables from the garden.
USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	Each week, highlight one item from Colorado's Harvest of the Month on the lunch menu.
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)	10.D. – Health, Nutrition, and Safety Policies and Procedures: The program has written policies to promote wellness and safeguard the health and safety of children and adults. Procedures are in place that address the providing of adequate nutrition for children and adults, 2.G.07 Curriculum Content Area for Cognitive Development: Science	Evidence could include the implementation of a wellness policy that included language about how the school promotes fresh, local food in meals and classroom activities. Scientific concepts include things such as life cycles of organisms, structure and property of matter, weather, seasons, time, light and shadow.
Head Start (View Growing Head Start Success with Farm to Early Care and Education full list of performance standards, Early Learning Outcomes and activities here .)	Subpart D - Health Program Services 1302.46: Family support services for health, nutrition and mental health. Sub-Domain: Cognitive Self-Regulation (Executive Function) Goal IT-ATL 3. Child maintains focus and sustains attention with support. Sub-Domain Creativity Goal IT-ATL9. Child shows imagination in play and interactions with others. Sub-Domain: Relationships with Other Children. Goal IT-SE5. Child imitates and engages in play with other children. Sub-domain: Gross Motor Goal IT-PMP 4. Child demonstrates effective and efficient use of large muscles to explore the environment.	Procurement: Share information about community resources that aid families in purchasing healthy, local food, such as a list of farmers markets that accept SNAP or offer SNAP incentives. Education: Connect with community partners to offer interactive cooking classes that highlight seasonal, local, and affordable foods. Children actively participate in adult led multi-step seed planting activities from digging a hole in the dirt to plant seeds, covering seeds, and watering. Children use blocks and manipulatives to "build" gardens and mimic plant growth. Children work together in the garden to achieve a common goal such as planting a seedling or watering the plants. Children follow directions and respond using vocabulary words specific to cooking (e.g., stir, bake, cut, measure), gardening (e.g., plant, soil, grow, leaf, water) or other food-based activities. Have children help carry gardening tools into the garden space, navigating different surfaces and moving around garden beds.



NATIONAL
FARM to SCHOOL
NETWORK

Farm to ECE & Head Start: A Natural Alignment

Farm to early care and education offers benefits that strongly parallel the goals and priorities of the early care and education community, with a particularly strong alignment with Head Start priority areas, including an emphasis on experiential learning opportunities, parent and community engagement and life-long health and wellness for children, families and caregivers.

To make it even easier for Head Start stakeholders to implement Farm to ECE, the National Farm to School Network has created [*Growing Head Start Success with Farm to Early Care and Education*](#). This new, comprehensive resource aims to promote understanding amongst Head Start stakeholders of how Farm to ECE supports achievement of [*Head Start Program Performance Standards*](#) and contributes to learning and development benchmarks as outlined in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. Growing Head Start Success is designed with clear, easy to read tables that directly align Program Performance Standards and the Early Learning Outcomes Framework with specific Farm to ECE activities from each of the three core elements of local procurement, gardening and food, agriculture and nutrition education. The resource also offers three profiles of Head Start programs leading the way in addressing performance and learning standards with Farm to ECE and their tips for integrating Farm to ECE in Head Start.

By promoting this resource widely, we hope that even more Head Start programs choose Farm to ECE to meet program and learning standards while providing children, families and communities with the myriad benefits that Farm to ECE has to offer. To dig into this new resource and find additional ways to get involved in Farm to ECE, visit the National [*Farm to School Network's Farm to ECE Landing Page*](#). NFSN is available to provide additional training, customized support and tools for your organization on a consultation basis.

To learn more, contact Lacy Stephens, Farm to Early Care and Education Associate, at lacy@farmtoschool.org.



Farm to Child Book List

These are some of our favorite books about growing, cooking, and tasting food. We have selected texts that feature characters from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, many of which are authored by writers of color.

