

# Incorporate local foods

There are a variety of ways to incorporate local foods into your meal programs. Local foods can be included in your school breakfast or lunch, and used either as a side item or a ‘center of the plate’ item. Many local foods are well suited for fresh fruit, vegetable or salad bars. Serving locally grown fruits and vegetables is a natural fit if your school participates in the USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program. Summer meal programs benefit from the incorporation of local foods, too. Local foods may be served outside of reimbursable meal programs; for instance, they can be featured in educational taste tests and sampling.

Strategies for incorporating local foods into your school’s meal plan must be practical and may require creativity. Adding local foods incrementally will allow trial and error without unnecessary risk and will help you work toward changes that may be more sustainable in the long run. We recommend you start slowly the first year by substituting locally grown items, when available, for one or two products you typically use in existing menu items or salad bars. The next step is to incorporate a new local food product or menu item. It’s better to start small and succeed than to make many changes too quickly.

*Get creative with **recipe development**— ask staff to bring in their favorite recipes, or hold a contest with prize incentives for staff, students or people in the community! This is a win-win: gather recipe ideas AND build involvement and enthusiasm for your program. See page 21 for more information about cooking contests.*

## Explore menu options

Many schools have found creative ways to integrate local items while working within their budget and labor constraints. Replacing unprocessed fruits or vegetables such as apples or potatoes with locally sourced substitutes likely entails a manageable degree of change and effort. Minimally processed, locally sourced products like carrot sticks or broccoli florets—if they are available in your area—can be substituted for existing menu items.

Other options for integrating local foods may require more staff training and adjustment time. Light, on-site processing such as chopping veggie sticks or roasting potatoes requires up-front effort. But examples from other schools show that, once systems are in place, overall labor hours may not necessarily increase.

On-site processing may require new equipment and staff training. The **list of recommended kitchen equipment for light processing** suggests tools that may increase your efficiency.



**List of recommended kitchen equipment for light processing**

# Incorporate local foods

New recipes that include local ingredients may require cooking from scratch. Menu items cooked from scratch with local ingredients might include pasta and pizza sauces, roasted chicken wrap sandwiches with grated, local vegetables, coleslaw, soups and chili. This option requires the most planning and development, but may result in delicious, nutritious additions to your menu that you and your staff will take pride in. The Chop! Chop! culinary skills videos will show you how to use and menu Wisconsin-grown produce ([www.cias.wisc.edu/chopchop](http://www.cias.wisc.edu/chopchop)). The Institute of Child Nutrition also produced Culinary Techniques for Healthy School Meals: [www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=266](http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=266). The **list of recommended kitchen equipment for from-scratch cooking** suggests tools to make your work more efficient.



## List of recommended kitchen equipment for from-scratch cooking

Visit these websites for tried and tested recipes:

Home Grown: Menus of Wisconsin <https://dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/national-school-lunch-program/menu-planning/cycle-menu/home-grown>

Chop! Chop! Resource Guide <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/team-nutrition/pdf/Chop%20Chop%20Resource%20Guide%202016%20-%20FINAL.pdf>

The Lunch Box: scalable recipes with nutritional analysis  
[www.thelunchbox.org/recipes-menus](http://www.thelunchbox.org/recipes-menus)

Massachusetts Farm to School Cookbook: school-friendly recipes  
[www.farmentoschool.org/Resources/MA\\_Farm\\_to\\_School\\_Cookbook.pdf](http://www.farmentoschool.org/Resources/MA_Farm_to_School_Cookbook.pdf)

New School Cuisine: Nutritious and Seasonal Recipes for School Cooks by School Cooks <https://healthymeals.fns.usda.gov/state-sharing-center/vermont/new-school-cuisine-cookbook>

Oklahoma Kidchen Expedition [www.kidchenexpedition.com/cookbook/](http://www.kidchenexpedition.com/cookbook/)

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**“Incorporating farm to school into our program has actually been a fun and invigorating addition to my job over the past three years. I am proud of what we have accomplished. The most rewarding part is seeing the kids catch on and enjoy the healthy, local foods we can offer. We are all benefitting.”**

— Nutrition program staff member, Chilton, WI

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Consider incorporating a salad or fresh fruit and vegetable bar to easily serve seasonal produce while avoiding the challenge of announcing a specific product in advance on lunch menus. Fresh fruit and vegetable bars provide menu flexibility. Local, seasonal product can be highlighted when available, while fresh produce can be offered year round. Students can freely choose healthful items at a produce bar, providing them with both nutritional and education benefits.

Based on the experience of participating schools, a fresh fruit and vegetable bar can be an efficient, cost effective aid in meeting nutritional requirements, and central to a farm to school program. In fact, salad bars can provide all components of a reimbursable meal, excluding milk, if properly managed. The following **field guide to salad bars** provides an overview and how-to information on starting and maintaining a variety of bars featuring fresh and local produce. The **fresh fruit and vegetable bar: production log** can be used to effectively plan and track costs and consumption patterns in your salad bar. **Let's move salad bars to schools** links schools with funding for salad bar equipment. More information can be found at [saladbars2schools.org](http://saladbars2schools.org).



Students and chef at Holmen's Sand Lake Elementary



**Field guide to salad bars in schools**



**Fresh fruit and vegetable bars: production log**

Community partners and funding can support acquisition of salad bars, even for large school districts. Read the **salad bar success story** to find out how REAP Food Group worked with the Madison Metropolitan School District to build a salad bar program over time.



**Wisconsin Farm to School Success Story: Madison Metropolitan School District Garden Bars**

# Incorporate local foods

## Processing and freezing local produce on site

Some schools process local produce on site, either in school kitchens or at central processing facilities. Processing lets schools take advantage of the abundance and affordability of local items when they are in season, and freezing provides access to local products throughout the school year. The “**Chefs move to schools**” video highlights the Viroqua school district’s success with processing, freezing and preparing local produce within their budget, and linking educational efforts with their farm to school program: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=JJBFxIjwC2E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JJBFxIjwC2E).

## Harvest of the Month

Although it may require more advance planning than a salad bar, a Harvest of the Month program is a way to simultaneously structure your procurement of local product, promote local foods and educate kids about fruits and vegetables—and the farms that grow them. Harvest of the Month generally highlights one local product a month, utilizing it in one or multiple ways. As schools become familiar with local items, Harvest of the Month can include more than one item per month. The **Harvest of the Month sample calendars** provide examples of how schools can plan products a year in advance as a strategy to set procurement, menu and educational goals.

**Take it slow!** Harvest of the Month can start simply with an educational sampling or taste testing of one local product each month. You can then incorporate the Harvest of the Month item into a meal program one or more times each month. Promote Harvest of the Month in newsletters and school menus, and provide complimentary classroom education activities for teachers. Harvest of the Month is a start-up strategy that can be launched at an individual school and grow to reach an entire district, as described in the **Wood County Harvest of the Month success story and calendar**.

For more information on Harvest of the Month promotional strategies, see page 20. Additionally, Harvest of the Month resources are available at <http://harvestofthemonth.cdph.ca.gov>.



**Harvest of the Month sample calendar**



**Wood County Harvest of the Month calendar**



**Wood County Harvest of the Month success story**



# Incorporate local foods

## Work with staff

Training employees to handle fresh produce or other local food fits within the parameters of their job descriptions and is one way to engage them in the process of building a farm to school program. Encouraging staff to take ownership and pride in their work will support your farm to school efforts and all aspects of your school's nutrition program. Each staff member can assist with program development and problem solving to achieve your farm to school goals. In general, involving staff throughout the process of developing a farm to school initiative, rather than just including them in its implementation, will increase their investment and improve your odds of a successful, sustainable program. Tips for involving staff:

- Train staff to “work smart,” utilizing their time efficiently. Match skill levels to jobs
- Work out production schedules for local items. Know and respect the limits of your staff (and yourself) when considering labor and time management.
- Provide training and encouragement when making production changes.
- Develop master recipes with staff input to guarantee labor costs for entrees, side dishes and scratch items.
- Monitor progress of the program, including labor hours, on a weekly basis.

*During implementation, farm to school programs report an **increase of fresh fruit and vegetable consumption of 25 to 84 percent.** \**



Onalaska kitchen staff serving a local roasted root vegetable blend

\*Joshi and Azuma, 2009

# Recommended Kitchen Equipment for Light Processing

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## Fresh Fruit and Veggie Prep Made Easy

Many hands make light work. Well-trained staff and proper equipment also lighten the work load in the kitchen when preparing local, raw fruits and veggies.

### 1) Salad Spinners

[http://www.novon.com/dynamic\\_salad\\_spinners.html](http://www.novon.com/dynamic_salad_spinners.html)

World Cuisine 5.5 GI # a488820

### 2) Chef's Knives

Mundial

Knife Chefs 8" SCW5610

Knife Paring 4" # SCW0547

R.H. Forschner

Knife Chef 5" Mini #47552

Creative Products Hand held Knife Sharpener #V-3095

### 3) Cutting Boards

Katchall Industries Cutting Boards

Poly White 15X20x.5 #CB-1520-1/2

Poly White 18X24x.5 #CB-1824-1/2

Also available in multiple colors for HACCP color coding

### 4) Wedge Makers / Fry Cutters

**Sunkist Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Sectionizer**

<http://www.centralrestaurant.com/Fruit--Vegetable-Wedger--Slicer-c83p6403.html>

**Wedge Maker Insta-Cut**

<http://www.rewonline.com/ss/foodprepworld/restaurant-equipment/cat/InstaCut.html>

**Nemco Easy FryKutter**

(used by REAP Food Group in Madison to prep 500+ lbs of carrot, sweet potato, or kohlrabi sticks weekly)

<http://www.zesco.com/products.cfm?subCatID=611&PGroupID=060110MZ01>

### 5) Fresh Fruit Preserver

Nature Seal -- <http://www.natureseal.com/>

### 6) Food Processor

<http://www.robotcoupeusa.com/>

Food Prep recommended model numbers:

R2c Dice

RGX

R301

R301R4n

### 7) Mandolines

Jaccard #200441 tabletop stand complete with seven blades for julienne, grate, fine grate.

Lincoln-Redco 4 slicing blades available



# Recommended Kitchen Equipment for From-Scratch Cooking

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## Scratch Cooking Wonders

High-quality equipment is available to improve production times and flexibility when incorporating scratch recipes into your program. Whether you choose local potatoes, culinary sauces and seasonings, cheeses or meats, having the right equipment can help the transition to scratch cooking.

### 1) Wedge makers/fry cutters

#### Sunkist Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Sectionizer

<http://www.centralrestaurant.com/Fruit--Vegetable-Wedger--Slicer-c83p6403.html>

#### Wedge Maker Insta-Cut

<http://www.bakertowne.com/1057/.html>

#### Nemco Easy FryKutter

(used by REAP Food Group in Madison to prep 500+ lbs of carrot, sweet potato, or kohlrabi sticks weekly)

<http://www.zesco.com/products.cfm?subCatID=611&PGroupID=060110MZ01>

### 2) Tilt skillets

Great for boiling potatoes and pasta, stir fry, batch cook recipes, grilled sandwiches and more.

Cleveland floor model: SEL30T1, SEL40T1 gas, table top model; SET15 gas

Vulcan-Heart floor model (VE30): 30 gal V-Series electric

Southbend: 30 gallon gas w/open leg frame base #BGLT-30 (NG)

Market Forge: 1200-TILT, Electric, 23 Gallon Capacity, Counter Top Model 301-1200

### 3) Steamers and combi/convi ovens

A wonderful addition for steaming or browning potatoes, meats, processed items and homemade pizza

Blogett BCX-14 series full size combi ovens

Cleveland 10 pans-full size boiler-less electric OES-10.20 Convotherm

Cleveland OES-6.10 Convotherm "The Mini"

Hobart Boiler-less steamers HC24EA3 and HC24EA5

### 4) Waring Immersion Food Blender

<http://www.waringcommercialproducts.com/catalog.php?pcID=90> Recommended: 18" harm # W5B65

### 5) Panini/clamshell grills

Step up your sandwich offerings utilizing fresh, local ingredients in a hot, grilled sandwich

Cadco Unox CPG-10 single sandwich grill w/ribbed plates

CPG-20 double sandwich grill w/ribbed plates

Waring (WPG150) 12" grooved full-top panini grill, Panini Perfetto series

Star (GX10IS) 15 3/4" Grill Express™ smooth two-sided grill

### 6) Mixers

Mashed potatoes cooked from scratch are only the beginning!

Hobart Legacy Mixers, countertop, 12 and 20 quart





# A FIELD GUIDE TO SALAD BARS IN SCHOOLS



MINNESOTA  
**MDH**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**A Field Guide to Salad Bars in School**  
Physical Activity and Nutrition Program  
Minnesota Department of Health  
Office of Statewide Health Improvement Initiatives  
85 East Seventh Place  
PO Box 64882  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55164-0882

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# **SECTION ONE**

# **INTRODUCTION**

## WHY SALAD BARS?

A salad bar might not be able to leap tall buildings in a single bound, but it can be a superhero for your school meal program. Salad bars can:

1. **Boost student participation.** As an example, in 2002, Riverside United School District (RUSD) in California was in the red \$3.1 million. Installing salad bars changed the perception of the nutrition program. Nine years later, RUSD has doubled participation and paid off their debt. They now have operating reserves of \$5.1 million.<sup>1</sup>
2. **Decrease plate waste.** When children are allowed to choose what they are going to eat, less food goes in the garbage.
3. **Improve the perception of the school meal program.** Salad bars have resulted in positive relationships between school food service staff members and students, administrators and teachers in some districts.<sup>1</sup>
4. **Cost you nothing, for a limited time.** The *Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools* program can get your school a free salad bar. For more information visit <http://saladbars2schools.org/>
5. **Get kids eating healthy.** Simply incorporating salad bars as part of school lunch has shown to increase fruit and vegetable consumption an average of 1.2 servings per student per day.<sup>2</sup> Given that most kids are not eating enough of these healthful foods on a given day, this is a great opportunity to help them meet their nutritional needs.
6. **Provide variety to students.** Salad bars provide a daily alternative to the regular hot school lunch. It complies with requirements of the USDA's National School Lunch Program for a reimbursable meal when carefully planned.<sup>3</sup>
7. **Adapt to your staffing capacity and facility.** There are many options for incorporating salad bars in to the menu. Some options require more staff capacity, such as pre-wrapped items, others less, such as self-serve bars. Some options require more space, such as a salad bar as a separate meal option, while others require less, such as a fruit and vegetable option as part of the full regular meal line. Choose what option works best for your school.
8. **Bolster your Farm to School program.** Since salad bars are flexible they can move with the seasons of your local farmer.
9. **Help you meet the requirement of the final USDA rule on school meals.** Stock your salad bar with dark green and bright red/orange vegetables and legumes and you're well on your way to meeting the new vegetable sub-group requirements.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: <http://saladbars2schools.org/pdf/Riverside-SBP.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Source: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/ora/menu/published/CNP/FILES/saladbar.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Source: <http://saladbars2schools.org/pdf/crunch-lunch.pdf>

## STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO SALAD BARS



### STEP ONE: Think of yourself as a salad bar champion

Chances are there is some reason you are reading this salad bar how-to; maybe you are interested in:

- Increasing school meal participation,
- Increasing revenues,
- Increasing fruits and vegetables,
- Promoting an even healthier eating environment for students, or
- Giving students more meal choices.

