

GUIDE FOR SCHOOL ORGANIZERS



OCTOBER 24, 2013

www.foodday.org

Center for Science in the Public Interest

Dear Food Day Leader,

Food Day is a nationwide celebration of healthy, affordable, and sustainably produced food, *and* a grassroots campaign for better food policies. It builds all year long and culminates on October 24. This annual event brings together some of the most prominent voices for change in the food movement, united by a vision of food that is healthy, affordable, and produced with care for the environment, farm animals, and the people who grow, harvest, and serve it.

In 2012, Food Day was celebrated with over 3,200 events nationwide. Thousands of schools around the country carried out Food Day activities in the cafeteria, garden, and classroom. Check out the [Food Day 2012 Campaign Report](#) for event highlights.

With sky-high rates of childhood obesity—at the same time that millions of children have limited access to healthy, fresh food—Food Day will focus on food education in 2013. Food manufacturers and fast-food chains spend billions convincing kids to want junk food. Children who know where our food comes from and how to cook meals will have a big advantage when it comes to being healthy and avoiding obesity and other health problems.

This guide will provide you with the tools you need for organizing successful Food Day activities in your school's classrooms, lunchroom, or garden, and tips for improving school food policies. Remember to invite the entire school system to get involved—from administrators and teachers to nutrition and food services directors and family and consumer sciences teachers—and of course, students!

Food Day is your day, and it will be as successful as you make it. Please contact us for assistance as you develop your plans: foodday@cspinet.org or 202-777-8392. New resources and information for “Eating Real” year-round will be available throughout the year on www.foodday.org.

Good luck and thanks for joining us!

Sincerely,
The Food Day Team



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OUR VISION

Food Day is a nationwide celebration of healthy, affordable, and sustainably produced food, *and* a grassroots campaign for better food policies. It builds all year long and culminates on October 24.

Food Day was created by the nonprofit Center for Science in the Public Interest, and is possible thanks to a network of more than 100 national groups and over 80 Advisory Board members that work together to raise awareness about food issues and strengthen the food movement.

With Food Day, we can celebrate our food system when it works and fix it when it's broken. Food Day is not just a day; it's a year-long catalyst for healthier diets and a better food system. Let's use this energy to make a meaningful and long-lasting difference!

FIND US ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER



www.facebook.com/FoodDayEatReal

[@FoodDay2013](https://twitter.com/FoodDay2013) #FoodDay2013

FOOD DAY PRIORITIES: FOCUS ON FOOD EDUCATION IN 2013

Food Day's priorities address overarching concerns within the food system and provide common ground for building the movement. We intentionally keep our platform broad and cultivate Food Day in order to:

- Promote safer, healthier diets
- Support sustainable farms
- End hunger
- Reform factory farms
- Support fair working conditions

Schools are ideal sites for food education, which has become increasingly important as making healthy choices has gotten more difficult and our children are especially vulnerable to junk-food marketing and poor food choices. Instilling healthy and appropriate eating habits in children will impact their health as adults. In addition, balanced and healthy school meals improve school performance and behavior.

Introducing kids to new fruits, vegetables, and whole grains—along with a few basic recipes—can put them on track to become healthier and happier learners. If you teach a child to cook, a lot of other things fall into place.

CHILDREN AND FOOD: FACTS AND FIGURES

- More than one-third of American children and adolescents ages 6 to 19 are overweight or obese.
- Up to 1 in 3 new cases of diabetes diagnosed in youth under age 18 is type 2 diabetes (formerly called adult-onset diabetes).
- 80% of children do not eat the recommended five or more servings of fruits or vegetables each day.
- Approximately 15% of the total calories consumed by children and adults come from added sugars, and more than 40% of those calories from added sugars comes from beverages.
- American children aged 8 to 18 years old consume nearly 3,400 mg of sodium per day, twice the recommended amount. High sodium intake is associated with risk of pre- and high blood pressure in children and adolescents.
- The FDA has concluded that artificial food dyes trigger hyperactivity in children with existing Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).
- Obesity has immediate effects on a child's health, including increasing the risk of fatty liver disease, causing breathing or joint problems, and creating possible social discrimination. In the long-term, obese children are more likely to be obese as adults, which can increase the risk of other chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers.
- Policies aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles in kids have led to promising drops in obesity rates in urban areas like New York City and Los Angeles.