Growing

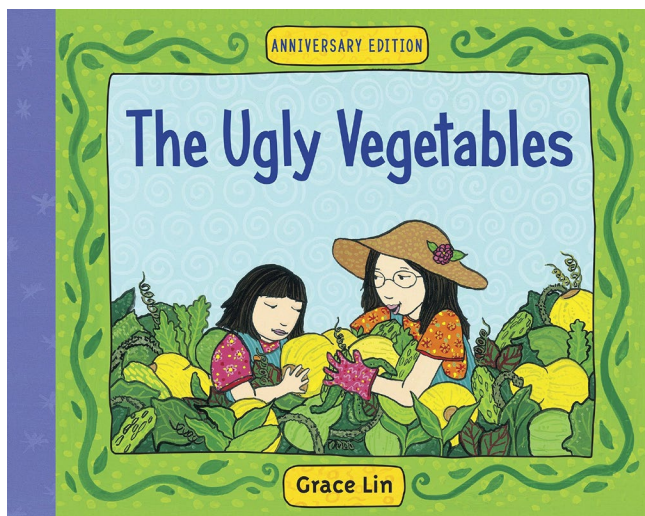
- » In My Garden, by National Geographic Kids
- » My Garden, by Kevin Henkes
- » Lenny In The Garden, by Ken Wilson-Max
- » Green Green: A Community Gardening Story, by Marie Lamba, Baldev Lamba
- » What's In The Garden?, by Marianne Berkes
- » Grandma Lena's Big Ol' Turnip, by Denia Lewis Hester
- » Lola Plants A Garden, by Anna McQuinn
- » How a Seed Grows, by Helene J. Jordan
- » Little Seeds (My Little Planet), by Charles Ghigna
- » From the Garden, by Michael Dahl
- » Up, Down, Around, by Katherine Ayres
- » One Bean, by Anne Rockwell
- » The Carrot Seed, by Ruth Krauss
- » City Green, by DyAnne DiSalvo-Ryan
- » The Ugly Vegetables, by Grace Lin
- » Plant A Little Seed, by Bonnie Christensen
- » The Tiny Seed, by Eric Carle
- » Our Community Garden, by Barbara Pollak
- » Planting a Rainbow, by Lois Elhert
- » The Apple Tree (English and Cherokee), by Sandy Sharp-Thee
- » Seed Magic, by Jane Buchanan
- » Rainbow Stew, by Cathryn Falwell
- » Fresh-picked Poetry: A Day At The Farmers' Market, by Michelle Schaub

Cooking and Tasting

- » Plants Feed Me, by Lizzy Rockwell
- » Before We Eat, by Pat Brisson
- » Mealtime (Toddler Tools), by Elizabeth Verdick
- » Let's Eat! A Comer!, by Pat Mora
- » Lenny Has Lunch, by Ken Wilson-Max
- » I Can Eat a Rainbow, by Annabel Karmel
- » Eating the Alphabet, by Lois Elhert
- » Everybody Cooks Rice, by Norah Dooley
- » Everybody Bakes Bread, by Norah Dooley
- » Everybody Serves Soup, by Norah Dooley
- » Everybody Brings Noodles, by Norah Dooley
- » Kitchen Dance, by Maurie J. Manning
- » Full, Full, Full Of Love, by Trish Cook
- » The Sandwich Swap, by Queen Rania of Jordan Al Abdullah
- » Dim Sum for Everyone, by Grace Lin
- » No Kimchi for Me!, by Aram Kim
- » Babies Can't Eat Kimchee!, by Nancy Patz
- » Too Many Tamales, by Gary Soto
- » A Season For Mangoes, by Regina Hanson
- » Bee-bim Bop!, by Linda Sue Park
- » Lailah's Lunchbox: A Ramadan Story, by Reem Faruqi
- » Sweet Potato Pie, by Kathleen D. Lindsey
- » Hungry Johnny, by Cheryl Kay Minnema
- » Auntie Yang's Great Soybean Picnic, by Ginnie Lo

Other

- » Green Is A Chile Pepper: A Book Of Colors, by Roseanne Greenfield Thong
- » Round Is a Tortilla: A Book of Shapes, by Roseanne Greenfield Thong
- » Round is a Mooncake: A Book of Shapes, by Roseanne Greenfield Thong
- » Fruits: A Caribbean Counting Poem, by Valerie Bloom



Songs about Gardens and Food

Young children love songs! Here are a few fun and easy tunes. See if you can create some new food and gardening songs with your students!