Craft a 30-second speech to explain your idea and start to get excited!



### STEP TWO: Talk to your business manager/purchasing director/administrator

After you have your salad bar sales pitch down, you should get your administrator and/or business manager on board. These people will be essential because they may have to approve and order your salad bar and supplies.



### STEP THREE: Determine where you will buy your fresh produce

- Farm to School programs are a terrific way to stock your salad bar. Check out the University of Minnesota Extension website to find great resources for working with local farmers and distributors to get local fresh produce for your school.  
<http://www.extension.umn.edu/farm-to-school/>
- Another source of fresh produce is your existing prime vendor. Double-check that they will be able to provide the amount and selection of produce at a competitive price.

*TIP: Produce prices are lowest when they are in-season. A list for Minnesota is available at <http://www.mda.state.mn.us/~media/Files/food/minnesotagrown/producecalendar.ashx>*



### STEP FOUR: Put someone in charge

Ask the foodservice staff for volunteers to be a salad bar coordinator. This person is responsible for salad bar activities for the school or district. Possible activities for the coordinator are ordering, preparing, serving and clean-up. The coordinator will need a minimum of 3 hours per day to get everything ready for a daily salad bar. This 3-hour estimate is based on a salad bar serving 40 or more meals per day.



### **STEP FIVE: Plan your menu**

Consider these questions:

- Will the salad bar be a reimbursable meal?
- Will it be used as a choice/fruit and vegetable bar?
- Will it be offered daily?
- Will the menu vary slightly from day to day to provide some variety?

*TIP: Check out the “Menu and Layout” starting on page 42 for more tips and tools for creating a salad bar menu.*



### **STEP SIX: Decide which school will launch the salad bar**

Develop a start-up schedule and set a goal for the number of schools with salad bars. Limit openings to one school per month at first to allow time to iron out any wrinkles.



### **STEP SEVEN: Order salad bars and containers**

You will need a variety of equipment for your salad bar. You may already have some of the equipment at your school.

*TIP: A list of the equipment is at <http://saladbars2schools.org/pdf/Salad%20Bar%20Brochure.pdf>*



### **STEP EIGHT: Spread the word**

- Tell your school principal(s) your plan to launch a salad bar in their school at least four weeks before opening.
- Send a press release to local papers and news outlets. (Check out the draft press release on page 51.)
- Create a flyer to announce the salad bar to parents and families.
- Email or send flyers home with students about a week before the launch.
- Ask to attend the next teacher meeting to talk about the salad bar. Ask teachers for permission to come to their classroom to demo salad bar etiquette so that students may practice before the launch.
- Contact the PTA to ask if you can discuss the salad bar and answer questions at their next meeting. Ask for parent volunteers if possible.
- Contact other parent and community groups to do the same.
- Schedule taste tests for the day and week before the salad bar launch to introduce students to some of the options they will have.

*TIP: Check out the Vermont FEED for a very helpful guide to doing taste-testing in the school, classroom or cafeteria: <http://www.vtfeed.org/materials/guide-taste-testing-local-foods-schools>*



#### **STEP NINE: Train and prepare staff**

- Include staff in the entire salad bar process; the more they are included, the more supportive they are likely to be.
- Address any questions and concerns they may have about implementing a salad bar

*TIP: Check out the training section starting on page 29*



#### **STEP TEN: Grand opening**

Have a big launch! Include banners, ribbons, non-latex balloons and nutrition education materials. Encourage the staff to have fun. For example, they could dress up as all of the colors of the rainbow to match the salad bar. Invite teachers, parents and others to join the students in eating from the salad bar.

*TIP: Use the salad bar checklist on page 40 to make sure that everything is ready and in place for your grand opening.*



#### **STEP ELEVEN: Adjust purchasing orders**

For the first few weeks quantities may be difficult to predict. Once salad bar participation has stabilized, you will be able to develop a standardized recipe. You will also be able to see how the salad bar performs compared to a variety of hot lunch items.

*TIP: Check out the “Quality Intro” section of *Fruit and Vegetables Galore* (available at [www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/fv\\_galore.html](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/fv_galore.html)) for ordering tips.*



#### **STEP TWELVE: Production records**

Accurate production records are essential to figure out how much of each item was prepared and served, how much was left over and how many students participated.

*TIP: Check out the Production Log on page 38 and Temp Logs on page 26 for templates.*



### **STEP THIRTEEN: Monthly salad bar meetings**

- Have the salad bar coordinator lead monthly meetings with staffing to hear their thoughts. This is a good place to get ideas, talk about potential changes and discuss food safety issues.
- Other potential topics include: scoop sizes, food group choices, sanitation and food temperature.



### **STEP FOURTEEN: Have fun!**

Be flexible and creative with your salad bar! Most of all, have fun and enjoy!!



*This step-by-step guide was adapted from the Riverside United School District Farmer's Market Salad Bar Program.*



## LESSONS LEARNED FROM MINNESOTA SCHOOLS WITH SALAD BARS

Two districts in Minnesota (Red Lake Public Schools and West Saint Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Public Schools ISD #197) were provided with salad bars in return for sharing their advice with other schools. The information in the next pages is drawn directly from their experience.

*“The salads we serve have had a great success at the elementary level. Implementing salad bars will help us continue on the path of improving healthy eating in our schools by increasing the servings of fruits and vegetables our students eat on a daily basis.”*

– Michelle Trumpy, MPH, RD, LD, Child Nutrition Consultant with ISD #197

Salad bars are an excellent way to increase meal participation as well as comply with USDA reimbursable meal regulations and increase access to fruits and vegetables in your school.

### Why have a salad bar?

- ☑ Students that didn't eat lunch at all are now taking advantage of the school lunch program
- ☑ Less waste compared to pre-portioned servings
- ☑ Parents and administrators have been great sources of positive PR for the food service program
- ☑ Students feel lucky to have salad bars in their school
- ☑ Increased fruit, vegetable and protein consumption compared to schools without salad bars
- ☑ It is a success at our school with students, staff and parents. They are eating better, healthier

### What are some challenges for schools wanting to start a salad bar?

- ✗ **Challenge:** Clean-up time for salad bars can be harder and longer than anticipated. Some salad bar units, especially in elementary schools where the units are smaller, can be difficult and uncomfortable to clean because the plastic sneeze guards aren't adjustable. Salad bars can be time consuming to clean when there is a very small window between services.
- 🔗 **Solution:** Line the salad bar wells with parchment paper to catch spills and make for easier clean-ups.
  
- ✗ **Challenge:** The salad bars can get really busy with kids flying through during their lunch period
- 🔗 **Solution:** Have a second pan ready for popular items so that it is easy and quick to switch items out and replenish the bar when pans get empty.
  
- ✗ **Challenge:** Knowing how much food to order and have available on the salad bar when first getting started.
- 🔗 **Solution:** Survey students, staff and other customers to get a baseline estimate of potential salad bar participation.
  
- ✗ **Challenge:** Getting food service staff and administrators on board.
- 🔗 **Solution:** Use a school wellness team to help organize your salad bar efforts and sell your message to administrators.

### **Tips from staff for starting a salad bar**

- Start serving more fruits and vegetables as you transition to having a salad bar.
- Begin planning at least three months before you plan to launch your salad bar. Make a plan in the beginning and stick to it!
- Have a second pan ready for popular items so that it is easy and quick to switch items out and replenish the bar when pans get empty.
- Have a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables on the salad bar.
- Staff appreciate being kept in the loop of what is going on and learning about salad bar operations ahead of time. They appreciate having the extra time to think through what is coming up and to wrap their mind around salad bar implementation.
- Watch for funding opportunities such as the Let's Move Salad Bars to School initiative.

### **Tips from staff for reducing waste**

- Use more small pans
- Remind kids to take only what they will eat
- Ask them if they can finish all that they took before they pile on more
- Show students serving sizes beforehand in as many ways as you can think of
- Use visual examples to teach students how much to take when first implementing the salad bar
- Use whatever fruits and vegetables you have planned for that grade level. Once the fruits and vegetables are gone, you don't have to put out more. (Similar to at home.)

### **Tips from staff for reducing messes**

- Line the bottom of the salad bar with foil or parchment paper to make for easier clean-up by catching spills before they get too out of hand (specifically under messy items like yogurt, shredded cheese, applesauce, cottage cheese, etc).

### **Final words of wisdom**

- Teamwork and staff dynamics can make all the difference. "We had one school execute almost flawlessly—kept very clean, followed good food safety techniques, no complaints. We had other schools that struggled a little bit more to catch on. I think the mix of staff and the kitchen culture have a lot to do with that."
- It is important to have back-ups ready to go. Bonus: If back-ups don't get used, the staff can use any untouched back-ups the next day.
- Develop a system to keep the salad bars clean in between student shifts. That is a time to wipe it down and refill.
- The work may seem like a lot at first, but give it time; it gets a little bit easier every day!
- Keep smiling.

# **SECTION TWO**

# **FOOD SAFETY**

## SAFE USE OF SALAD BARS IN SCHOOLS



### Introduction

Research and experience have shown that school children significantly increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables when they are given a variety of choices at a school fruit and vegetable salad bar. This experience can lead to a lifetime of healthy food choices. Therefore, public and private agencies throughout the country are working together to expand the use of salad choice bars. ([www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/chp/cdr/nutrition/FTS/saladbars-schools.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/chp/cdr/nutrition/FTS/saladbars-schools.html)).

The Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture encourages schools to follow food safety standards and best practices with all foods served in school meal programs. The addition of salad bars to these programs raises new concerns. This fact sheet provides answers to frequently asked questions about regulatory and food safety matters related to salad bars in Minnesota schools.

### Part One: Regulatory Matters

**Can any school have a self-service salad bar?** Yes. There has been some confusion that salad bars are only allowed in elementary schools if the food is either pre-wrapped or served by a school nutrition employee. This is not the case.

Elementary students are allowed to self-serve from salad bars that are designed specifically for small children. These salad bars must have a plastic barrier (food shield) positioned at the appropriate height for small children, and have a lower serving surface than full-sized salad bars.

If a school serves meals to children in early and middle grades and only has a full-sized salad bar, food for the younger children can be pre-packaged or served by an adult.

**Will a new menu mean other new requirements from the health inspector?** Any time you add a new food process, equipment, or a time and temperature sensitive food item, you should involve your state or local health inspector before and during the menu change. The health inspector can help assess food safety risks and identify practices to reduce those risks. They can also help you to decide if the changes you are planning will require plan review by your regulatory authority.

When time and temperature sensitive foods are added to the menu, you will need standard procedures to support your HACCP plan for safely handling these items. Such procedures might include guidelines for purchasing, receiving, storage, washing, processing, holding, temperature logging, serving and re-serving of fresh produce.

**What kind of equipment will we need?** First, you must have a food preparation sink for washing fruits and vegetables, as required by the Minnesota Food Code (4626.0780). This sink cannot be used for any other purpose such as washing hands, meat or dishes.

For the salad bar itself, you may use a mechanically cooled unit, or a non-mechanically cooled salad bar along with time as a public health control. Any unit must be NSF approved. You may also use an existing refrigerated service line with cold wells and food shields. One-sided service will be slower but will make it easier to monitor the salad bar and to assist younger children.

The Minnesota Food Code (4626.0395) requires potentially hazardous food (PHF) (e.g., cut fruits and vegetables, ready-to-eat meats, cottage cheese) be kept in mechanical refrigeration at 41°F or below, and hot foods at 140°F or above.

**If we plan to use a salad bar that is not mechanically cooled, what steps must we take to use time as a public health control?**

- First, submit prior written notification to the regulatory authority of your intention to use time as a public health control.
- Maintain a written copy of your detailed plan to use time as a public health control and make it available upon request. The plan must include details about how you will:
  - Maintain food temperatures according to the Food Code.
  - Clearly mark food containers to indicate the time that the food will expire (no more than four hours after food is removed from temperature control)
  - Discard food that is unmarked or for which the time has expired, and
  - Discard food at the end of meal service, even if it has not been four hours since the food was placed on the salad bar. Exception: Whole fruits can be re-washed and reused.

**Can salad bar foods be part or all of a reimbursable meal?** Salad bar offerings can be part of a reimbursable meal for schools participating in the National School Lunch Program. The salad bar can be used to provide all the meal components. Or, salad bars can be limited to offering a selection of vegetables and fruits that will serve only as the fruit and/or vegetable component. The rest of the components of the reimbursable meal should then be served elsewhere in the cafeteria line.

## Part Two: Health and Hygiene

**Kitchen staff:** School nutrition staff already understand the importance of handwashing. Hand hygiene reminders must be reinforced when you introduce fresh fruit and vegetables to the kitchen and the menu.

Kitchen staff must continue to wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after using the toilet or changing tasks. Wash hands before handling or cutting fresh produce. Use gloves or a clean utensil to touch ready-to-eat produce. Wash hands before putting on disposable gloves and change gloves when they may have been contaminated or in-between tasks.

Re-train staff on the importance of illness reporting and logging. Make sure that food service workers do not work while ill, and stay away from the kitchen for 72 hours after their last episode of vomiting or diarrhea. To avoid non-food related outbreaks, re-train maintenance staff on the correct way to clean-up after accidents involving feces or vomit.

We recommend a written plan for changing food service if the school has a very high number of colds, flu or gastrointestinal illnesses. This plan could include pre-packaging raw foods or discontinuing self-service during that period of time.

**Students:** You may prevent students from touching food at the salad bar but you cannot prevent them from handling these foods while they eat. It is important that students come to lunch with properly cleaned hands. It is recommended that a universal handwashing policy be in place before your salad bar program begins. Handwashing education must be included as part of the pre-salad bar education and information campaign for families, staff, and students. Handwashing education that includes family members will help reinforce good hygiene behaviors taught at school. Student handwashing needs to be promoted, monitored, and reinforced by staff at all levels. Remember, hand sanitizers are NOT a substitute for handwashing with soap and water.

