

**The Road to Scratch Cooking**

OFFICE OF  
SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS  
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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**Welcome!**

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## Objectives

- Define scratch cooking, speed scratch cooking, and convenience foods.
- Recall the benefits of scratch cooking.
- Identify equipment and ingredients needed for successful scratch cooking in school nutrition.
- Describe steps in taking a convenience food menu item to a scratch cooked recipe.



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- Professional Standards – Learning Codes**
- Standardized Recipes (1140 & 2100)
  - Equipment Purchasing and Maintenance (3520)

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## Definitions

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## ICN Definitions

- Convenience foods
- Speed-scratch food preparation
- Scratch-based food preparation



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## Benefits of Scratch Cooking: Let's hear it from you!



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## Healthier



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**Flavorful & Local**



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**Greater Ingredient Control**

- Fewer supply chain issues
- Confident in what you serve
- Easier to make modifications
- Incorporate cultural inclusivity



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**Perceived Barriers**

- Cost
- Labor
- Culinary Skills

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**Culinary Skills Workshop for Managers  
2023 Survey Results**

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- Perceived importance of increasing the amount of scratch cooking in managers' schools
- Measured the mean rating on a scale of 1 (very unimportant) to 5 (very important), which showed neutral to somewhat important ratings
  - Pre-survey: 3.44
  - Post-survey: 3.66
- Change was statistically significant



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**Culinary Skills Workshop for Managers  
2023 Survey Results**

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- Measured the mean rating on a scale of 1 (very unimportant) to 5 (very important)
- Perceived importance of increasing the amount of locally procured foods offered in managers' schools on the post-survey
  - Mean rating: 3.60
  - Neutral to somewhat important
- Perceived importance of increasing offerings of culturally inclusive meals in managers' schools on the post-survey
  - Mean rating: 3.56
  - Neutral to somewhat important



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**Where Do You Begin?**

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Inventory

- Equipment
- Ingredients
- Labor
- Staff morale
- Community support



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### Equipment

- Knives and cutting boards
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Mixing bowls
- Whisks
- Spatulas
- Bench scrapers
- Mixing spoons



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### More Equipment

- Commercial grade blenders & food processors
- Storage containers
- Sheet pans



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### Small Equipment

- Steamtable pans
- Perforated Pans
- Scales



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### Large Equipment

- Multiple ovens
- Tilt skillet
- Steamers
- Combi ovens



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### Cooler/Freezer Ingredients

- Dairy products – cheeses, plain yogurt
- Eggs
- Unseasoned lean meats and meat alternates
- Flatbreads
- Fresh and frozen fruit
- Fresh and frozen vegetables



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## Dry Ingredients

- Spices & herbs
- Mayonnaise
- Oil - canola and/or olive
- Vinegar
- Canned tomato products
- Canned or dry beans
- Nut/seed butters
- Baking supplies (white whole wheat flour, baking powder, baking soda, oats)
- Onion and garlic



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## Labor

- Current culinary skill level
- Training
- MPLH
- Organization



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## Community Support

- Getting community groups and stakeholders involved in your school



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# Recipe Development

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Scratch & Speed-scratch



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## Where to Start

- USDA Recipes
- VDOE Recipes
- Healthy School Meals
- Current Recipes
- VA Standardized Recipe Development Manual



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From Convenience to Scratch

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### Convenience Burrito

<p><b>Benefits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal labor</li> <li>• Product consistency</li> </ul>	<p><b>Challenges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited flavors</li> <li>• Sodium concerns</li> <li>• Undesirable textures of meat and/or tortilla</li> <li>• Dependent on processor/distributor</li> <li>• Environmental concerns</li> <li>• No creativity</li> </ul>
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### Convenience to Speed Scratch

- Speed scratch
  - Value-added food products with additional ingredients
  - Minimal production steps
  - Produce a student-approved menu item



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### Speed Scratch Burrito

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- Value-added food products with additional ingredients
  - Added canned pinto beans
- Minimal production steps
  - No change to taco meat
  - Shredded cheese
- Produce a student-approved menu item
  - New tortilla
    - Local bakery
    - Softer texture
    - Easier to roll
    - Student approved!



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### Speed-Scratch Benefits & Challenges

<p><b>Benefits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added more plants</li> <li>• Selected tortilla</li> <li>• Incorporated local foods</li> </ul>	<p><b>Challenges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited flavors &amp; use of meat</li> <li>• Sodium</li> <li>• Undesirable textures</li> <li>• Dependent on processor/distributor</li> </ul>
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### Speed-Scratch to Scratch-Based

- Scratch-based
  - Multiple culinary techniques
  - Incorporating ingredients as close to their original state
  - Produce a student-approved menu item



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### Scratch-Based Burrito

- Multiple culinary techniques
  - Cook meat in tilt skillet or steamer
  - School made spicy salsa with VA local tomatoes
- Incorporating ingredients as close to their original state
  - Raw meat
  - School-made taco seasoning
  - Canned pinto beans
  - Shredded cheese
- Produce a student-approved menu item
  - Fresh and flavorful!



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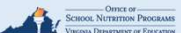
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### Scratch-Based Benefits & Challenges

<p><b>Benefits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All the speed scratch benefits plus:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Local ingredients</li> <li>○ Flavor variation</li> <li>○ Control sodium and added sugars</li> <li>○ Ingredient versatility</li> <li>○ Not depended on processor/distributor</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Challenges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culinary skill</li> <li>• Labor</li> <li>• Equipment</li> </ul>
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### Packaged Muffin to Scratch Muffin

- Ingredient control
- Marketing
- Taste Testing




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# Menus



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## Menu Activity

- Monday:
  - Cheeseburger or hamburger
  - French fries (from frozen)
  - Burger salad
  - Watermelon
- Tuesday:
  - Soft beef tacos (with frozen taco meat) or chicken quesadilla (convenience food)
  - Spanish rice
  - Refried beans (from can)
  - Lettuce and salsa
  - Grapes
- Wednesday:
  - Chicken nuggets or Sunbutter and jelly sandwich (individually wrapped)
  - Whole grain roll
  - Mashed potatoes (from dry)
  - Canned green beans
  - Mandarin oranges
- Thursday:
  - Orange chicken (pre-made kit) with brown rice or cobb salad
  - Steamed broccoli
  - Baby carrots
  - Pears
- Friday:
  - Pepperoni pizza or cheese pizza
  - Canned corn
  - Side salad
  - Apple slices



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Start small, think big!



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## Market Your Program




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