Dirt Made My Lunch

*Dirt made my lunch,
Dirt made my lunch.
Thank you Dirt, thanks a bunch,
For my salad, my sandwich
My milk and my munch 'cause
Dirt, you made my lunch.*

Credit: Banana Slug String Band (to hear the tune, go here:
bananaslugs.bandcamp.com/track/dirt-made-my-lunch-3)

Planting Time

Sung to: "Row, Row, Row Your Boat"

*Dig, dig, dig the earth
(make digging motion)
Then you plant your seeds
(pretend to drop seeds)
A gentle rain
(Flutter fingers down)
And bright sunshine
(Circle arms above head)
Will help your flowers grow
(Hold one arm parallel to ground and move other arm up behind it with
fingers extended to represent a flower growing)*

I'll Plant A Little Seed

Sung to: "I'm A Little Teapot"

*I'll plant a little seed in the dark, dark ground.
Out comes the yellow sun, big and round.
Down comes the cool rain, soft and slow.
Up comes the little seed, grow, grow, grow!*

Seeds

Sung to: "Twinkle, twinkle little star"

*Dig a hole deep in the ground
Spread some tiny seeds around
Pat them down - so they will keep
They are lying fast asleep
Rain will help the seeds to grow*



COLORADO

Department of Public
Health & Environment

Guidelines for Poisonous Plants in a Child Care Facility

All plants, their roots, stems, leaves, flowers, and fruit can be potentially toxic. Generally, the plant or a part of the plant has to be ingested for someone to have a reaction but simply touching the plant can cause a reaction as well.

Poisonous plants are prohibited in areas of a child care facility occupied by infants and toddlers. Preschool age children must be supervised around poisonous plants. This is a limited list of specific plants that have been classified as poisonous. If a plant is not listed here it does not mean that it is not poisonous. When adding plants to a child care facility it is important to verify whether or not it is poisonous. Additional resources on poisonous plants can be found at the links below.

[https://www.rmpds.org/system/user_files/Documents/Plant%20guide%20%201-31-08%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.rmpds.org/system/user_files/Documents/Plant%20guide%20%201-31-08%20(1).pdf)

<http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/plants/index.html>

In the event that a child ingests a plant call Rocky Mountain Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222.

You can contact your local public health agency or the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment if you have questions about the Rules and Regulations Governing the Health and Sanitation of Child Care Facilities in the State of Colorado.

Find the contact information for your Local Public Health Agency at <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/public-information/find-your-local-public-health-agency>.

Contact CDPHE at (303)692-3645 or cdphe_iepu@state.co.us



Flowers

The table below contains the common name(s) and botanical name of flowers that have been identified as poisonous. This is not an exhaustive list.

Common Name(s)	Botanical Name
Caladium, Angel Wings (all parts)	Caladium bicolor
Cardinal Flower (all parts)	Lobelia cardinalis
Castor Bean (seeds and leaves)	Ricinus communis
Daffodil (all parts)	Narcissus
Flowering Tobacco (leaves and flowers)	Nicotiana glauca
Four-o'clock, Marvel-of-Peru (roots and seeds)	Mirabilis jalapa
Foxglove (all parts)	Digitalis purpurea
Foxglove (all parts)	Helleborus
Iris (all parts)	Iris spp.
Lantana, Red Sage, Yellow Sage, West Indian Lantana (unripe fruits and leaves)	Lantana camara
Larkspur (delphinium)	Delphinium spp.
Lily of the Valley (all parts)	Convallaria majalis
Lupine (all parts)	Lupinus spp.
Monkshood, Aconite (all parts)	Aconitum spp.
Poppy (all parts)	Papaver somniferum
Snowdrop (bulb)	Galanthus
Spurges (milky sap)	Euphorbia spp.
Star-of Bethlehem (all parts)	Ornithogalum umbellatum
Sweet pea, Tangier Pea (seeds and pods)	Lathyrus spp.
Tulip (bulbs)	Tulipa

Houseplants

The table below contains the common name(s) and botanical name of houseplants that have been identified as poisonous. This is not an exhaustive list.

Common Name(s)	Botanical Name
Aloe (sap if ingested)	Aloe barbadensis miller
Anthurium, Flamingo Lily (all parts)	Anthurium andraeanum
Calla Lily (all parts)	Zantedeschia aethiopica
Chinese evergreen	Aglaonema
Croton (seeds, leaves, and stems)	Codiaeum variegatum
Crown of Thorns (milky sap)	Euphorbia milii
Dumb Cane/Dieffenbachia (all parts)	Dieffenbachia seguine
Elephant Ear (all parts)	Colocasia
Jerusalem Cherry (all parts)	Solanum pseudocapsicum
Mistletoe (all parts)	Viscum album
Philodendron (all parts)	Philodendron

Fruit Trees and Garden Plants

The table below contains the common name(s) and botanical name of fruit trees and garden plants that have been identified as poisonous. This is not an exhaustive list.