## Part Three: Food Safety Concerns

**Education:** A successful salad bar program will include education and training before the salad bar arrives, and continuing education as it is used in the school.

**Before the salad bar arrives:** Send information home to families about the salad bar, including handwashing and salad bar etiquette. Discuss the salad bar and new menu at school meetings and conferences.

**In the kitchen:** Provide fresh produce training for all food service staff. Discuss personal hygiene, salad bar maintenance, cleaning, monitoring, and other changes to the mealtime routine.

*“Handwashing is the single most important means of preventing the spread of infection.”  
—(Centers for Disease Control)*



In the classroom: Spend time in the classroom to discuss new menu items and teach children about salad bar manners. Teach them why they must use utensils to handle food and stay behind the sneeze guard. Explain the importance of trying new foods and to take only as much as they will eat.

Especially for the early grades (K-3), having classroom exercises incorporating the use of various styles of tongs would help build student confidence in their use.

At the salad bar: Use signs with pictures to remind students about handwashing, salad bar manners, and portion sizes. Provide adequate monitoring for when they forget.

### **Source, selection, and shipments**

Good food safety practices begin when you select a vendor that not only provides quality food at a good price but also delivers fresh, fruits and vegetables that are properly dated, labeled, packaged and transported. Kitchen staff must carefully examine deliveries of fresh produce and be prepared to reject food that is old, over-ripe, bruised or damaged. After receipt, store produce immediately in dry or cold storage. Keep food in original packaging or label to identify its source. Make sure to store produce away from chemical products in dry storage, and away from raw meat, poultry and eggs in refrigerators or walk-in coolers. Store produce at least six inches off the floor, below the ceiling and away from walls.

### **“Shower, never bathe” fruits and veggies**

All but pre-washed fresh fruits and vegetables must be washed before they are peeled, cut, processed, served or eaten. Foodborne pathogens will spread easily from one fruit or vegetable to others if they are soaked in water. Always wash fresh fruits and vegetables under a running tap.

- It is not necessary to rewash packaged produce labeled “ready-to-eat,” or “washed.”
- Wash all other produce - even those with skins and rinds that will not be eaten. Rub firm-skin fruits and vegetables under running tap water or scrub with a clean vegetable brush while washing under a running tap.
- To wash tomatoes, the water temperature should be at least 10 °F warmer than the tomatoes. This prevents the absorption of bacteria into the tomato.
- Dry fruits and vegetables with a clean paper towel.
- Never use detergent, bleach or the dishwasher to wash produce.
- Chemical washes, if used, must be approved for use on foods and used according to the manufacturer’s directions.

### **Avoid cross-contamination**

In the kitchen: Always separate raw foods from ready-to-eat and cooked foods. Store and prepare each produce item separately. Document produce use on a production record. Use a different, clean cutting board and utensils (e.g., knives) for each food item. Wash, rinse, sanitize and air-dry kitchen tools, utensils, cutting boards, other surfaces and containers that come into contact with produce immediately after using them.

At the salad bar: Consider using longer handled utensils, especially for younger students. Use separate utensils for each container. Be sure to change-out utensils every four hours or sooner if the food contact area has been touched or the utensil has been dropped or placed in the wrong container, and whenever you change-out the food container. If students return to the salad bar, be sure they use a clean plate. Consider changing utensils after each individual class or after each “run.”

Never add food to a partially full container on the salad bar. Replace food containers when they are getting low in product, empty or have been contaminated.

Monitor salad bars to prevent students from ducking under sneeze guards, touching food with their hands, returning food, using utensils in more than one food container, or taking unmanageable portions.

Use reminder signs – with more pictures than words - to help students remember their salad bar manners.

After meal service: Clean and sanitize the entire salad bar at the end of each day’s meal service.

### **Saving leftovers and minimizing waste**

Keep time and temperature logs for all foods on any type of salad bar. All PHF foods from a non-mechanically cooled salad bar and cold foods that have been out of the refrigerator or the mechanically cooled salad bar for four hours must be discarded. You must also discard food that has been mixed with other foods, or touched with bare hands.

You may choose to save leftover food from a mechanically cooled salad bar to reuse the next day if the proper temperature has been maintained and has been recorded on the time and temperature log.

However, given the high potential for contamination of food items on a salad bar, the Minnesota Department of Health strongly recommends that leftovers only be saved to be used in a cooked product the next day.

If you choose to save leftovers for any purpose, cover and store them immediately. Mark containers with the date they were prepared. The food can be held for seven days, including the day it was prepared, provided the PHF has been maintained at 41°F or below. Minnesota Food Code (4626.0400)

Never combine leftovers with a new batch of the same food. Leftover food must be put out alone and used up before any new product is introduced.

To avoid waste, monitor portion size, particularly with smaller children. Use half-size or half-full containers of less popular items and food items typically selected in smaller portions. Half-fill containers near the end of service.

From Safe Use of Salad Bars in Schools fact sheet, Minnesota Department of Agriculture; Minnesota Department of Health; University of Minnesota Extension

## **KEEPING THE SALAD BAR SAFE - QUICK GUIDE FOR STAFF**

- Wash all whole fruit (unless package states pre-washed)
- Make sure food is kept cold (<41°). Use temperature logs to keep track
- Use shallow pans to reduce waste
- Change tongs:
  - If they are dropped on the floor or in the food
  - When food is replenished/switched out
  - If they become contaminated in any way
- Avoid spray chemicals to clean salad bar while in use
- Use a towel/sanitizer bucket for cleaning
- Clean up salad bar between lunch periods and as needed for spills
- Wash your hands frequently and encourage students to do the same
- Oversee students to ensure:
  - Heads stay above the sneeze guard
  - Food is touched with clean utensils only
  - No coughing, spitting, sneezing on food
  - No foreign objects in food
  - Trays are used only once (use clean boat for seconds)
- Remove and discard any potentially contaminated food
- Food must be thrown out after it's been on the salad bar, so plan ahead to reduce waste
- Inspections might focus on:
  - Keeping salad bar at proper temperature
  - General cleanliness of salad bar
  - Proper utensils are used for handling (proper size, good condition)
  - Clean plate for second serving

## **KEEPING THE SALAD BAR SAFE – QUICK GUIDE FOR STUDENTS**

- Always wash hands first
- Heads stay above the sneeze guard—ask an adult if you can't reach
- Food touched with clean utensils only—never use your fingers
- If utensil falls on the floor, don't put it back. Tell an adult
- Don't taste food items at salad bar
- Take what you can eat
- No coughing, spitting, sneezing on food
- Always use a clean plate/boat for seconds
- Always be polite in line, wait your turn

## **SALAD BAR PROCEDURE**

### **Washing fruits and vegetables**

The salad greens that are being used in every school have been triple washed and sealed. They are as clean and safe as they can be and it is the manufacturer's intention that they not be washed before using. Additional washing will only degrade the product. Additionally, many sites do not have the proper sink setup needed to effectively and safely wash greens. Therefore the mandatory standard procedure for all greens that are used is that they NOT be washed.

Other fruits and vegetables used on the salad bars DO need to be washed as they may have loose dirt and microbes on them that must be removed.

### **Procedure for washing whole fruits and vegetables (including vegetables that will be peeled)**

- Wear single use gloves when washing fruits and vegetable per HACCP SOP.
- Remove all stickers. Soak hearty produce to loosen foreign particles and reduce the risk of food-borne illness.
- This can be done in a clean, sanitized container such as a large bowl, bus tub or deep hotel pan. Do not fill up a sink for washing unless you have a dedicated vegetable sink that has been sanitized.
- For produce with thick skin (such as carrots, potatoes and bell peppers), use a vegetable brush to help wash away loose dirt and microbes.
- Some produce should not be soaked in water or scrubbed with a brush. Put fragile produce (such as cherry tomatoes and peaches) in a sanitized colander and spray with water.
- Drain fruits and vegetables well in a colander or other drain pan before cutting or storing.

### **Procedure for peeling and cutting salad bar items**

- Bacteria from the outside of raw produce can be transferred to the inside when cut or peeled. As stated above, even products that will be peeled must be washed properly.
- Start with a clean, sanitized workspace including countertops, cutting boards and utensils.
- Clean and sanitize all surfaces and utensils after preparing food items.

### **Salad Bar setup**

- Refrigerate all canned or bottled items (such as beans and salad dressing) and their backups before putting out on the salad bar. For example, if you generally use one can of beans for service, have another one refrigerated in case you run out.
- Keep all salad bar containers refrigerated and cooling pads frozen once they have been cleaned and sanitized.
- This will ensure that you start with a cold environment and will help maintain a safe product temperature while it is on the salad bar. When ready to set up the salad bar (as close to the start of service as possible), remove cooling pads from freezer and place in the base of the salad bar.
- Put dividers in place according to the grid.

- Set out filled refrigerated pans as close to the start of service as possible.
- Follow the grid setup!!! If you must substitute an ingredient, make sure you are subbing with a like ingredient (example, don't substitute eggs for tomatoes, put out carrot sticks in addition to carrot coins, or more of another popular vegetable). Substitute vegetables for vegetables, beans for beans, fruit for fruit and protein for protein.
- Alternate Diced Chicken and Diced Egg Daily. These products should not be out on the same day!
- Leftover Chicken from Tuesdays can be boned, diced and used on the salad bar if properly cooled.
- Leftover Tofu can be marinated and served on the salad bar as a protein (see recipe).
- Record how much product is prepared on the Production Record. After lunch, record what is left.

### **Salad Bar Food Safety**

- Products must be maintained at a temperature below 40°F or must only stay out on the salad bar for a 2 hour period. Time/Temperature logs must be maintained for all salad bar items
- Products may be reused for service the following day if they are clean, free of other items, appear fresh and have been held below 40°F or have been out on the salad bar for under 2 hours and have been recorded on a food time/temperature log. Never combine an old product with a new one, even if it has been properly handled.
- When changing out an old product with a new one, use a new, clean container. Do not add new product to a used container.
- Do not fill protein containers more than halfway. This will ensure that the product remains at a safe temperature.

Source: <http://www.thelunchbox.org/resources/salad-bar>

## **SELF-SERVICE BAR TIPS**

### **Setting Up**

- Place items on both sides so no student has to reach over.
- Use ½ size 2-inch deep so serving utensils do not go into the food.
- Use 1/6 or 1/9 size for items that are not used in great quantity, such as cilantro.
- Use full size 6-inch deep for only items that do not need utensils such as bananas or a wrapped product.
- Use pans to cover empty spaces, great for holding tongs or repeat an item that takes longer to self-serve.
- Change out serving utensil with a clean utensil each lunch period, or if continuous service, every half hour.
- Change out containers as needed. Try to avoid adding food on line from a can or a bag.
- Do you like to take the last ½ cup of something from a buffet dish or do you wait for it to be replenished? If there is only a little left, bring back to kitchen, place in the smallest container needed and refrigerate. Save in case you need it for the last line.
- Dispose of any cut or peeled fruits and vegetables, including canned, used on serving line at the end of the total serving time. To minimize waste, using smaller containers and replenishing as needed reduces the amount that needs to be tossed.
- During service, do not use any cleaning sprays. Wipe up only with an approved cleaner or quat.
- During break in service, roll out cart with fresh product and utensils on top, bucket for scraps, and cleaning buckets on bottom of cart.
- Always remove immediately a container or utensil that has been contaminated.
- For salad dressings, using squeeze bottles instead of ladles makes it easier for children. They do not need to be placed under the breath guard. Fill only 1/3 to ½ full so you can have more bottles without wasting product. Dispose of product daily and clean properly.
- Handle commercial bottled sauces or cryovac bags, such as hot sauce, ketchup, or dressings, according to manufacturer's food safety rules.
- Use attractive pans, utensils, and labels.

### **Monitoring and Observing**

- Determine the rules for self-service. How much or how many? Will it be unlimited?
- Ask for help from the cafeteria monitors to help children choose. Start out with instruction and adult supervision
- Observe the students' use of utensils. Make sure utensils are easy to use. Example: A spaghetti server is great for carrots. When students use tongs, the carrots are likely to spring out and onto the floor.



## Choosing the Right Self-Service Service Bar

Before purchasing a self-service bar, ask yourself the following questions:

- *What type of bar is it?* Is it a salad bar?
  - Is it a fruit and vegetable bar?
  - Is it a toppings/fixings bar to finish off sandwiches, tacos, or other entrée choice?
- *Where will you put it?*
  - Will it serve all lines?
  - Is it part of the reimbursable meal and therefore in front of the point of sale?
  - Will you need to fit it through a door when not serving? (If so, is it easy to move?)
- *How much will it hold?*
  - Do you have room for 4, 5, or 6 wells?
  - Do you need to order dividers so you can use smaller pans?)
- *How easy is it to clean?*
  - Do the breath guards/sneezeguards flip up?
  - Is there a drain?
- *Do you need it refrigerated and/or lighted?*
  - Do you have electrical where you want to place and store the bar?
  - How long is your food out? (Can you use the food safety time and temperature rule?)



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## **SAMPLE SOP: PREVENTING CONTAMINATION AT FOOD BARS**

**PURPOSE:** To prevent foodborne illness by ensuring that all items held on food bars are protected from contamination.

**SCOPE:** This procedure applies to anyone who is responsible for maintaining and monitoring the self-service food bars.

**KEY WORDS:** Contamination, Self-Service, Salad Bars, Food Bars

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Train foodservice employees on using the procedures in this SOP.
2. Follow state or local health department requirements.
3. Follow Employee Health Policy, Personal Hygiene and Washing Hands SOPs. (Employee health policy is not included in this resource.)
4. Follow manufacturer's instructions for pre-heating and pre-chilling food bar equipment before use.
5. Place all exposed food under sneeze guards.
6. Provide an appropriate clean and sanitized utensil for each container on the food bar.
7. Replace existing containers of food with new containers when replenishing the food bar.
8. Assist customers who are unable to properly use utensils.
9. Ensure that customers use a clean dish when returning to the food bar.
10. Store eating utensils with the handles up or in a manner to prevent customers from touching the food contact surfaces.
11. Avoid using spray chemicals to clean food bars when in use.

### **MONITORING**

1. Monitor and record temperatures of food in accordance with the Holding Hot and Cold Potentially Hazardous Foods SOP.
2. Continually monitor food containers to ensure that utensils are stored on a clean and sanitized surface or in the containers with the handles out of the food.
3. Continually monitor customers' use of the food bar to ensure that customers are not:
  - Touching food with their bare hands
  - Coughing, spitting, or sneezing on the food
  - Placing foreign objects in the food
  - Using the same plate for subsequent trips

### **CORRECTIVE ACTION**

1. Retrain any foodservice employee found not following the procedures in this SOP.
2. Remove and discard contaminated food.
3. Demonstrate to customers how to properly use utensils.
4. Discard the food if it cannot be determined how long the food temperature was above 41°F or below 135°F.