FOOD DAY 2012 IN SCHOOLS

Thousands of schools participated in Food Day 2012 with a variety of activities including taste tests introducing children to new and healthy options, nutrition lessons, cooking demonstrations, lectures, workshops, conferences, and health fairs. Here are some event highlights from around the country:

San Diego Passport Challenge

San Diego, California

San Diego public health professionals, school administrators, local businesses, UC San Diego staff, and three area farmers markets partnered with nine elementary schools to organize the "Eat, Grow San Diego" Food Day Passport Challenge. Over 1,000 students and their parents visited their neighborhood farmers markets to learn about new fruits and vegetables, hear food-themed stories, and meet local farmers. The school with the highest participation received a Food Day celebration with a local chef.

Sweet Potato Challenge

St. Louis, Missouri

Students at St. Louis Public Schools harvested sweet potatoes from their school gardens as part of the "Sweet Potato Challenge 2012" initiative to maintain school gardens over the summer. After learning about and harvesting this nutritious vegetable, the students participated in cooking demonstrations with area chefs and sampled healthy recipes featuring—surprise—sweet potatoes!

MDAR Organizes Massachusetts Schools

Boston, Massachusetts and statewide

New salad bars opened at six schools in Boston; students at over 200 schools throughout the state

enjoyed a fresh and local lunch; and several schools hosted special activities, including a Food Day Fall Festival at Learning Circle Preschool in Canton. The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) spearheaded statewide Food Day organizing for the second year in a row.

Mott Haven Academy Rooftop Garden Opening

Bronx, New York City

At the Mott Haven Academy Charter School, located in the Mott Haven neighborhood of New York City's South Bronx, the poorest Congressional district in the country, city officials, CSPI representatives, New York Foundling, and Bolthouse Farms joined dozens of children to officially open a new rooftop learning garden at the school and participate in a healthy cooking lesson led by celebrity chef Ellie Krieger.

Meatless Monday

Stratford, Connecticut

Students and parents of North Stratfield, CT, schools were introduced to Meatless Monday with samples, recipes, resources, and demonstrations to help reduce meat consumption in the community and at schools.

100% Local Lunch

Falmouth, Maine

The R.E.A.L. Lunch Program in Falmouth, ME—a student-led initiative started by a small group committed to changing their school's lunch program—partnered with Maine farmers for a 100% local Food Day lunch in area schools.



IDEAS FOR FOOD DAY IN SCHOOLS

The following is a sampling of suggested Food Day activities in schools. Many of the activities can be adapted to any educational level or situation. Be creative!

- Create a class mural of favorite fruits and vegetables. Follow up with a discussion about eating whole fruits and vegetables.
- Build a “Junk Food Hall of Shame” and “Super Food Hall of Fame.” Have students cut out junk-food advertisements in magazines or bring in food packages, and display items.
- Pick three recipes that all students will learn to prepare or cook during the week of Food Day.
- Protest junk-food advertising on Nickelodeon and the use of their characters on junk foods.
- Host a classroom tasting of farm- or garden-fresh fruits, veggies, and herbs. Get students involved—have them vote on meal options or lead taste tests, appoint a student ambassador, and help to increase school meal participation.
- Have a grade-wide or school-wide super-food or junk-food drawing or coloring competition for healthy snack prizes.

- Take a field trip to a farm, pumpkin patch, or apple orchard.
- Organize a school-wide assembly and invite farmers and/or chefs to talk and give demonstrations.
- Host a cooking competition involving local chefs and student helpers.
- Take a trip to get hands-on experience at an urban garden or local health-oriented restaurant.
- Evaluate the nutrition policy of a school or school district and petition for improvements.
- Organize a debate about food, agriculture, or the environment, either in the classroom or at a school assembly.
- Show a film and have a discussion afterwards. Check out the Resources section of www.foodday.org for ideas from the Film Screening Guide.
- Encourage your school or district to participate in the Healthier US School Challenge or become active in the First Lady's *Let's Move!* Campaign.
- Organize recipe swaps among parents and teachers to help educate kids about good nutrition and cooking.
- Coordinate a research project for students around food, agriculture, or biology on or around Food Day.
- Coordinate with other subject areas such as health, physical education, science, or English for integrated lessons and projects (e.g., essay competitions about science topics, guest speakers, etc.)
- Hold a classroom poster or essay contest about food and farms.