Common Name(s)	Botanical Name
Apricot (bark, leaves, seeds, pits)	Prunus armeniaca
Cherry (bark, leaves, seeds, pits)	Prunus avium
Common garden beans (if eaten raw when mature or nearing maturity)	Phaseolus vulgaris
Peach (bark, leaves, seeds, pits)	Prunus persica
Plum (bark, leaves, seeds, pits)	Prunus domestica
Potatoes (green or sprouting)	Solanum tuberosum

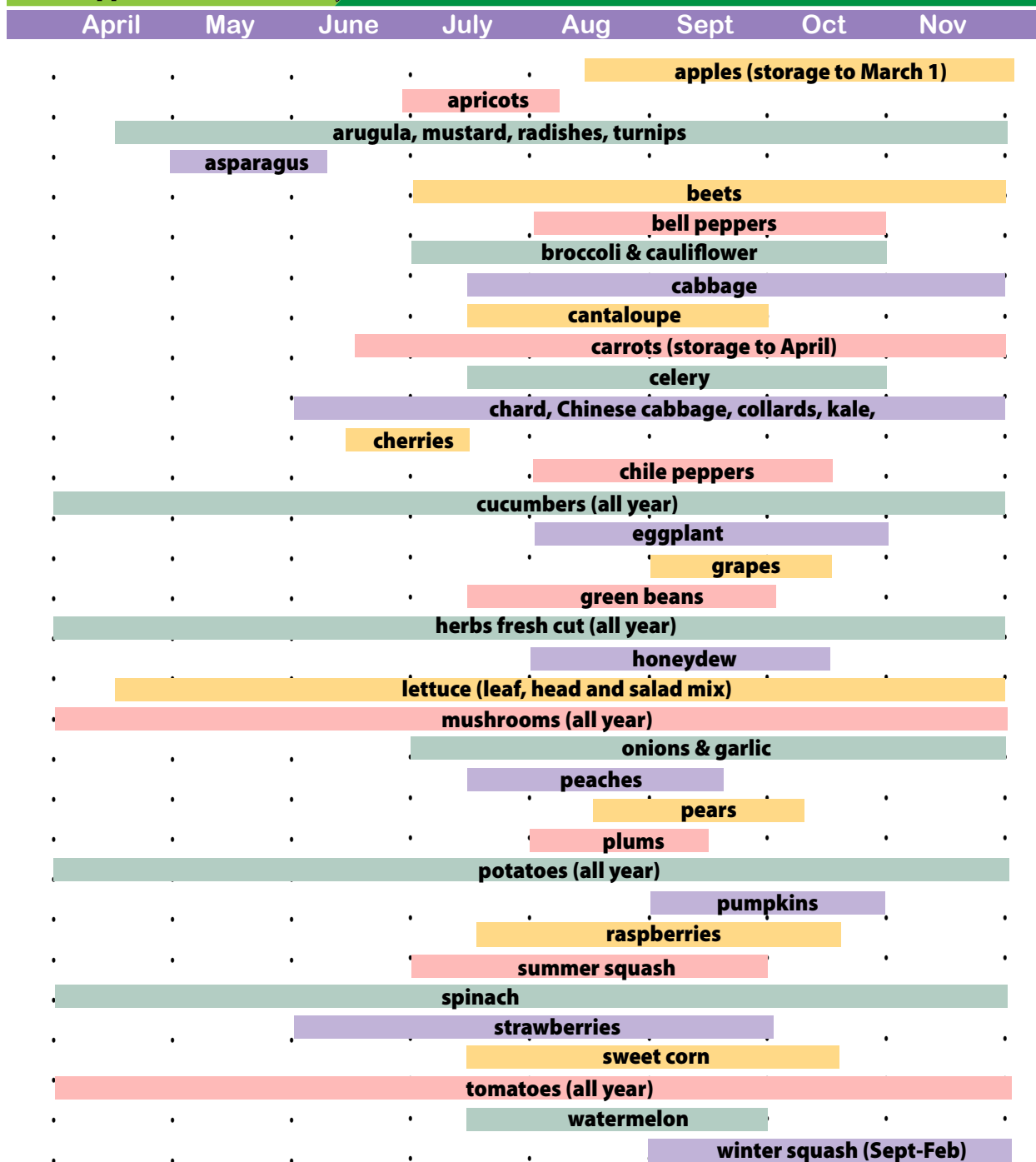
Landscape Plants

The table below contains the common name(s) and botanical name of houseplants that have been identified as poisonous. This is not an exhaustive list.

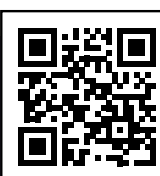
Common Name(s)	Botanical Name
Azalea (leaves and flowers)	Rhododendron
Black Locust (all parts)	Robinia pseudoacacia
Boston Ivy (berries)	Parthenocissus tricuspidata
Boxwood (leaves and twigs)	Buxus
Buckeye (all parts)	Aesculus
Burning Bush (all parts)	Euonymus alatus
Clematis (leaves)	Clematis
Elderberry (all parts)	Sambucus
English Ivy (all parts)	Hedera helix
Euonymus	Euonymus
Holly (berries, leaves)	Ilex
Honeysuckle	Lonicera spp
Horse Chestnut, Buckeye (all parts)	Aesculus hippocastanum
Hydrangea (leaves and buds)	Hydrangea macrophylla
Oak (acorns, leaves)	Quercus
Privet (all parts)	Ligustrum
Rhododendron (leaves and flowers)	Rhododendron
Snowberry	Symphoricarpos
Wisteria (all parts)	Wisteria sinensis
Viburnum/Arrowwood virburnum	Virburnum

COLORADO Produce Calendar

Find Colorado produce at coloradoproduce.org
Approximate availability shown below



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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food and
Nutrition
Service

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DATE: March 13, 2015

MEMO CODE: CACFP 11-2015

SUBJECT: Local Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program with Questions and Answers

TO: Regional Directors
Special Nutrition Programs
All Regions

State Directors
Child Nutrition Programs
All States

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide guidance on the incorporation of local foods and agriculture-based curriculum in early childhood education and care settings. The memorandum also clarifies policies in the recently published *FNS Instruction 796-2, Revision 4, Financial Management in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)* relevant to local food production and procurement. Finally, this memorandum includes questions and answers regarding procuring local food for use in the CACFP, growing food for use in CACFP, and donations.