## VERIFICATION AND RECORD KEEPING

The foodservice manager will verify that foodservice employees are assigned to maintain food bars during all hours of operation. Foodservice employees will record temperatures of food items and document corrective actions taken on the Hot and Cold Holding Temperature Log. The foodservice manager will complete the Food Safety Checklist daily. This form is to be kept on file for a minimum of 1 year. Foodservice employees will document any discarded food on the Damaged or Discarded Product Log. The foodservice manager will verify that appropriate corrective actions are being taken by reviewing, initialing and dating the Damaged or Discarded Product Log each day. The Hot and Cold Holding Temperature Log and the Damaged or Discarded Product Log are to be kept on file for a minimum of 1 year.

**DATE IMPLEMENTED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE REVIEWED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE REVISED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

Source: <http://sop.nfsmi.org/HACCPBasedSOPs/PreventingContaminationatFoodBars.pdf>

## Sample SOP: Cleaning and Sanitizing Food Contact Surfaces

**PURPOSE:** To prevent foodborne illness by ensuring that all food contact surfaces are properly cleaned and sanitized.

**SCOPE:** This procedure applies to foodservice employees involved in cleaning and sanitizing food contact surfaces.

**KEY WORDS:** Food Contact Surface, Cleaning, Sanitizing

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Train foodservice employees on using the procedures in this SOP.
2. Follow state or local health department requirements.
3. Follow manufacturer's instructions regarding the use and maintenance of equipment and use of chemicals for cleaning and sanitizing food contact surfaces. Refer to Storing and Using Poisonous or Toxic Chemicals SOP.
4. If state or local requirements are based on the *2001 FDA Food Code*, wash, rinse and sanitize food contact surfaces of sinks, tables, equipment, utensils, thermometers, carts and equipment:
  - Before each use
  - Between uses when preparing different types of raw animal foods, such as eggs, fish, meat and poultry
  - Between uses when preparing ready-to-eat foods and raw animal foods, such as eggs, fish, meat and poultry
  - Anytime contamination occurs or is suspected
5. Wash, rinse and sanitize food contact surfaces of sinks, tables, equipment, utensils, thermometers, carts and equipment using the following procedure:
  - Wash surface with detergent solution.
  - Rinse surface with clean water.
  - Sanitize surface using a sanitizing solution mixed at a concentration specified on the manufacturer's label.
  - Place wet items in a manner to allow air drying.
6. If a 3-compartment sink is used, set up and use the sink in the following manner:
  - In the first compartment, wash with a clean detergent solution at or above 110°F or at the temperature specified by the detergent manufacturer.
  - In the second compartment, rinse with clean water.
  - In the third compartment, sanitize with a sanitizing solution mixed at a concentration specified on the manufacturer's label or by immersing in hot water at or above 171°F for 30 seconds. Test the chemical sanitizer concentration by using an appropriate test kit.
7. If a dishmachine is used:
  - Check with the dishmachine manufacturer to verify that the information on the data plate is correct.
  - Refer to the information on the data plate for determining wash, rinse and sanitization (final) rinse temperatures; sanitizing solution concentrations; and water pressures, if applicable.
  - Follow manufacturer's instructions for use.
  - Ensure that food contact surfaces reach a surface temperature of 160 °F or above if using hot water to sanitize.

## MONITORING

Foodservice employees will:

1. During all hours of operation, visually and physically inspect food contact surfaces of equipment and utensils to ensure that the surfaces are clean.
2. In a 3-compartment sink, on a daily basis:
  - Visually monitor that the water in each compartment is clean.
  - Take the water temperature in the first compartment of the sink by using a calibrated thermometer.
  - If using chemicals to sanitize, test the sanitizer concentration by using the appropriate test kit for the chemical.
  - If using hot water to sanitize, use a calibrated thermometer to measure the water temperature. Refer to Using and Calibrating Thermometers SOPs.
4. In a dishmachine, on a daily basis:
  - Visually monitor that the water and the interior parts of the machine are clean and free of debris.
  - Continually monitor the temperature and pressure gauges, if applicable, to ensure that the machine is operating according to the data plate.
  - For hot water sanitizing dishmachine, ensure that food contact surfaces are reaching the appropriate temperature by placing a piece of heat sensitive tape on a smallware item or a maximum registering thermometer on a rack and running the item or rack through the dishmachine.
  - For chemical sanitizing dishmachine, check the sanitizer concentration on a recently washed food-contact surface using an appropriate test kit.

## CORRECTIVE ACTION

1. Retrain any foodservice employee found not following the procedures in this SOP.
2. Wash, rinse and sanitize dirty food contact surfaces. Sanitize food contact surfaces if it is discovered that the surfaces were not properly sanitized. Discard food that comes in contact with food contact surfaces that have not been sanitized properly.
3. In a 3-compartment sink:
  - Drain and refill compartments periodically and as needed to keep the water clean.
  - Adjust the water temperature by adding hot water until the desired temperature is reached.
  - Add more sanitizer or water, as appropriate, until the proper concentration is achieved.
4. In a dishmachine:
  - Drain and refill the machine periodically and as needed to keep the water clean.
  - Contact the appropriate individual(s) to have the machine repaired if the machine is not reaching the proper wash temperature indicated on the data plate.
  - For a hot water sanitizing dishmachine, retest by running the machine again. If the appropriate surface temperature is still not achieved on the second run, contact the appropriate individual(s) to have the machine repaired. Wash, rinse and sanitize in the 3-compartment sink until the machine is repaired or use disposable single service/single-use items if a 3-compartment sink is not available.

- For a chemical sanitizing dishmachine, check the level of sanitizer remaining in bulk container. Fill, if needed. “Prime” the machine according to the manufacturer’s instructions to ensure that the sanitizer is being pumped through the machine. Retest. If the proper sanitizer concentration level is not achieved, stop using the machine and contact the appropriate individual(s) to have it repaired. Use a 3-compartment sink to wash, rinse and sanitize until the machine is repaired.

**VERIFICATION AND RECORD KEEPING**

Foodservice employees will record monitoring activities and any corrective action taken on the Food Contact Surfaces Cleaning and Sanitizing Log. The foodservice manager will verify that foodservice employees have taken the required temperatures and tested the sanitizer concentration by visually monitoring foodservice employees during the shift and reviewing, initialing and dating the Food Contact Surfaces Cleaning and Sanitizing Log. The log will be kept on file for at least 1 year. The foodservice manager will complete the Food Safety Checklist daily. The Food Safety Checklist is to be kept on file for a minimum of 1 year.

**DATE IMPLEMENTED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE REVIEWED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE REVISED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

Source: <http://sop.nfsmi.org/HACCPBasedSOPs/CleaningandSanitizingFoodContactSurfaces.pdf>

More HACCP-based SOP templates can be found at: <http://sop.nfsmi.org/HACCPBasedSOPs.php>

**Food Contact Surfaces Cleaning and Sanitizing Log**

**Instructions:** Record time, temperatures/sanitizer concentration, as appropriate and any corrective action taken on this form. The foodservice manager will verify that food workers have taken the required information by visually monitoring foodservice employees and preparation procedures during the shift and by reviewing, initialing and dating this log daily. Maintain this log for a minimum of 1 year.

Date and Time		Wash Temperature	Rinse Temperature	Final Rinse (Sanitization) Temperature	Heat Sensitive Tape (place here)	Sanitizer Concentration (in ppm)	Corrective Action	Employee Initials	Verified By/ Date

Source: <http://sop.nfsmi.org/Records/FoodContactSurfacesCleaningandSanitizingLog.pdf>

### Cooling Temperature Log

**Instructions:** Record temperatures every hour during the cooling cycle. Record corrective actions, if applicable. If no foods are cooled on any working day, indicate “No Foods Cooled” in the Food Item column. The foodservice manager will verify that the foodservice staff is cooling food properly by visually monitoring foodservice employees during the shift and reviewing, initialing and dating this log daily. Maintain this log for a minimum of 1 year.

Date	Food Item	Time/ Temp	Time/ Temp	Time/ Temp	Time/ Temp	Time/ Temp	Time/ Temp	Corrective Actions Taken	Initials	Verified By/ Date

Source: <http://sop.nfsmi.org/Records/CoolingTemperatureLog.pdf>



**Damaged or Discarded Product Log**

**Instructions:** Foodservice employees will record product name, quantity, action taken, reason, initials and date each time a food or food product is damaged and/or will be discarded. The foodservice manager will verify that foodservice employees are discarding damaged food properly by visually monitoring foodservice employees during the shift and reviewing, initialing and dating this log daily. Maintain this log for a minimum of 1 year.

Date	Time	Vendor or School	Product Name	Temperature	Corrective Action Taken	Initials/Date	Manager Initials/Date

Source: <http://sop.nfsmi.org/Records/DamagedorDiscardedProductLog.pdf>

# **SECTION THREE**

# **OPERATIONS**

## **STAFF TRAINING**

Staff should be involved from the very beginning. When the salad bar is up-and-running, monthly staff meetings about salad bars are a good idea. In the pages that follow are salad bar meeting agendas, an FAQ template you can complete for staff and training evaluation form.

### **Salad Bar Staff Training Agenda Example 1**

- I. Background
- II. Food Safety
  - a. Best Practices
  - b. HACCP plan
- III. Serving up the Salad Bar
  - a. Template
  - b. Food Coaching
  - c. Hands on time
- IV. Question/Answer
- V. Evaluation

### **Salad Bar Staff Training Agenda Example 2**

- I. Review observations, new guidance
- II. Questions for you
  - a. Name for salad bar?
  - b. Is school menu limiting with fruit/vegetables listed?
  - c. Production Records
- III. School Sharing
  - a. Successes
  - b. Challenges
- IV. Evaluation

## Training Evaluation Example 1

Did you feel this training was useful?

Yes

No

What did you think of the length of the training?

Too Long

Too Short

Just Right

Any other information you would have liked covered?

Any other feedback?

## Training Evaluation example 2

Did you find this training useful?

Yes

No

Do you think the salad bar was easier, about the same, or harder to start than you imaged?

Easier

About the same

Harder

What is one tip you have for other school kitchens starting a salad bar?

What is one tip you have for other schools to reduce waste with the salad bar?

Any other feedback?

## **SALAD BAR FAQ FOR FOODSERVICE STAFF**

### **Why are we getting a salad bar? It sounds like a lot of work.**

Salad bars can increase student participation, put our nutrition program in a good light and help increase the amount of fruits and vegetables kids eat. [District/School Name] was already offering a variety of fruits and vegetables. The salad bars are a way to serve fruits and vegetables in a more appealing/attractive way.

### **How is this being funded?**

[If this is of concern to your audience, explain how you got funding for the salad bar (ex. Let's Move Salad Bars to School, SHIP, etc)]

### **What is the timeline of salad bar implementation?**

[Some examples of items to include in your timeline are below]

- Salad bar start date. This will give staff and new students a chance to get settled before adding the salad bar.
- Regularly-scheduled salad bar meetings with kitchen staff to check in
- Observe each salad bar 2 times/month and talk with staff, parents, teachers and students
- Conduct time studies of each salad bar
- Provide education for students about salad bar use and offerings
- Conduct taste testings with students
- Feature Farm to School item

### **How many times do I need to change the tongs on the salad bar?**

- If the tongs are dropped on the floor or in the food
- When food is replenished or switched out
- If they become contaminated

### **How do I reduce waste?**

Keep track of food used on your production records and use smaller/shallow pans.

### **What day is the salad bar starting?**

[Type your salad bar start date here]

### **What schools are getting salad bars?**

[Type which schools are getting salad bars]

### **Are we really allowing students to have unlimited access to fruits and vegetables?**

Yes.

### **Can a student get seconds on fruits and/or vegetables?**

Yes, ONLY if s/he uses a CLEAN [*boat/plate/bowl*]. Reusing a tray is NOT allowed.

**Can we just pre-cup fruits and vegetables to make it the correct portion?**

No, we want to reduce pre-cupping portions as much as possible. This will continue to be evaluated.

**How do I know what to put on the salad bar?**

Use the salad bar template. [Write your school's general layout...example: In general, there should be lettuce, protein, 2 vegetable choices and 2 fruit choices (at least 1 fresh).]

**How is the salad bar stocked, monitored and kept clean?**

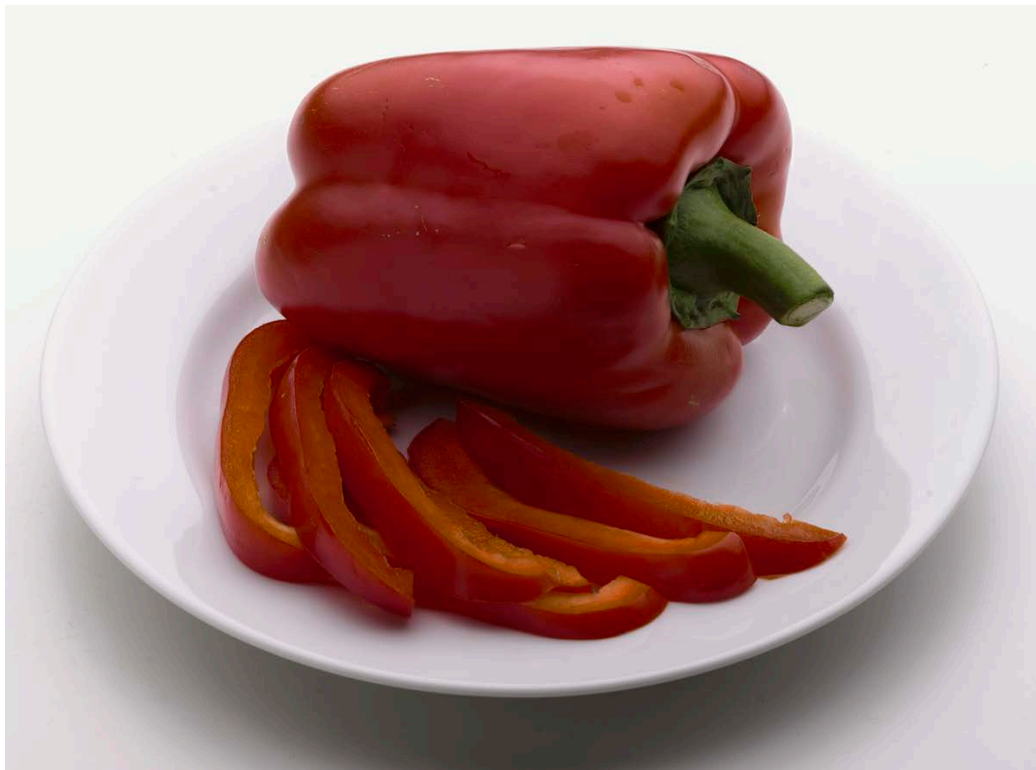
This will be decided individually in each kitchen. These tasks might be rotated, but it is important to have one point person for these salad bar tasks daily.

