



[#BCCookOff](https://twitter.com/BCCookOff)



This event is brought to you by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and the Public Health Association of BC, in support of Feeding Futures.



Inquiry Guide:

“The Great B.C. School Food Cook-Off”

This inquiry guide is part of *The Great B.C. School Food Cook-Off*, which runs from December 12, 2024, to March 1, 2025. Its intention is to support teachers with engaging students in learning activities aligned with B.C.'s curricular and core competencies, while fostering meaningful connections between schools and the community, including local food producers, processors and food systems. This resource will encourage students, teachers, and school food staff to learn more about B.C. foods, where they come from, and how to use them in balanced meals and snacks in B.C.'s Feeding Futures school food programs across the province.

Researching and developing recipes creates the opportunity for storytelling and exploring a sense of personal and cultural identity. This cook-off is a fantastic opportunity for both students and teachers to learn more about B.C. foods, get creative in the kitchen, support local producers, processors, and food systems, and contribute fresh menu ideas for school food programs across the province.

Some key curriculum connections are highlighted below, but many more connections can be made across the curriculum including Math, Science, Social Studies, Language Arts and Career Education. Check out [Farm to School BC's Curriculum Connections page](#) for more, and please reach out to [Stephanie Korolyk, Contest Coordinator](#) at any time if you are looking for additional support in participating and creating a meaningful, engaging learning experience with your students.



Alignment with B.C.'s Curricular and Core Competencies

Curriculum:

- [Applied Design, Skills and Technologies](#) (ADST): focus on ingredient use and meal design, factors that influence food choices, including cost, availability, and family and cultural influences
 - Food Studies content from Grades 6-9
 - Food Studies 10-12
 - Culinary Arts 10-12
- [Physical and Health Education](#) (PHE): focus on exploring a variety of healthy eating choices and influences (particularly K-7), including culture and traditions

Core competencies:

- [Personal and Social](#): focus on personal well-being and valuing personal and cultural narratives
 - [Personal Awareness and Responsibility](#)
 - [Positive Personal and Cultural Identity](#)

Recipe Criteria

Your recipe must:

- **Include at least 1 B.C. food** as the focus of the recipe (defined below)
 - Tip: Use the [Top 10 BC Foods used in school food programs](#) as your starting point!
- **Include a variety of nutritious ingredients** as described in the [Food Guide Snapshot from Canada's Food Guide](#).
- **Acknowledge the First Nations Territories** where your class is located and submitting the recipe from.
- **Consider the ease and ability to scale** the recipe for use in school food programs, including lunch, breakfast and snack categories (e.g., choose a round number when considering your recipe's serving size, so it can easily be changed from 10, 50, or 100+ servings!).



- **Include at least one high-quality photo** of your recipe and follow the provided recipe submission template, which includes detailed instructions on ingredients, measurements, preparation steps, and cooking times.
 - *Note:* Submission form with exact parameters provided upon registration
- **Include a paragraph highlighting:**
 1. The B.C. ingredient(s) included in your recipe
 2. Why the class chose the recipe

Guiding Inquiry Questions and Extension Ideas

1. Developing Recipes

Guiding Inquiry Questions

- How do you design a recipe?
- What makes a recipe your favourite?
- What is the story behind the recipe?
 - Who has made this recipe for you?
 - Where does this recipe originally come from?
- How does this recipe reflect culture and food traditions?

Additional Resources:

- [Canada's Food Guide](#)
- [Teach Food First: An Educator's Toolkit for Exploring Canada's Food Guide with K-8 students](#)
- [Hands On Food: Use Food to Teach the B.C. Curriculum](#)
- [Farm to School BC Food Literacy Resources](#)



2. Using B.C. Foods

Guiding Inquiry Questions

- What is a B.C. food?
- Why is local food important?
- What B.C. foods are available during different seasons?
- Where can you go to find out which B.C. foods are in season?
- If you are not able to source locally during the timeline of the cooking contest, where would you be able to source locally at other times of the year?

Background

A B.C. food is any food produced or processed in British Columbia.

B.C.-produced food: This includes raw foods grown, caught, harvested, or raised in B.C.

B.C.-processed food: This refers to food that has been changed in some way, like being cut, frozen, dried, or combined with other ingredients to create a new product for sale in B.C.

If you need support sourcing B.C. ingredients for this cook-off you could:

- Look for the Buy BC logo if purchasing from retailers
- Check the Feed BC Directory or Buy BC website for B.C. food options
- Look for product origin on product packages
- Ask your district's school food coordinator or Feeding Futures manager for suggestions of local products
- Reach out your local farmers' market, food hub, or other community food organization for seasonal B.C. food suggestions
- Engage with your community to explore what's available in your region

Why Choose B.C. Food? Supporting local food has wide-ranging benefits for students, schools, and communities alike. With a wealth of B.C. food producers and processors in the province, B.C.'s food sector creates jobs, strengthens local food systems, and fosters resilient community networks. Every British Columbian is connected to the food system—whether by growing food, processing food, gathering traditional foods, or enjoying the meals on our plates.



Bringing local food into school programs helps:

- Strengthen local food systems
- Boost the local economy
- Deepen students' knowledge of and connection to food systems

The result? Well-fed students ready to learn, valuable educational opportunities in food literacy, agriculture, and climate awareness, and a vibrant, interconnected B.C. food system for all.

1. [Definition of B.C. food, as per Feed BC](#)

Additional Resources:

- [Buy BC – What's in Season?](#)
- [Regional Guide to B.C. Producers and Processors](#)
- [Seasonal Availability Charts](#) for different regions of the province
- [Getting Started: A Guide to Sourcing B.C. Food in Kindergarten to Grade 12 School Food Programs](#)
- [Cooking in Two Worlds: A Process Guide for Incorporating Indigenous Foods into Institutions](#)
- [Feed BC in kindergarten to grade 12 schools](#)

3. Using a Variety of Nutritious Ingredients to Create a Balanced Meal or Snack

Guiding Inquiry Questions

- What makes a balanced meal or snack?
- How would you turn this into a balanced snack or meal?



Using Canada's Food Guide to create balanced meals and snacks

- How to create a balanced meal or snack:
 - **Lunch** or **breakfast** should include: at least one choice from each part of the plate from Canada's Food Guide Snapshot
 - Vegetables / fruits
 - Protein foods
 - Whole grain foods
 - A **snack** should include: at least one choice of protein foods and either one choice from whole grain foods or vegetables and fruits (i.e. vegetable and fruit + protein food or whole grain food + protein food)

Additional Resources:

- [Prepare meals and snacks using healthy ingredients](#)
- [Canada's Food Guide: Toolkit for Educators](#)
- [Make healthy meals with Canada's food guide plate](#)