National Apple Crunch

On October 24, 2012, more than 400,000 New Yorkers took part in the city's Big Apple Crunch. This year we're bringing it to the national level. Take a bite on October 24 and join thousands of others biting into an apple around the country! An apple crunch event, however big or small it might be, is easy to organize. You can crunch in the classroom, in the garden, or have a school-wide crunch and ask local farmers to donate the apples. Here are steps for holding a city-wide apple crunch:

1. Determine where you will get your apples (or another local fruit or vegetable) for the crunch; many growers, farmers markets or retail stores would donate them.
2. Build partnerships with the Farm to School network, teachers, parents, school nutrition services, and local farmers.
3. Decide how you will promote the crunch: posters, flyers, social media.
4. Use the map at www.foodday.org to register your participation. Make sure to list how many people will be participating!
5. Make a media strategy. What outlets (TV, radio, print, other) will write about your crunch?
6. Take a bite on October 24! Remember to document and spread the word on social media using the hashtag *#FoodDay2013*.





ACTION IDEAS AROUND SUGAR DRINKS

Sugar drinks are the single greatest source of calories in the American diet and a large contributor to chronic health problems like obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. To raise awareness about the harmful health effects of consuming sugar drinks, students can take action in a variety of ways:

- Create a display to show the actual amounts of sugar in a variety of sugar drinks or the enormous amount consumed by the average American each year.
- Film a video or event with students creatively [pouring out sugar drinks](#).
- Encourage students, teachers, and parents to pledge to give up sugar drinks for a period of time.
- Get involved with your community and encourage elected officials to adopt or create healthy beverage policies.

FOOD DAY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Teachers College of Columbia University has created a unique school curriculum for Food Day. Designed for upper elementary and middle school students, it offers five lessons designed to teach children the importance of eating real, fresh food, cutting back on processed foods, and advocating for a healthier community.

In the Food Day curriculum, you will find instructions for connecting the lessons to **Common Core State Standards** and **Science Education Standards**. The lessons can be easily adapted for older or younger students. Teachers are highly encouraged to use the curriculum on the week of October 24 and connect their efforts with the Food Day movement. Although the five lessons have been designed to be taught in sequence around the time of Food Day, you can use them individually and at any time.

Download the curriculum for free at www.foodday.org.

The curriculum includes:

- Activities to explore the differences between whole and processed foods, with beautiful accompanying graphic materials.
- Interactive lessons on using USDA's MyPlate to plan meals.
- An "Eat Real Action Plan" to help students make healthy choices.
- Tips and facts on plant-based diets and reducing portion sizes as well as sugar, fat, and salt.
- An advocacy project that takes students into their communities to learn to navigate the food environment.
- Additional classroom activity materials.

Lesson 1: Eat Real

— Cards —


This activity will help your students understand why eating real is good for our bodies and good for the earth. Each card has a green bar that represents "how healthy" the food is and a red bar that shows "how much processing" is involved in producing the food. First, hang and discuss the cards in Column 1. Use cards on pages 21–23 and discuss information on page 18. Next, hang and discuss the cards in Column 2 (changed a little). Use cards on pages 23–25 and discuss the information on page 19. Finally, hang and discuss the cards in Column 3 (changed a lot). Use cards on pages 26–28 and discuss the information on page 20.

Food Change



Food Day Lessons

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School Curriculum

Helping Youth Eat Real

Classroom Lessons to Transform Youth and Their Communities

FOOD DAY IN THE CAFETERIA

With the passage of the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act in 2010, Food Day is a perfect opportunity to highlight successes and support the work toward healthier school food options. Use this momentum to improve school meals and help schools meet the new USDA standards!

This year, schools across the country are implementing updated federal nutrition standards for school lunches. Students will have more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains and less salt and unhealthy fats on their school lunch trays. Schools are working hard to implement these healthier standards, but they could use some support. Here are some ways to celebrate Food Day in the cafeteria and help to support improvements in school foods:

- Introduce taste and food education activities in the cafeteria to encourage kids to eat new, healthier choices.
- Use Food Day to start a salad bar in your cafeteria. Check out the Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools program (www.saladbars2schools.org). Hold a healthy fundraiser for the new salad bar.
- Start a Farm to School program (www.farmtoschool.org).
- Have a "Parents Come to Lunch" day on Food Day and invite parents to join students in the cafeteria to experience new healthy school meal options.
- Urge food services directors to serve a special Food Day cafeteria meal featuring local foods and highlighting new healthy menu options, and ask them to increase the variety of fruits and vegetables and explore options for local sourcing.