**Is there anyone else helping on this project?**

Schools might have volunteers, lunch room para-professionals and/or teachers assist students through the salad bar.

**Who do I ask if I have questions, comments or concerns?**

[Food Service Director and Salad Bar Coordinator name, contact info]



## **REDUCING WASTE FROM SALAD AND CHOICE BARS**

- Survey students and other customers regarding their salad bar preferences as well as their likelihood to eat at the salad bar
  - This can help you to make initial estimates for ordering
- The first few weeks and months of your salad bar may make it seem like the students are eating up your entire budget. As students get used to the salad bar, the amount they take as well as how often they eat will begin to plateau and come to rest at a steady rate. Once this occurs it will be easier for you to order what you need and estimate how much of each product will be consumed on a daily basis, which will help you to reduce waste as well as your food costs.
- Encourage students to take only what they can eat. If it is your school policy, remind them that they can come back for seconds (but must use a clean plate!).
- Teach foodservice staff to recognize proper portion sizes visually in order to monitor compliance with the NSLP as well as to prevent waste.
- Develop visuals that show proper portion sizes compared to everyday objects so that students and staff may learn how to recognize the amount of food they serve themselves.
- Use shallow containers to hold the food items.



## PURCHASING

When buying food products for a salad bar, you want the highest quality products at the best price. Following these steps will help you reach that goal:

- Plan menus
- What to buy and quantities required
- Develop quality standards
- Determine product movement policies
- Document purchasing process
- Analyze market and evaluate vendors
- Determine purchasing system
- Select vendors
- Place orders
- Receive products
- Prepare meal

USDAs Food Buying Guide and the Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals are two valuable tools that can assist you in the purchasing process. For more detailed purchasing guidance, go to the NFSMI website and review First Choice: <http://www.nfsmi.org/documentlibraryfiles/PDF/20111129111739.pdf>

### What to Buy and Quantities Required

One of the first steps in the process is to determine what and how much to buy. Your answers to the following questions will help:

- What will you be serving on your menu?
- How much of each ingredient will you need to fulfill your recipes?
- What products are already on hand at your facility?
- Are orders already in place for products needed?
- Product yields – How many servings will each item produce?  
(<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/foodbuyingguide.html>)
- How much product is usually consumed at meals? What is the average meal consumption rate?
- Volume and type of storage available – Do you have space for extra dry and refrigerated storage? How much room do you have for additional product?
- Do you have the space and equipment to meet the needs of your staff in preparing, storing and serving the new products?
- Do you have enough people to do the work? Will you need extra labor?
- Are there conflicting demands on the production schedule?



## DEVELOPING QUALITY STANDARDS

Developing quality standards (specifications, descriptions, or identifications) is the most difficult step in the purchasing process. It is also one of the most important, and it can be time consuming. To get the quality you need and want, you have to know how to ask for it. So you must provide a detailed and specific list of the characteristics you want in a food product. Then, when you receive the order, you have to make sure the food meets your descriptions and is in good condition.

One source of help in developing your specifications is USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). AMS maintains commercial item descriptions (CIDs) for hundreds of food items. A CID concisely describes the "salient characteristics" such as the processing, ingredients, odor, flavor, color, texture and analytical requirements – of each available, acceptable commercial product. To view the current CIDs, go to the AMS website at:

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/ams.fetchTemplateData.do?template=TemplateN&navID=CommercialItemDescriptions&rightNav1=CommercialItemDescriptions&topNav=&leftNav=GradingCertificationandVerification&page=CommercialItemDescription&resultType=&acct=procsdgrdcert>

Since most people want to buy high quality fruits and vegetables, here are some specifications you may want to consider using when you order fruits and vegetables:

- Quality of raw products
- Maximum/minimum level of ripeness of fresh product that will be acceptable
- Processing methods and packaging materials you prefer
- USDA grade, Department of Commerce standard, or product packed to a USDA grade
- Size and variety of item
- How it should be shipped
- Where it should be shipped
- Appropriate shipping temperature
- Any other specific information to ensure that you receive the highest quality products

You may specify that lettuce be a healthy green color with no loose leaves and no brown leaves. Such specifications can help guarantee that you receive fresh items. You can also specify the type of ripeness desired of certain produce. For example, tomatoes are typically available in six stages of ripeness. Select an appropriate degree of ripeness to avoid spoilage. If you don't plan to use all of your tomatoes at once, you might want to specify that a certain amount be riper than others, so they don't all peak simultaneously.

## EXAMPLE ORDERING FORMS

Vegetable Ordering Information			
Broccoli florets		18 cp/3 lb bag	NC
Carrot, baby		16 cp/5 lb bag	NC
Carrot, coins		16 cp/5 lb bag	NC
Cauliflower florets		10 cp/3 lb. bg	
Celery sticks		18cp/5 lb bag	NC
Cucumber, sliced		15 cups/5 lb bag	NC
Jicama sticks		15 cp/5 lb bag	NC
Lettuce, shredded		30 cp/5 lb. bag	NC
Salad greens		15 cp/2 ½ lb bg	NC
Spinach leaves		20 cp/2 ½ lb. bg	NC
Onion, diced		9 ½ cp/3 lb. bag	NC
Peas, frozen		48 cp/20 lb. case	NC
Tomatoes, diced		11 cup/5 lb. bag	NC
Tomatoes, grape		30 cp/flat	NC
Zucchini sticks		16 cp/5 lb. bag	NC

Svg size based on ½ cup servings for all veggies

Ordering Information			
Eggs, hard-boiled	12 eggs/bag -12 bags/cs	144 egg/cs	US
Cottage cheese	11 svg (1/4 cp) per carton	24 oz. carton	Sch
Cheese, shredded	480 svg/cs	120 cp/30 lb. cs	NC
Black Bean Salad			
Black beans, drained, rinsed	20 svg/cn	6 cans/cs	US

Red Pepper, diced	112 svg/bg	7 cp/3 bg	NC
Green Pepper, diced	112 svg/bg	7 cp/3 bg	NC
Onions, diced	380 svg/bg	9 ½ cp.3 lb. bg	NC
Corn, drained	144 svg/cn	6 can/cs	NC
Garlic, minced	1800 svg/jar	3 ¾ cp/32 oz. jar	US
Jalapeno pepper	140 svg/cn	2 cp/28 oz cn	US
Dressing, black bean	160 svg/bg	8 cp/bg	NC
<b>Corn and Edamame Salad</b>			
Corn, drained	40 svg/cn	6 cn/cs	NC
Edamame	135 svg/bg	6 ¾ cp/2 ½ lb bg	NC
Onion, diced	384 svg/bg	9 ½ cp/3 bg	NC
Pepper, red diced	288 sg/bg	7 cp/3 bg	NC
Cilantro, chopped	2,000 svg/bg	12 ½ cp/bg	NC
Dressing, corn & edamame	320 svg/bg	8 cp/bg	NC
<b>Italian Bean and Pasta Salad</b>			
Pasta, macaroni	27 svg/bg	15 cp/9 lb. bg	NC
Beans, pinto	54 svg/can	9 cups can 6 can/cs	NC
Tomatoes,diced	85 svg/bg	11 cp/bg	NC
Onions, diced	256 svg/bg	9 ½ cp.3 lb. bg	NC
Green pepper, diced	95 svg/bg	7 cp/3 lb. bg	NC
Dressing, Italian fat-free	120 svg/gal	16 cp/gal	US

## EXAMPLE PRODUCTION RECORD

School:

Site lead:

# students served: \_\_\_\_\_

Item	Pan	Amt/Pan	Monday				Tuesday			
			Prepared Amount	Leftover	Used	Discarded	Prepared Amount	Leftover	Used	Discarded
Beans, Garbanzo	1/4 pan	61 oz								
Beans, Kidney	1/4 pan	61 oz								
Carrots	1/4 pan	2#								
Celery	1/4 pan	4#								
Cherry Tomatoes	1/4 pan	4.5#								
Chicken, Diced	1/4 pan	2#								
Corn	1/4 pan	2#								
Cottage Cheese	1/4 pan	4#								
Cucumbers	1/4 pan	4#								
Egg, chopped	1/4 pan	1.5#								
Fruit, canned	1/4 pan	61 oz								
Fruit, Apple (whole)	Full pan									
Fruit, Bananas (whole)	Full pan									
Fruit, Oranges/Tang (whole)	Full pan									
Jalepenos	1/4 pan	61 oz								
Jicama	1/4 pan	4#								
Peas	1/4 pan	2.5#								
Peppers, green	1/4 pan	3#								

Peppers, red	1/4 pan	3#								
Potatoes, roasted	1/4 pan	2#								
Salad Mix - Romaine	1/2 pan	.5#								
Salad Mix - Spring	1/2 pan	2.5 qt								
Salad, Brown Rice	1/4 pan	1.5 qt								
Salad, Tabouli	1/4 pan									
Dressing, Balsamic	Bottle									
Dressing, Italian	Bottle									
Dressing, Ranch	Bottle									

Source: Production record adapted from The LunchBox [www.thelunchbox.org](http://www.thelunchbox.org)

Microsoft Excel version also available.

# SALAD BAR CHECKLIST

## Preparation

✓	
	Wash produce that will be served, even those with a rind or skin that will be removed.
	Cut fruits and vegetables into a cut size that is appropriate for the youngest customers.
	Place produce into appropriate size chilled pan, label and refrigerate until service.
	Do not fill containers more than half-way.
	Prepare back-up stock so that it is ready to use during a busy service.
	Record how much product is prepared on the Production Record.
	Make sure that salad dressing containers are wiped down, clean and labeled.

## Set-up

✓	
	Wipe down and sanitize salad bar prior to set-up.
	If using a non-mechanical salad bar, remove the chill pads as close to service as possible. Place in base of salad bar.
	Place dividers on the salad bar according to your school's grid/diagram.
	Set out filled refrigerated pans as close to the start of service as possible. Make sure to follow the grid/diagram for the salad bar layout!
	If not done already, record how much product is prepared on the Production Record.
	Record temperature of prepared food on the Temperature Record.
	Place tongs in all containers/pans. At least one set of tongs or scoops per container.
	Label all containers clearly so that customers will know what product is where.

## Service

✓	
	Assist students/staff/customers as necessary with salad bar.
	Monitor portion sizes for compliance with NSLP.
	Make sure that salad bar stays clean.
	Wipe down salad bar between services. Do not spray the line when food is out for service.
	Change out empty containers as necessary. Do NOT combine old product with new, even if it has been handled properly. Do NOT add a new product to an old container. Replace empty containers with refrigerated back-up stock.
	Temp food as necessary and record on Temperature Record.
	Remind students that they must use a new plate if they come back for seconds.
	Monitor students to ensure that they follow salad bar etiquette.
	Remove food containers if they become contaminated.

Post-service

✓	
	Remove food from the salad bar immediately after the last meal service.
	Record temperature of prepared food on the Temperature Record.
	Record how much product is left over from service on the Production Record.
	Discard any product that has been on the line for two hours or longer.
	Discard any product that is out of its recommended temperature range.
	If you have a mechanical salad bar, cover, label, date and refrigerate any leftovers that have not been contaminated, were not on the line for more than two hours, and did not enter the temperature “danger zone.”
	If you have a non-mechanical salad bar, discard all remaining food.
	Use chemical sprays to clean the salad bar after all food has been removed.
	Wash and sanitize pans and containers that were used on the line. Place pans and containers in the refrigerator after drying.
	Wash and sanitize any tongs, scoops, etc.

# **SECTION FOUR**

# **MENU AND SERVICE**



## SALAD (CHOICE) BAR MENU IDEAS

### Chef Salad

1. Lettuce
2. Turkey
3. Ham
4. Shredded cheese
5. Cherry tomatoes
6. Eggs
7. Bacon bits
8. Croutons
9. Ranch and French dressing
10. Baby carrots
11. Celery sticks
12. Orange smiles
13. Apple slices
14. Dinner roll or bread stick

### Taco/Nacho Bar

1. Lettuce
2. Taco meat
3. Tortilla chips
4. Shredded cheese
5. Tomatoes
6. Black olives
7. Salsa
8. Sour cream
9. French dressing
10. Mandarin oranges
11. Grapes or kiwi
12. Watermelon
13. Tortillas
14. Milk

### Baked Potato Bar

- |                    |               |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. Baked potatoes  |               |
| 2. Taco meat       |               |
| 3. Nacho cheese    |               |
| 4. Chopped onions  |               |
| 5. Shredded cheese | 9. Broccoli   |
| 6. Kidney beans    | 10. Jalapeños |
| 7. Tomatoes        | 11. Butter    |
| 8. Sour cream      | 12. Chives    |

EXAMPLE 5-DAY CYCLE MENU	
Monday	Chef Salad
Tuesday	Taco/Nacho Salad
Wednesday	Garden Salad
Thursday	Chef Salad
Friday	Pasta Salad

### Garden Salad

1. Romaine lettuce and spinach
2. Cherry tomatoes
3. Green peppers
4. Black olives
5. Broccoli or baby carrots
6. Cauliflower or celery
7. Cucumbers
8. Assorted dressings
9. Shredded carrots
10. Croutons
11. Kiwi halves
12. Banana
13. Shredded cheese
14. Sunflower seeds
15. Bacon bits
16. Dinner roll

### Pasta Salad Bar

1. Pasta
2. Lettuce
3. Tomatoes
4. Sliced carrots
5. Chopped onions
6. Peas
7. Shredded cheese
8. Broccoli
9. Cauliflower
10. Sliced zucchini
11. Sliced pepperoni
12. Sliced black olives
13. Tuna
14. Italian dressing