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010 amended the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to expand the purpose of the CACFP to “provide aid to child and adult care institutions and family or group day care homes for the provision of nutritious foods that contribute to the wellness, healthy growth, and development of young children, and the health and wellness of older adults and chronically impaired disabled persons” [42 USC 1766(a)(1)(A)(ii)]. Further, Section 243 of the HHFKA established a Farm to School Program at the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to increase the availability of local foods in schools and institutions. FNS continues to provide grants and technical assistance to implement Farm to School programs that improve access to local foods in the Child Nutrition Programs, including CACFP.

The incorporation of local food and agricultural education into CACFP can play an important role in creating and promoting a healthy environment. There is a well-established and growing public interest in supporting local and regional food systems by purchasing these foods and incorporating agriculture-based curriculum and activities into early childhood education and care. Program administrators and partners are therefore encouraged to use local food as a means to enhance CACFP operations.

The recently issued *FNS Instruction 796-2, Revision 4, Financial Management of the CACFP*, now categorizes costs associated with growing food that will be used in the CACFP, either as part of the meal service or for activities related to nutrition education to

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food service staff, as allowable. These costs may include seeds, fertilizer, labor, plot rental, etc. Institutions are subject to 7 CFR Part 226.22 and therefore must conduct all procurements in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200.317-326. These procurement standards must be followed regardless of dollar amount, meal served or purchasing frequency. Facilities, such as day care homes and sponsored centers are encouraged to purchase in a way that promotes open and fair competition. For more information, see <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/796-4.pdf>.

State agencies are reminded to distribute this information to Program operators immediately. Program operators should direct any questions regarding this memorandum to the appropriate State agency. State agency contact information is available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm>. State agencies should direct questions to the appropriate FNS Regional Office.