- Ask cafeteria managers to increase meal appeal: cook veggies to preserve vibrant color, vary the cuts of fruits, veggies, and sandwiches; use catchy names like *zippin' zucchini* and *fire-engine red tomatoes*. Suggest and implement behavioral tactics to change the placement and prominence of healthier choices – place plain milk closer to students than flavored milk, serve healthier options first in service lines, place fruit in colorful bowls, etc.
- Start a “healthy snack club” [like one Food Day organizer did](#) and organize parents to come cut up fruits and vegetables in the cafeteria each morning so that kids are more likely to eat them.



SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Work with your school district or school to strengthen your school wellness policy and ensure that it is implemented:

- Ensure that there is a wellness policy coordinator in each school who could serve as a liaison with the district and coordinate implementation.
- Send information about wellness policies to parents or post on your school's website.
- Conduct only healthy fundraisers and apply nutrition standards to all school events.

FOOD MARKETING TO CHILDREN

There is a huge amount of food marketing aimed at kids—about \$1.8 billion worth a year. Studies show that food marketing causes kids to want more and eat more of the foods marketed to them. Unfortunately, many of the foods being marketed, including in schools, are of poor nutritional quality. In schools, foods are marketed through fundraisers, educational materials and curricula, posters and signs, fronts of vending machines, scholarships, food displays, label redemption programs, and incentive programs. Take action! There is a lot you and your school can do:

- Urge Nickelodeon to stop marketing junk food to kids by [sending a letter](#) to Nickelodeon's CEO. Nickelodeon, the largest entertainment company for kids, markets and advertises food to children through television, its websites, games, toy giveaways with fast-food meals, and the use of its characters to promote foods. Ads for unhealthy foods make up 70% of the total.
- Reduce junk food marketing in schools. Check out this resource for action ideas: [Captive kids: Selling Obesity at Schools \(an action guide to stop the marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in school\)](#).
- Reduce junk food marketing in neighborhoods. Check out this advocacy toolkit for tips: [Fighting junk food marketing to kids: A toolkit for advocates](#).



For more resources on food marketing to children, please visit the following link:
<http://www.foodmarketing.org/resources/food-marketing-in-schools/>

FOOD DAY IN THE SCHOOL GARDEN

Become part of the food system! Because Food Day is at the end of October, it may not be the time to plant a garden in many parts of the country, but it can certainly be a day to announce plans for a garden. Use Food Day to announce your garden or rally people around an existing one.

- Host an event on the site of the upcoming garden.
- Take pictures of the site “before,” and next year follow up with the “after” pictures.
- Hold a class on vegetable gardening or cooking to demonstrate meals that can be made with future crops from the garden.
- Hold harvest celebrations or use Food Day curriculum activities.
- Get a “pet plant” and allow children to take turns caring for it.
- Plant a class window garden.
- Join the Edible Schoolyard project (www.edibleschoolyard.org).

Get other teachers, nurses, administrators, and food service providers—in addition to parents and student organizations—on board to make Food Day special for everyone.

CULINARY SKILLS

Food Day Recipes for Kids

We believe that every child should know how to cook a limited number of key recipes for their own health. Having cooking skills is a vital part of staying healthy. Starting this fall, for the first time ever, all secondary students in the United Kingdom will be required to learn about food and cooking as part of a new national curriculum. All students will learn how to cook 20 healthy dishes before they leave secondary school. Imagine the improvements to kids’ public health and nutrition knowledge if we did something similar in the U.S.!

Stay tuned to www.foodday.org for a selection of recipes that Food Day is preparing with the consultation of our national partners. We’ll be rolling out these recipes and an accompanying nutrition kit before this year’s Food Day.

Remember that a healthy meal at home can be a great Food Day activity. Don’t forget to add your healthy dinner to the Food Day map on www.foodday.org starting in mid-summer!





Jamie Oliver Food Foundation

The Jamie Oliver Food Foundation (JOFF), a 501(c)3 non-profit, works to bring food education to schools and youth groups through raising awareness and hands-on training, throughout the year and on their annual [Food Revolution Day](#) in May (in collaboration with Jamie's causes in the UK and Australia). Similar to Food Day, JOFF believes that food skills are one of the most valuable life skills and that every child should learn about food—where it comes from and how it affects our bodies. Their [Learn Your Fruits and Vegetables program](#) in schools and after-school programs offers first steps in food education. You can get involved with the Jamie Oliver Food Foundation by [applying](#) to become a voluntary Ambassador, [searching](#) for your nearest Ambassador to connect with, or joining the movement online on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).