## LAYOUT OPTIONS AND EXAMPLES

<i>Well 1</i>	<i>Well 2</i>	<i>Well 3</i>	<i>Well 4</i>
<i>Lettuce</i>	<i>Protein choice— Optional, consider 1-2 times/week</i>	<i>Fresh Vegetables</i>	<i>Fruit</i>
Romaine and/or spinach + LCR (equal proportions)	Choose 1-2 daily, vary options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cottage Cheese</li> <li>• Hard boiled eggs</li> <li>• Bean salad</li> <li>• Soy nuts</li> <li>• Yogurt</li> <li>• Diced meat</li> <li>• Trail mix</li> <li>• Shredded cheese (when menued, such as Mexican entree)</li> </ul>	Choose at least 2 different fresh vegetables each day.  Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carrots</li> <li>• Cucumbers, sliced</li> <li>• Jicama sticks</li> <li>• Grape/cherry tomatoes</li> <li>• Cauliflower florets</li> <li>• Broccoli buds</li> <li>• Celery sticks</li> <li>• Radishes</li> <li>• Other school favorites?</li> </ul>	Choose at least 2 different fruit choices. At least 1 must be fresh.  Use 4 oz. spoodle for canned fruit.
2 ½ pans OR 1 full pan	2 half pans or 1 full pan	2 half long pans or 4 quarter pans	2 half long pans or 4 quarter pans

If no protein option, then lettuce, 3 vegetables, 3 fruits

<i>Well 1</i>	<i>Well 2</i>	<i>Well 3</i>	<i>Well 4</i>
<i>Lettuce</i>	<i>Fresh Vegetables—2 choices</i>	<i>Fresh Vegetable—1 choice, Fresh fruit 1 choice</i>	<i>Fresh and/or canned fruit</i>

\*Consider adding variety of choices throughout the week versus each day

# SALAD (CHOICE) BAR LAYOUT EXAMPLES

## Choice Bar Diagram

Protein Choice	Menued Fruit	Veggie Option	Lettuce	Veggie Option
Protein Choice	Menued Fruit	Veggie Option	Lettuce	Veggie Option

### Examples:

#### Scenario A

##### Example: Taco menu

Shredded Lettuce	Shredded Cheddar	Diced Onions	Baby Carrots	Canned Peaches
Shredded Lettuce	Shredded Cheddar	Diced Tomatoes	Baby Carrots	Canned Peaches

#### Scenario B

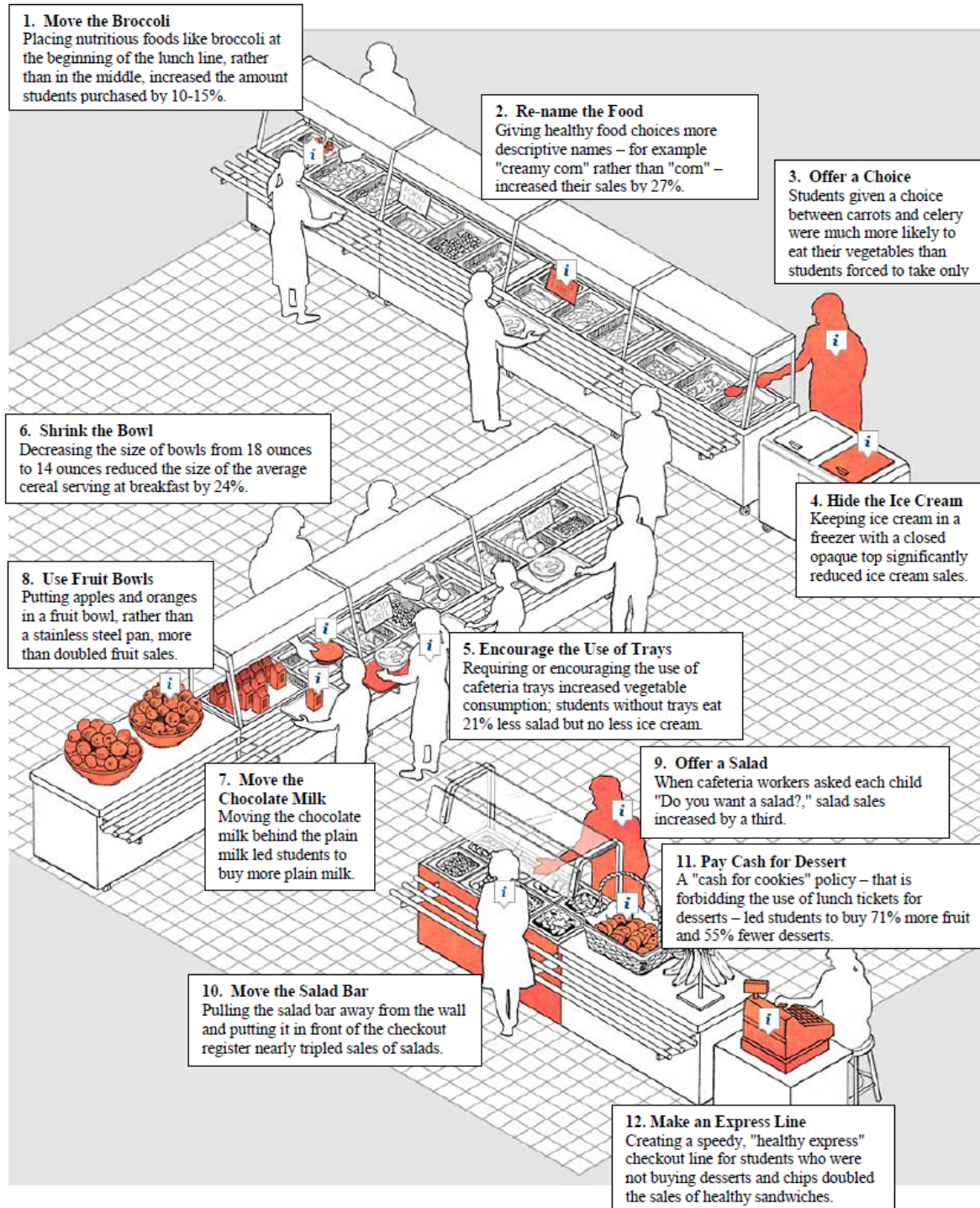
##### Example: Hamburger menu

Shredded lettuce		Baby carrots	Italian Pasta Salad	Apple Wedges
Diced tomatoes	Diced onions	Pickle chips (menued item)	Italian Pasta Salad	Apple Wedges

<b>5-pan salad bar</b>	
Dressing – 3 bottles (1/4 pan)	Salad Mix (1/2 pan)
Cherry Tomatoes (1/4 pan)	
Chicken (1/4 pan)	Salad Mix (1/2 pan)
Carrots (1/4 pan)	
Onions or leftover slaw (1/4 pan)	Celery (1/4 pan)
Corn (1/4 pan)	Kidney OR Garbanzo beans (1/4 pan)
Green peppers (1/4 pan)	Broccoli/Peas (1/4 pan)
Cottage Cheese OR Egg (alternate daily) or Leftover Egg or Tuna Salad (1/4 pan)	All – Grain salad OR Secondary – Jalapenos Elementary – Canned or cut fruit (1/4 pan)
Fresh fruit –1 full pan, 2–1/2 pans or 4–1/4 pans	
<b>4-pan salad bar</b>	
Fresh Fruit (1/2 pan)	Salad Mix (1/2 pan)
Dressing – 3 bottles (1/4 pan)	Red Peppers (1/4 pan)
Cottage cheese (1/4 pan)	Chicken OR Diced Egg OR Tuna or Egg salad - alternate daily (1/4 pan)
Cherry Tomatoes (1/4 pan)	Celery (1/4 pan)
Carrots (1/4 pan)	Kidney OR Garbanzo beans (1/4 pan)
Jicama or Slaw (1/4 pan)	Cucumber (1/4 pan)
Grain Salads or Corn (peas) (1/4 pan)	Cut or Canned fruit (1/4 pan)

Adapted from The LunchBox [www.thelunchbox.org](http://www.thelunchbox.org)

## Redesigning Your Lunch Line



Adapted from Brian Wansink, David R. Just, and Joe McKendry's article, *Lunch Line Redesign* (The New York Times, October 21, 2010, [http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/10/21/opinion/20101021\\_Oplunch.html?scp=1&sq=lunch%20line%20redesign,%20comell&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/10/21/opinion/20101021_Oplunch.html?scp=1&sq=lunch%20line%20redesign,%20comell&st=cse)).

### Seasonal Minnesota Fruits

Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
September October November	December January February	March April May	June July August
apples cantaloupe grapes honeydew plums raspberries watermelon	apples		apples blueberries blackberries cantaloupe currants chokecherries gooseberries grapes honeydew plums raspberries strawberries watermelon

### Seasonal Minnesota Dark Green Vegetables

Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
September October November	December January February	March April May	June July August
arugula bok choy broccoli collard greens dark green leafy lettuce kale mesclun mustard greens romaine lettuce spinach Swiss chard turnip greens watercress	kale	arugula bok choy beet greens collard greens dark green leafy lettuce kale mesclun mustard greens romaine lettuce spinach Swiss chard turnip greens watercress	broccoli collard greens dark green leafy lettuce kale mesclun mustard greens romaine lettuce spinach Swiss chard turnip greens watercress

## Seasonal Minnesota Orange Vegetables

Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
September October November	December January February	March April May	June July August
carrots pumpkin sweet potatoes winter squash	carrots sweet potatoes winter squash	winter squash	carrots pumpkin winter squash

## Seasonal Minnesota Starchy and Other Vegetables

Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
September October November	December January February	March April May	June July August
bean sprouts beets bell peppers Brussels sprouts cabbage cauliflower celery celery root celeriac chicory cucumbers daikon eggplant fennel garlic kohlrabi leeks mushrooms onions radishes rutabaga shallots summer squash sweet corn parsnips potatoes tomatoes turnips	beets cabbage celeriac daikon garlic leeks mushrooms onions parsnips rutabaga shallots turnips potatoes	asparagus bean sprouts cauliflower kohlrabi mushrooms peas potatoes radishes rhubarb scallions turnips	beets bell peppers Brussels sprouts cabbage cauliflower celery celeriac chicory cucumbers eggplant endive daikon fennel garlic green beans kohlrabi mushrooms okra onions parsnips peas potatoes radishes rhubarb rutabaga scallions shallots summer squash

# **SECTION FIVE**

# **MARKETING**



## DRAFT PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***District [XX] implements salad bars in [elementary/middle/high] schools***

[DATE]

[City/Town/Village Name], Minn. – School District [XX] [is/has] started a salad bar at [SCHOOL NAME] to help improve healthy eating by increasing the amount of fruits and vegetables offered and served to students and staff.

District [XX] school officials chose to implement a salad bar as part of an ongoing effort to improve healthy eating in the schools by making the healthy choice the easy choice. [QUOTE FROM FOOD SERVICE STAFF: example: “This grant will help give us a unique opportunity to offer salad bars in our elementary schools,” said Michelle Trumpy, the district’s Registered Dietitian.]

Through the *Let’s Move Salad Bars to School* project, [# of bars] salad bar[s] were donated to the district. The plan is to have the salad bars in place when school begins in the fall.

“The salads we serve have had a great success at the elementary level,” said Trumpy. “Implementing salad bars will help us continue on the path of improving healthy eating in our schools by increasing the servings of fruits and vegetables our students eat on a daily basis.”

The [# of bars] donated salad bar[s] are part of the *Let’s Move Salad Bars to Schools* initiative, a comprehensive grassroots public health effort designed to mobilize and engage stakeholders at the local, state and national level to support salad bars in schools. The initiative’s vision is to significantly increase salad bars in schools across the country until every child has the choice of healthy fruits and vegetables every day at school.

*Picture of student/staff (with permission) enjoying the salad bar.*

*Let’s Move Salad Bars to Schools* is an initiative of the Food Family Farming Foundation, National Fruit and Vegetable Alliance, United Fresh Produce Association Foundation, and Whole Foods Market. It is designed to help support First Lady Michelle Obama’s *Let’s Move* initiative, which works to address childhood obesity.

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District [XX] serves approximately [# of students] students in grades K-12, with additional early learning opportunities for [AGE GROUPS][Elaborate on opportunities]. District [XX] is located near [large city nearby], serving all or parts of the communities of [cities/villages/towns served by school district].

CONTACT:

[Name of district contact person], [Title of contact person]  
[Contact@district.edu].





**Take What You WANT.  
Eat What You TAKE.**

**Take What You WANT.  
Eat What You TAKE.**



# **SECTION SIX**

## **LET'S MOVE SALAD BARS TO SCHOOL**

School fact sheet:

# Would you like a **free salad bar** for your school?

## Be part of part of the salad bar movement!

Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools is a national campaign to connect donors and schools with the goal of giving away free salad bars. All schools—both public and private—that participate in the National School Lunch Program are eligible.

### Why all the buzz about salad bars?

- Kids eat more fruits and vegetables when they have choices. Since most children are not eating enough fruits and vegetables on a given day, salad bars are a great opportunity to help them meet their nutritional needs.
- Meal participation tends to increase when school lunch programs have a salad bar, which could mean more money for your program.
- Plate waste is reduced when kids are allowed to choose what they are going to eat.
- Salad bars can be a cost effective way to meet lunch standards, and all food components of a reimbursable meal can be offered.
- Finally, salad bars are a perfect place to showcase fresh foods from your local farmer.



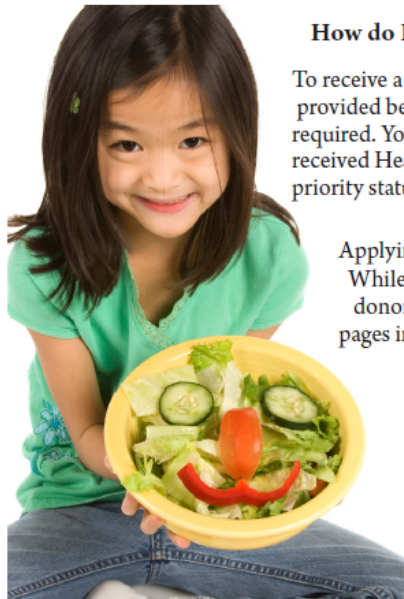
### How does it work?

Across the country businesses are working to improve children's nutrition by helping bring salad bars to schools. Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools offers them the option of donating to a general fund or to donate all or part of the cost of a salad bar to the school of their choice. Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools then matches schools to donors, and the kids are the winners.

### How do I apply for a salad bar?

To receive a salad bar, all you have to do is complete an online application at the web address provided below. Signatures of your superintendent and nutrition services director are required. You may apply for a salad bar for every school in your district. Schools who have received Healthier US School Challenge Bronze, Silver or Gold distinctions will have priority status in getting their salad bar.

Applying lets local and national donors know that you are looking for a salad bar. While you are not guaranteed a salad bar within a set time period, there may be a donor waiting for you—you don't know unless you apply. The application is only three pages in length with just one open-ended question. Be sure to sell your program!