Original Signed

Angela Kline
Director
Policy and Program Development Division
Child Nutrition Programs

Attachment

Questions and Answers Related to Use of Local Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

A. General

1. What is Farm to School/Farm to Preschool?

The term “Farm to School” encompasses efforts that bring local or regionally produced foods into cafeterias along with hands-on learning activities and the integration of food-related education into the regular, standards-based classroom curriculum. Farm to Preschool, the incorporation of these activities in early childcare and education settings, is a great way to introduce young children to where their food comes from, and help them develop lifelong healthy eating habits.

Farm to Preschool encompasses a variety of efforts that might include:

- » Purchasing local and regional foods for reimbursable meals;
- » Incorporating agricultural education programs into early childcare settings, such as Grow It, Try It, Like It, (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/grow-it>);
- » Taste testing with locally-produced foods;
- » Participating in a Harvest of the Month program;
- » Starting and maintaining preschool gardens; and
- » Taking field trips to local farmers markets and farms.

2. How and where can CACFP institutions purchase local foods?

There are many ways in which institutions can incorporate local foods into their meals programs, including competitively purchasing directly from a producer, through a distributor or food service management company, or from food hubs, farmers’ markets, and gardens. See USDA’s Guide to Procuring Local Foods for Child Nutrition Programs for a detailed description of each (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cfs/procuring-local-foods>)

A logical starting point may be for an institution to start asking about the source of the food they are currently purchasing. Some institutions may already be using local foods and not yet know it. Institutions can also communicate to current vendors and suppliers regarding their preference for local products.

Also, vendor solicitations may be written with characteristics of products from local sources in mind; for instance specifying a particular variety of apple that is native to your region, or that a product be delivered within 24 or 48 hours of harvest. Products from local sources may be expressed as a preference, but may not be required as a product specification.

Geographic preference may be used by institutions to procure locally grown or raised unprocessed foods. The institution making the purchase has the discretion to determine the local area to which the geographic preference option will be applied (7 CFR 226.22(n)(1)). Local area is not defined by the USDA. Additional guidance on Geographic Preference can be found in CACFP 02-2013, Procurement Geographic Preference Q&As – Part II, October 9, 2012 (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/procurement-geographic-preference-qas-%E2%80%93-part-ii>).

Note that CACFP institutions must procure all goods and services using the procurement regulations found in 7 CFR 226.22 and 2 CFR Part 200.317-326. Additional guidance on procurement can be found in FNS Instruction 796-2 Rev. 4 (www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/796-2%20Rev%204.pdf).

3. How can CACFP facilities, such as day care homes and sponsored centers, purchase local foods?

CACFP facilities can purchase local foods from any source, such as distributors, farmers markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), and food hubs, and are not required but are encouraged to purchase in a way that promotes open and fair competition. Additional guidance on procurement can be found in FNS Instruction 796-2 Rev. 4

(www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/796-2%20Rev%204.pdf).

4. When an institution purchases from a farm stand, farmer's market, CSA, or directly from a farm, are handwritten receipts acceptable forms of documentation of purchase?

Yes. Handwritten receipts for items purchased are acceptable documentation as long as the receipt includes the date of purchase, name of vendor/farmer, item cost, amount, and total cost.

5. Can food that was donated from local gardens or farms be used as part of the reimbursable meal?

Yes. While the full reimbursement for CACFP meals must be spent on allowable Child Nutrition Program costs, there is no Federal requirement that all of the food components be purchased with Program funds or that a specific percentage of the reimbursement be spent on food. It is an allowable practice for non-program resources to cover food expenses provided that an excessive balance is not present as determined by the State agency (*Refer to FNS Instruction 796-2, Revision 4, Financial Management of the CACFP, Section VI, D*). CACFP institutions must maintain records of the types and quantities of donated foods received, which will be assessed as part of their food service records during an administrative review.

6. Can State agencies use their State Administrative Expense (SAE) Funds to provide training and technical assistance on this topic?

Yes. FNS Instruction 781-2 includes providing technical assistance, nutrition education, and training as an allowable use of SAE provided that the funds are used to support State-level administrative activities. For more information on utilizing SAE funds to support state-level staff and training activities, see SP 28-2015 (correct number will be provided when memorandum is posted), *Questions and Answers Regarding the Use of State Administrative Expense (SAE) Funds and State Administrative Funds (SAF) for Farm to School Related Expenses*, March 13, 2015, (website will be updated when memorandum is posted to the public web).