Taste Education

Systematically exploring food through the senses can lead to greater knowledge about food and make kids more open-minded eaters who are less likely to turn up their noses at new and different foods. Tasting new foods is especially effective with foods that students have raised or prepared themselves.

Whatever you do in your classroom or lunchroom for Food Day, incorporating some aspect of taste education can enhance the students' experience and may even introduce them to a new favorite vegetable! To get started, download the ["To the Origins of Taste" kit](#).

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Planet Health

Interdisciplinary middle school curriculum; includes 33 lessons across different subject areas, plus an introductory lesson and physical education.

<http://www.planet-health.org/>

Nourish

Middle school curriculum for grades 6-8 interdisciplinary; aligned with national curriculum standards.

Set of resources to open a conversation about food and sustainability, contains a viewing guide, six learning activities, action projects and student hand-outs.

<http://www.nourishlife.org/teach/curriculum/>

Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution "Learn Your Fruits and Vegetables" program

Use this free starter pack to teach lessons about individual fruits and vegetables. Comes with kid-friendly recipes. The Food Revolution team has partnered with Boys & Girls Clubs of America to promote the kit.

<http://www.jamieoliver.com/pdfs/us-veg-sample.pdf>

Big Ideas: Center for Ecoliteracy

Conceptual framework for an integrated curriculum; includes AAAS benchmarks. Not lessons.

<http://www.ecoliteracy.org/books/big-ideas-linking-food-culture-health-and-environment>

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE SCHOOL BOARD

Dear ____

I am writing to invite your school system to join Food Day on October 24, 2013. The effort is a nationwide celebration and movement toward healthier diets and a sustainable and affordable food system in America. I hope you'll use this nationwide day to improve the nutritional quality of foods and beverages offered at our schools and to provide more food/nutrition education.

With sky-high rates of childhood obesity—at the same time that millions of children have limited access to healthy, fresh food—teaching children about the benefits of a nutritious diet and how to eat healthfully is invaluable to the success of our students.

I hope the entire school system will consider participating in Food Day and using it to raise awareness about healthier options in schools and to improve school food policies.

- Use Food Day to support new school meal standards. In 2011, the Los Angeles Unified School District used Food Day to highlight their Menu Transformation Initiative and healthy breakfast program.
- Pledge to improve school foods and beverages sold in vending machines, a la carte, fundraisers, etc.
- Employ the Food Day nutrition curriculum, developed by professors at Teachers College, Columbia University, available for download at www.foodday.org. The curriculum provides for week-long education activities on a variety of nutrition and health subjects.
- Install school gardens where students can learn how to grow and harvest healthy, fresh foods.

Celebrating Food Day is a great opportunity to highlight the projects and initiatives you may already be working on to improve nutrition and health education.

Sincerely,
NAME

REGISTER YOUR EVENT

Use the Food Day website to register your Food Day event, whether it is in the classroom, cafeteria, or elsewhere. Once you have registered your event(s), spread the word by sharing with your colleagues, friends, and family. Others will also be able to find your events by doing a ZIP code search or browsing a map of Food Day events.

IMPORTANT!

Share your photos, videos, and event highlights with us after Food Day on YouTube and Flickr. Make sure to share photos and videos of your events with the entire Food Day community on our Flickr and YouTube pages on and around October 24. You can also share milestones along the way to October 24: planning meetings, community rallies, etc. Upload your Food Day videos to YouTube, include “Food Day” in the tag and description, and we’ll “favorite” as many as we can. Share photos on the Food Day Flickr page.

CONTACT US

National Partnerships, Lilia Smelkova (lsmelkova@cspinet.org)

State and Local Organizing, Catherine Kastleman (ckastleman@cspinet.org)

General Inquiries, Avi Schlosburg (aschlosburg@cspinet.org)

To find your local Food Day coordinators, please visit www.foodday.org.
(If there is no coordinator, will you step up and take the lead?)

NOTES:

Food Day and CSPI

Food Day was created by the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) and grew with the support of hundreds of national partner groups. CSPI is a consumer-advocacy organization whose twin missions are to conduct innovative research and advocacy programs in health and nutrition, and to provide consumers with current, useful information about their health and well-being. Visit <http://www.cspinet.org> to learn more.



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www.foodday.org