National campaign: [www.saladbars2schools.org](http://www.saladbars2schools.org)  
More information: [www.health.state.mn.us/fts](http://www.health.state.mn.us/fts)

**MINNESOTA**  
**MDH**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
Office of Statewide Health  
Improvement Initiatives  
PO Box 64882  
St Paul, MN 55164

*Minnesota*  
**Department**  
of **Education**

Available at [www.health.state.mn.us/fts](http://www.health.state.mn.us/fts)



## Raise the bar for school nutrition

Every child should have the choice of healthy fruits and vegetables every day at school. However, in Minnesota most schools do not have the resources to purchase new equipment. There's a solution: businesses across the state are stepping up to the challenge, with Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools making it easy to donate all or part of the cost of a salad bar to the school of their choice.

## Why salad bars?

- Kids who eat a balanced and nutritious diet are better learners.
- Most children do not eat enough fruits and vegetables, and kids eat more when they are given choices.
  - Salad bars are a perfect place to showcase fresh foods from your local farmer, which is good for the farmer and good for the local economy.

**Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools makes it easy**

National campaign: [www.saladbars2schools.org](http://www.saladbars2schools.org)

More information: [www.health.state.mn.us/fts](http://www.health.state.mn.us/fts)



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## SAMPLE SUPERINTENDENT LETTER

Dear Superintendent [Name],

The school nutrition department would like to participate in *Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools* – an initiative that provides free salad bar equipment to schools. Participating in *Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools* will provide a unique opportunity to introduce fresh fruits and vegetables into our students' diets while allowing them to choose what they will eat. Salad bars offer many benefits to both schools and students:

- Research has shown that kids who eat a balanced and nutritious diet are better learners. Salad bars are more than an idea that looks good on paper. Salad bars translate to real results in the area of academics by helping improve classroom focus and interaction with peers.
- Exposing children to fruits and vegetables through salad bars instills good eating habits into adulthood.
- Offering more fruits and vegetables supports our school's local wellness policy efforts.
- Salad bars communicate to parents, students, teachers and the community our commitment to children's health and well-being.
- Kids eat more fruits and vegetables when they are given choices. Because most children are not eating enough fruits and vegetables on a given day, this is a great opportunity to help them meet their nutritional needs.
- Plate waste decreases when children are allowed to choose what they are going to eat. Salad bars can be a cost effective way to meet lunch standards and all food components for a reimbursable meal can be served.
- Schools across the country have demonstrated that introducing a salad bar increases meal participation and therefore program revenue.
- Salad bars provide an excellent opportunity to highlight local farmers. Partnering with our neighbors to provide food for the students ties the children to their community. It also establishes our school as a community partner.

To apply for a free salad bar, all that needs to be done is to complete an online application at <http://saladbars2schools.org/>. The signatures of both the Superintendent and Nutrition Services Director are required on the application. Applying to *Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools* gets our school's profile on the program website where both local and national funders can make contributions to our salad bar fund. In total, each salad bar requires \$2500 in donations.

Thank you for your support in this endeavor. We could not participate in *Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools* without dedicated educators, such as you, who realize the importance of the school nutrition program and the role nutrition plays in the cognitive development of our youth. Please call or email me with any additional questions you may have.

Sincerely,

[Name]

School Nutrition [Title]

[Email address]

[Phone #]

# FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Lunch Box

[www.thelunchbox.org](http://www.thelunchbox.org)

Let's Move Salad Bars to School

[www.saladbars2schools.org](http://www.saladbars2schools.org)

University of Minnesota Extension Farm to School

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/farm-to-school/>

National Food Service Management Institute

[www.nfsmi.org](http://www.nfsmi.org)

United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Services

[www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov)

Minnesota Department of Health Farm to School

[www.health.state.mn.us/fts](http://www.health.state.mn.us/fts)

Minnesota Department of Health Let's Move Salad Bars to School

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/chp/cdr/nutrition/FTS/saladbars.html>





651-201-5440 TTY 651-201-5797

Printed on recycled paper.

6/2012

# Safe Use of Salad Bars in Schools

Minnesota Department of Agriculture; Minnesota Department of Health; University of Minnesota Extension

## Introduction

Research and experience have shown that school children significantly increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables when they are given a variety of choices at a school fruit and vegetable salad bar. This experience can lead to a lifetime of healthy food choices. Therefore, public and private agencies throughout the country are working together to expand the use of salad choice bars. ([www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/chp/cdr/nutrition/FTS/saladbars-schools.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/chp/cdr/nutrition/FTS/saladbars-schools.html)).

The Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture encourages schools to follow food safety standards and best practices with all foods served in school meal programs. The addition of salad bars to these programs raises new concerns. This fact sheet provides answers to frequently asked questions about regulatory and food safety matters related to salad bars in Minnesota schools.

## Part One: Regulatory Matters

### Can any school have a self-service salad bar?

Yes. There has been some confusion that salad bars are only allowed in elementary schools if the food is either pre-wrapped or served by a school nutrition employee. This is not the case.

Elementary students are allowed to self-serve from salad bars that are designed specifically for small children. These salad bars must have a plastic barrier (food shield) positioned at the appropriate height for small children, and have a lower serving surface than full-sized salad bars.

If a school serves meals to children in early and middle grades and only has a full-sized salad bar, food for the younger children can be pre-packaged or served by an adult.

### Will a new menu mean other new requirements from the health inspector?

Any time you add a new food process, equipment, or a time and temperature sensitive food item, you should involve your state or local health inspector before and during the menu change. The health inspector can help assess food safety risks and identify practices to reduce those risks. They can also help you to decide if the changes you are planning will require plan review by your regulatory authority.

When time and temperature sensitive foods are added to the menu, you will need standard procedures to support your HACCP plan for safely handling these items. Such procedures might include guidelines for purchasing, receiving, storage, washing, processing, holding, temperature logging, serving and re-serving of fresh produce.

### What kind of equipment will we need?

First, you must have a food preparation sink for washing fruits and vegetables, as required by the Minnesota Food Code (4626.0780). This sink cannot be used for any other purpose such as washing hands, meat or dishes.

For the salad bar itself, you may use a mechanically cooled unit, or a non-mechanically cooled salad bar along with *time as a public health control*. Any unit must be NSF approved. You may also use an existing refrigerated service line with cold wells and food shields. One-sided service will be slower but will make it easier to monitor the salad bar and to assist younger children.

The Minnesota Food Code (4626.0395) requires potentially hazardous food (PHF) (e.g., cut fruits and vegetables, ready-to-eat meats, cottage cheese) be kept in mechanical refrigeration at 41°F or below, and hot foods at 140°F or above.



### If we plan to use a salad bar that is not mechanically cooled, what steps must we take to use time as a public health control?

- First, submit prior written notification to the regulatory authority of your intention to use time as a public health control.
- Maintain a written copy of your detailed plan to use time as a public health control and make it available upon request. The plan must include details about how you will:
  - Maintain food temperatures according to the Food Code.
  - Clearly mark food containers to indicate the time that the food will expire (no more than four hours after food is removed from temperature control)
  - Discard food that is unmarked or for which the time has expired, and
  - Discard food at the end of meal service, even if it has not been four hours since the food was placed on the salad bar. Exception: Whole fruits can be re-washed and reused.



### Can salad bar foods be part or all of a reimbursable meal?

Salad bar offerings can be part of a reimbursable meal for schools participating in the National School Lunch Program. The salad bar can be used to provide all the meal components. Or, salad bars can be limited to offering a selection of vegetables and fruits that will serve only as the fruit and/or vegetable component. The rest of the components of the reimbursable meal should then be served elsewhere in the cafeteria line.

## Part Two: Health and Hygiene

**“Handwashing is the single most important means of preventing the spread of infection.”** (Centers for Disease Control)

**Kitchen staff:** School nutrition staff already understand the importance of handwashing. Hand hygiene reminders must be reinforced when you introduce fresh fruit and vegetables to the kitchen and the menu.



Kitchen staff must continue to wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after using the toilet or changing tasks. Wash hands before handling or cutting fresh produce. Use gloves or a clean utensil to touch ready-to-eat produce. Wash hands before putting on disposable gloves and change gloves when they may have been contaminated or in-between tasks.

Re-train staff on the importance of illness reporting and logging. Make sure that food service workers do not work while ill, and stay away from the kitchen for 72 hours after their last episode of vomiting or diarrhea. To avoid non-food related outbreaks, re-train maintenance staff on the correct way to clean-up after accidents involving feces or vomit.

We recommend a written plan for changing food service if the school has a very high number of colds, flu or gastrointestinal illnesses. This plan could include pre-packaging raw foods or discontinuing self-service during that period of time.

**Students:** You may prevent students from touching food at the salad bar but you cannot prevent them from handling these foods while they eat. It is important that students come to lunch with properly cleaned hands. It is recommended that a universal handwashing policy be in place before your salad bar program begins.

Handwashing education must be included as part of the pre-salad bar education and information campaign for families, staff, and students. Handwashing education that includes family members will help reinforce good hygiene behaviors taught at school. Student handwashing needs to be promoted, monitored, and reinforced by staff at all levels. Remember, hand sanitizers are NOT a substitute for handwashing with soap and water.

## Part Three: Food Safety Concerns

### Education

A successful salad bar program will include education and training before the salad bar arrives, and continuing education as it is used in the school.

**Before the salad bar arrives:** Send information home to families about the salad bar, including handwashing and salad bar etiquette. Discuss the salad bar and new menu at school meetings and conferences.

**In the kitchen:** Provide fresh produce training for all food service staff. Discuss personal hygiene, salad bar maintenance, cleaning, monitoring, and other changes to the mealtime routine.

**In the classroom:** Spend time in the classroom to discuss new menu items and teach children about salad bar manners. Teach them why they must use utensils to handle food and stay behind the sneeze guard. Explain the importance of trying new foods and to take only as much as they will eat.

Especially for the early grades (K-3), having classroom exercises incorporating the use of various styles of tongs would help build student confidence in their use.

**At the salad bar:** Use signs with pictures to remind students about handwashing, salad bar manners, and portion sizes. Provide adequate monitoring for when they forget.

### Source, selection, and shipments

Good food safety practices begin when you select a vendor that not only provides quality food at a good price but also delivers fresh, fruits and vegetables that are properly dated, labeled, packaged and transported. Kitchen staff must carefully examine deliveries of fresh produce and be prepared to reject food that is old, over-ripe, bruised or damaged. After receipt, store produce immediately in dry or cold storage. Keep food in original packaging or label to identify its source. Make sure to store produce away from chemical products in dry storage, and away from raw meat, poultry and eggs in refrigerators or walk-in coolers. Store produce at least six inches off the floor, below the ceiling and away from walls.



### “Shower, never bathe” fruits and veggies

All but pre-washed fresh fruits and vegetables must be washed before they are peeled, cut, processed, served or eaten. Foodborne pathogens will spread easily from one fruit or vegetable to others if they are soaked in water. Always wash fresh fruits and vegetables under a running tap.

- It is not necessary to rewash packaged produce labeled “ready-to-eat,” or “washed”.
- Wash all other produce - even those with skins and rinds that will not be eaten.
- Rub firm-skin fruits and vegetables under running tap water or scrub with a clean vegetable brush while washing under a running tap.
- To wash tomatoes, the water temperature should be at least 10 °F warmer than the tomatoes. This prevents the absorption of bacteria into the tomato.
- Dry fruits and vegetables with a clean paper towel.
- Never use detergent, bleach or the dishwasher to wash produce.
- Chemical washes, if used, must be approved for use on foods and used according to the manufacturer’s directions.

### Avoid cross-contamination

**In the kitchen:** Always separate raw foods from ready-to-eat and cooked foods. Store and prepare each produce item separately. Document produce use on a production record. Use a different, clean cutting board and utensils (e.g., knives) for each food item. Wash, rinse, sanitize and air-dry kitchen tools, utensils, cutting boards, other surfaces and containers that come into contact with produce immediately after using them.

**At the salad bar:** Consider using longer handled utensils, especially for younger students. Use separate utensils for each container. Be sure to change-out utensils every four hours or sooner if the food contact area has been touched or the utensil has been dropped or placed in the wrong container, and whenever you change-out the food container. If students return to the salad bar, be sure they use a clean plate. Consider changing utensils after each individual class or after each “run.”

## Salad Bar Factsheet, continued

Never add food to a partially full container on the salad bar. Replace food containers when they are getting low in product, empty or have been contaminated.

Monitor salad bars to prevent students from ducking under sneeze guards, touching food with their hands, returning food, using utensils in more than one food container, or taking unmanageable portions.

Use reminder signs – with more pictures than words - to help students remember their salad bar manners.

**After meal service:** Clean and sanitize the entire salad bar at the end of each day's meal service.

### Saving leftovers and minimizing waste

Keep time and temperature logs for all foods on any type of salad bar. All PHF foods from a non-mechanically cooled salad bar and cold foods that have been out of the refrigerator or the mechanically cooled salad bar for four hours **must** be discarded. You must also discard food that has been mixed with other foods, or touched with bare hands.

You **may** choose to save leftover food from a mechanically cooled salad bar to reuse the next day if the proper temperature has been maintained and has been recorded on the time and temperature log.

However, given the high potential for contamination of food items on a salad bar, the Minnesota Department of Health strongly recommends that leftovers only be saved to be used in a cooked product the next day.

If you choose to save leftovers for any purpose, cover and store them immediately. Mark containers with the date they were prepared. The food can be held for seven days, including the day it was prepared, provided the PHF has been maintained at 41 °F or below.

Minnesota Food Code (4626.0400)

Never combine leftovers with a new batch of the same food. Leftover food must be put out alone and used up before any new product is introduced.

To avoid waste, monitor portion size, particularly with smaller children. Use half-size or half-full containers of less popular items and food items typically selected in smaller portions. Half-fill containers near the end of service.