B. Gardens and Growing Food

This guidance for growing food for use in the CACFP meal service is consistent with the guidance provided to schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and operating school gardens. For more information, see SP 32-2009, *School Garden Q&As*, July 29, 2009, (http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/SP_32-2009_os.pdf) and SP 06- 2015, *Farm to School and School Garden Expenses*, November 12, 2014, (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/SP06-2015os.pdf>).

- 1. Can an institution or facility use funds from the nonprofit food service account to purchase items for gardens such as seeds, fertilizer, watering cans, rakes, etc, to grow food that will be used in the food service?**

Yes. As long as the produce grown in the garden will be used as part of the reimbursable meal –and for nutritional education activities. Centers using garden produce in their CACFP reimbursable meals should document the weight and/or volume of the produce.

- 2. Can an institution sell food grown in their CACFP garden that was funded using the nonprofit food service account?**

Yes. As long as the revenue from the sale of the food accrues to the nonprofit food service account. Institutions or facilities may serve the produce as part of a reimbursable meal or sell it a la carte to parents, at a roadside stand, etc.

- 3. Can an institution or facility purchase produce from another institution or facility that is maintaining and managing the garden, such as Future Farmers of America (FFA), which is an agricultural education program for students?**

Yes. An institution or facility may purchase produce from a garden run by a school organization such as FFA as long as documentation includes the date of purchase, name of organization, item cost, amount, and total cost.

- 4. May funds received for serving At-Risk Afterschool meals be used to purchase seeds/tools/equipment for a garden?**

Yes. The At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program is a component of CACFP and is subject to the same rules as other CACFP components with regard to foods from local sources.

- 5. How may excess produce from the garden be used?**

The institution or facility should first see if the excess food can be used to benefit another program such as the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) or NSLP. If that is not possible, the food may be sold or donated in accordance with State and local health/safety regulations. As always, any profits must accrue back to the nonprofit food service account. Please refer to SP 11-2012, SFSP 07-2012, *Guidance on the Food Donation Program in Child Nutrition Programs*, February 3, 2012, for more information on donating food.

C. Food Safety

1. Are there resources for handling produce safely in kitchens?

National Food Service Management Institute's (NFSMI) publication *Ready, Set, Go! Creating and Maintaining a Wellness Environment in Child Care Centers Participating in the CACFP* (<http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=376>) provides best practices and assessment tools for the safe handling of food in child care facilities.

In addition, a produce-specific publication has been created for the school environment, and the best practices apply to many child care centers. NFSMI's publication *Best Practices: Handling Fresh Produce in Schools* (<http://nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=351>), developed for FNS, outlines recommendations for handling fresh produce at all steps in the food production process. Best practices address purchasing and receiving, washing and preparation, hand hygiene, serving, storage, and training, and general food safety practices. Specific recommendations for handling melons, tomatoes, leafy greens, and sprouts are also included.

FNS' Produce Safety University also identifies best practices for selecting, handling, and preparing produce for use in Child Nutrition Programs (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/food-safety/produce-safety-university>).

2. Is Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and/or Good Handling Practices (GHP) going to be a requirement for producers who sell to CACFP institutions?

No. GAP/GHP certifications are required when selling fresh fruits and vegetables directly to USDA and if State and local governments require it. Local distributors, retailers, institutions, or facilities may have individual GAP/GHP related policies. However, including GAP/GHP certification as part of the terms and conditions in the solicitation process is encouraged.

3. Is there a specific amount of liability coverage that farmers or others providing local foods products for CACFP must carry?

No. There is no specific amount of liability coverage required of farmers by USDA to sell to CACFP institutions or facilities. Institutions, facilities, States, distributors, retailers and food service management companies may all have different liability coverage requirements provided the requirements are not excessive which may potentially restrict competition. It is best to contact these entities for further information.

4. What other rules or regulations must farmers meet in order to sell to institutions or facilities?

Farmers must meet all Federal, State and local regulations to sell their products within the Child Nutrition Programs. Local distributors may have additional requirements, such as third party audits or product liability insurance limits. Farmers and purchasers should check with their local health departments to ensure that local and State requirements are met.

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