### For more information

Minnesota Department of Health, *Let's Move Salad Bars to School* website and resource page, [www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/chp/cdrr/nutrition/FTS/saladbars-schools.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/chp/cdrr/nutrition/FTS/saladbars-schools.html)

National Food Service Management Institute's (NSFMI) *Best Practices: Handling Fresh Produce in Schools*, [www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/ffvp/bestpractices.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/ffvp/bestpractices.pdf)

USDA and NSFMI Fact Sheet on *Handling Fresh Produce on Salad Bars*, <http://nfsmi.org/documentlibraryfiles/PDF/20110822025744.pdf>

"Tricks of the Trade: Serving Options for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables": [http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/tricks\\_trade.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/tricks_trade.pdf)

Centers for Disease Control *Norovirus: Facts for Food Handlers* <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/revb/gastro/downloads/norovirus-foodhandlers.pdf>

NSFMI *Produce Safety* resources, including videos, factsheets and PowerPoint presentations <http://nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=394>

[www.mda.state.mn.us/food](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/food)  
651-201-6027 1-800-697-AGRI

[www.health.state.mn.us/foodsafety](http://www.health.state.mn.us/foodsafety)  
651-201-5000 1-800-657-3908

[www.extension.umn.edu/foodsafety](http://www.extension.umn.edu/foodsafety)  
612-624-1222

[www.health.state.mn.us/fts](http://www.health.state.mn.us/fts)



MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE





## Wisconsin Farm to School success stories

# Madison Metropolitan School

## District: Garden bars



July, 2015

In several schools within the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD), Farm to School AmeriCorps members are introducing elementary school students to their new garden bars. The new garden bars allow students to choose up to five or six different fruit or vegetable options, rather than assembling traditional salads. Garden bars are a new experience for students because most meals at MMSD elementary schools are served as pre-packaged hot and cold packs that students take off the lunch line, along with utensils and milk. Students use trays to select produce from the garden bars and, for many students, this is their first time using a tray in the lunchroom. After being handed a shiny blue tray, one student exclaimed, “I feel like I’m in high school!” Students are clearly empowered by the garden bars and the power of choice they provide.

The MMSD garden bar initiative is led by REAP Food Group, which works with MMSD on a variety of farm to school projects. This non-profit with a focus on local food is thinking big, with plans to implement garden bars featuring local produce in all MMSD schools. Garden bars and salad bars are a great avenue to get fresh, healthy and local products into the cafeteria. They also encourage students to think about their eating habits as they exercise autonomy over their meal choices.

The primary goal fueling this project is to increase fruit and vegetable consumption among children, and salad bars are a proven way to do this. Salad bars are also effective at reducing food waste from school lunch, as “students are more likely to eat a fruit or vegetable if they have the power to choose it,” says Natasha Smith, Farm to School Program Manager at REAP Food Group.

Now that twenty-nine garden bars are implemented in MMSD cafeterias, REAP’s goal is to fill the bars with local produce. This may be a challenging task. The district currently prepares and distributes pre-packaged meals from a central kitchen site and many individual schools lack standard kitchen equipment to handle fresh produce. In addition, the central kitchen usually works with pre-processed produce and does not have the equipment or staffing necessary to process fresh produce. Until further processing is available at the central kitchen or individual schools, REAP is coordinating efforts with regional processors to prepare local items for garden bars and school lunch service.

REAP is also working with Dustin Lundt, MMSD food purchasing specialist, on innovative strategies to procure local food for the garden bars. School food



***“... students are more likely to eat a fruit or vegetable if they have the power to choose it.”***

**– Natasha Smith,  
Farm to School  
Program Manager at  
REAP food group**





contracts are typically set up to ensure low prices and ease of ordering. “The bidding process ends up being dominated by large distributors and limits local farmers,” says Smith. One solution is the use of informal procurement, as piloted by REAP and MMSD to bring local carrots and kohlrabi into school meals in recent months. This alternative bidding option is simpler for farmers and vendors to navigate, can be tailored for local products and is less of an administrative burden. It’s a win-win situation, and a creative way to increase local produce to garden bars and lunch trays.

“Parents often tell me that their kids are eating more vegetables, both in school and at home, since the garden bars were introduced in their schools,” says Steve Youngbauer, Director of MMSD Food and Nutrition. Resounding approval from the schools, students and parents, in addition to grant awards, has helped establish a solid collaborative partnership between REAP and MMSD. Smith says that, “More than ever, MMSD sees REAP as an ally, and values farm to school as a vehicle for health and positive change.”

REAP has crafted thoughtful approaches as it works towards building a strong and sustainable farm to school garden bar program within the Madison Metropolitan School District. The positive feedback

MMSD is receiving about the garden bars further motivates REAP’s mission to provide local fruits and veggies to children on a daily basis. This project has shown that even the largest of goals can be achieved with a strong vision, persistence and a dash of creativity.

***“Parents often tell me that their kids are eating more vegetables, both in school and at home, since the garden bars were introduced in their schools.”***

**– Steve Youngbauer,  
Director of MMSD Food  
and Nutrition**





## Farm to School – Harvest of the Month Schedule 2013-2014

**Objective:** To educate students and their families about the availability, flavor profile, and nutrition of locally grown products.

**Method:** Food Service will partner with principals and teachers, Live54218, and volunteers to expose students to locally grown produce. Live54218 will provide teachers and parents with Harvest of the Month Family, Educator, and Community Newsletters containing local farm and nutrition information, recipes, and activities. Food service will incorporate the product into the elementary menu 3-4 times within the target month.

Month	Product	Taste Test Idea	Menu Integration/Recipe Suggestions*
September	Melon	Melon medley	Pineapple Melon Salad; Melon Poppy Seed Salad; Go Bananas Melon Dip; Melon with Sunshine Dip; Watermelon Romaine Salad; Chicken Salad with Cantaloupe; Fresh Market Watermelon Salsa
October	Apples	Sweet & tart apple combo	Apple Cider Stew; Baked Apples; Baked Sweet Potatoes & Apples; Cucumber Apple Salad; Pork Roast w/ Apples; Strawberry Applesauce; Applesauce Cake; Whole Grain Apple Crisp; Autumn Harvest Salad; Apple-Cranberry Crunch; Zucchini, Carrot & Applesauce Cake; WI Apple Crisp; Apple-Cheese Quesadilla, Apple Oatmeal Muffins, Cranberry Apple Chicken Wrap Sandwich
November	Pumpkin	Pumpkin seeds	Pumpkin Bars, Pumpkin Soup, Toasted Pumpkin Seeds
December	Squash	Roasted butternut squash	Roasted Butternut Squash; Spiced Butternut Squash; Butternut Rice Pilaf; Winter Squash Muffins, Bread or Biscuits; Mashed Butternut Squash & Sweet Potato; Butternut Squash Soup; Cider Glazed Squash; Crunchy Veggie Wraps; Roasted Veggie Sandwiches; Butternut Squash & Sweet Potato Bake; Harvest “Fries”; Butternut Cranberry Bread
January	Beets	Marinated beets	Roasted Root Vegetables, Beets & Sweets; Cold Beet Salad w/ Raspberries; Carrot, Parsnip & Beet Salad; Roasted Root Vegetables; Beetnick Cake; Roasted Root Vegetables; Balsamic Glazed Beets
February	Beans – Dried or Canned	Black bean dip with veggie dippers	Black Bean, Corn & Tomato Fiesta Salad; Chipotle Rice & Beans; Easy Hummus Dip; Italian Bean & Pasta Salad; Marinated Black Bean Salad; Three Bean Salad; Vegetarian Chili; White Chicken Chili; Beef & Bean Nachos; Chipotle Chicken Burrito; Turkey Black Bean Chili; Vegetarian Rice Bowl; Whole Grain Beef & Bean Enchilada; Bean & Barley Soup; Bean Dip
March	Mixed Greens	Salad greens & vinaigrette	Spring Salad Mix; Chicken & Spinach Alfredo Pasta; Spinach Salad w/ Grape Tomatoes; Touchdown Tomato Basil Soup; Chicken Caesar Salad; Caesar, Greek, Honey Mustard, or Ranch Dressing; Caesar, Mediterranean, Greek or Southwest Chicken Wrap; Watermelon Romaine Salad; Spinach Sunshine Salad; Eagle Pizza; Tropical Slaw
April	Potatoes	Raw sweet potato sticks with maple Greek yogurt dip	Gold Rush Pizza; Sweet Potato Salad w/ Citrus Vinaigrette; Apple Glazed Sweet Potatoes; Winter Turkey Pot Pie, Sweet Potato Muffins or Bread; Potato Frittata; Parsnip & Potato Chips; Mashed Red Potatoes; Shepherd’s Pie; Sweet Potato Fries; Crunchy Vegetable Burritos; Baked Sweet Potatoes; Garlic Mashed Potatoes; Pureed Sweet Potatoes w/ Pineapple; Roasted Potato Wedges; Baked Potato Bar; Winter Vegetable Roast; Potato Salad; Breakfast Bake
May	Berries	Dried mixed berries	Spring Salad Mix, Wheat Berry Salad w/ Pineapple; Sage Dressing w/ Dried Cherries; Triple Berry Buckle; Berry Poppy Seed Salad; Go Bananas Berry Dip; Rainbow Fruit Salad; Raspberry Grape Salad; Tropical Fruit Salad; Fruity Breakfast Parfait; Strawberry Yogurt Breakfast Split; Apple-Cranberry Crunch; Autumn Harvest Salad; Berries with Sunshine Dip; Fruit Smoothie; Cranberry Apple Chicken Wrap Sandwich; Butternut Cranberry Bread

\*For these recipes and many more, please visit: [http://www.health.state.mn.us/schools/greattrays/pdfs/NowCooking\\_August22.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/schools/greattrays/pdfs/NowCooking_August22.pdf);  
[http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/iowa/Gold\\_Star\\_Cycle\\_Menus/Recipes.pdf](http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/iowa/Gold_Star_Cycle_Menus/Recipes.pdf); <http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/nhp/documents/cookbook.pdf>;  
[http://www.schoolmealsvt.com/images/stories/pdfs/recipes/vt\\_feed\\_recipe\\_collection.pdf](http://www.schoolmealsvt.com/images/stories/pdfs/recipes/vt_feed_recipe_collection.pdf);  
[http://www.schoolmealsvt.com/images/stories/pdfs/recipes/school\\_year\\_of\\_seasonal\\_recipes.pdf](http://www.schoolmealsvt.com/images/stories/pdfs/recipes/school_year_of_seasonal_recipes.pdf); <http://www.thelunchbox.org/menus-recipes/recipes>;  
<http://www.kitchenexpedition.com/category/cookbook/squash/>; [http://www.massfarmtoschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/farm\\_to\\_school\\_cookbook.pdf](http://www.massfarmtoschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/farm_to_school_cookbook.pdf)

please contact [Ashley@Live54218.org](mailto:Ashley@Live54218.org) or (920)593-3401



Watch for these local foods in your school cafeteria!

## SEPTEMBER

Tomatoes, cucumbers, apples, bell peppers, cantaloupe and watermelon



## OCTOBER

Carrots, apples, spinach, lettuces, potatoes and cabbage



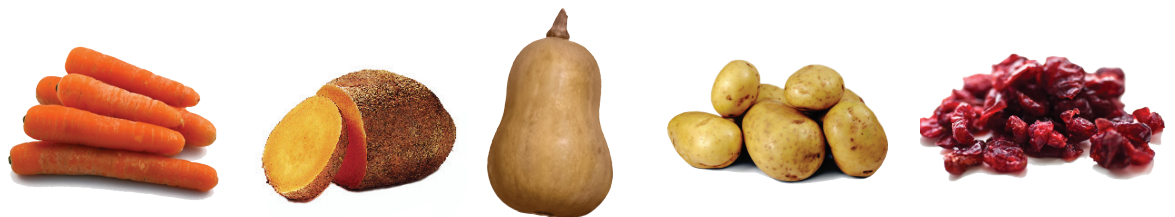
## NOVEMBER

Apples, sweet potatoes, winter squash, cabbage, carrots, potatoes and spinach



## DECEMBER

Carrots, sweet potatoes, winter squash, potatoes and cranberries



## JANUARY

Potatoes, sweet potatoes, winter squash and cranberries



## FEBRUARY

Potatoes, sweet potatoes and cranberries



## MARCH

Potatoes and cranberries



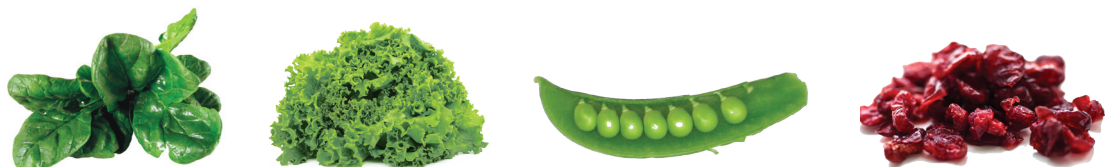
## APRIL

Potatoes, spinach, lettuces and cranberries



## MAY

Spinach, lettuces, snow peas and cranberries



## ALL YEAR

Watch for harvest muffins with locally grown carrots and zucchini, PLUS locally produced hot dogs from Wenzel's!



## BACKGROUND:

In 2010, the Healthy People Wood County Coalition (HPWC) was awarded a \$2.3 million Communities Putting Prevention to Work obesity prevention grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Wood County F2S is one program initiated through this grant funding. Wood County F2S serves all six Wood County, WI public school districts: Auburndale, Marshfield, Nekoosa, Pittsville, Port Edwards and Wisconsin Rapids (about 11,000 students). Since the program's inception in the 2010-11 school year, WCF2S has utilized the Harvest of the Month (HoM) brand as both a program implementation strategy and as a marketing/communication tool.

YEAR 1: 2010-11	YEAR 2: 2011-12	YEAR 3: 2012-13	YEAR 4: 2013-14 [thru Jan. only]
10 local growers	19 growers	26 growers	44 growers
750# food	16,500# food	28,961# food	30,151# food
\$650 spent	\$6,250 spent	\$21,419 spent	\$20,121 spent
[Grant subsidized]	[Grant subsidized]	[NO Grant subsidies]	[NO Grant subsidies]

### HoM as an implementation strategy:

As a program implementation strategy, HoM helps school food service directors (FSDs) organize the menuing of local foods by building a school-year calendar in which each month features a new type of local food. The month-by-month sourcing tactic provides school FSDs with a long-term organized plan for sourcing local foods, as well as coordinated multi-district local food purchases. It also provides a timeline to follow for cafeteria taste tests or farmer visits, and gives FSDs an easy way to test a new food in the cafeteria.

### HoM as a promotional/educational strategy:

As a marketing/communication tool, HoM quickly becomes a recognizable brand associated with the local foods calendar schedule for students, school staff and parents. Communication materials that align with the local food procurement calendar such as cafeteria signage, monthly family newsletters, monthly school building/district newsletter articles and monthly earned media pieces such as newspaper articles, are a cost effective way to drive promotional and educational efforts for a large, county-wide audience.

### Evolution of Wood County F2S HoM program:

Wood County F2S adapted its HoM program from the California Dept. of Public Health's Network for a Healthy California. It is important to note, however, that as WCF2S evolved, staff customized the HoM program to fit the needs and wants of school FSDs. For example, while we will continue to utilize the HoM brand in the upcoming 2013-14 school year for cafeteria signage and for planning other monthly communication materials, Wood County FSDs have chosen to serve multiple local food items each month versus one local food HoM product. This allows FSDs more versatility in their procurement of local foods, and allows for more local foods in lunch lines. Monthly communication materials will feature multiple products and producers versus a single product and producer.