

Pennsylvania



Culinary Training Sessions

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Background

In 1995, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Food and Nutrition formed a partnership with Penn State University known as Project PA. The work of Project PA has primarily involved providing training for school food service personnel to meet state and federal regulations, enhance their school meals programs, and establish healthy nutrition environments.

Pennsylvania's culinary training sessions, offered through the Project PA partnership, began in 2015 and were inspired by the Maryland

Department of Education's Culinary Boot Camp program. While Maryland's program consisted of five days of training, the Pennsylvania program was designed as a 2-day session. More than thirty training sessions were offered between 2015–2022 reaching approximately 25 school food service employees per session. All sessions were held in school lunch rooms/kitchens, primarily during the summer, and were led by a certified chef. Sessions included a combination of lecture, demonstration, discussion, small-group work, and hands-on activities. The sessions were designed to help school food service employees improve their basic culinary and food presentation skills and gain the confidence and skills necessary to allow them to prepare and present healthy meals that are acceptable to students.

Participants completed a short evaluation form following each culinary session. Selected comments included:

“This was the most amazing training I’ve ever attended. Very inspiring!”

“Great class. I learned knife skills which will make my prep time go a lot faster and improved my skills in presenting attractive dishes. I plan to take back what I learned to the other schools which will help a lot. I enjoyed preparing the dishes with the new friends I met.”

“Best class ever! The tools you learn here you will use. Will be sharing with other schools.”

This manual provides a description and guide that serves as a model for conducting these culinary training sessions.

Preparing for Culinary Training Sessions

Five Months Prior to Culinary Training Sessions:

Recruiting a Chef

Identification of a chef to lead the culinary training sessions is a critical step in the process. In addition to culinary skills, it is recommended that the chef have knowledge of state and federal regulations governing school meal programs, an awareness of the challenges faced by operators of School Nutrition Programs, experience working in school environments, and excellent communication skills. In addition to leading the culinary session, the chef provided all of the food items needed for the demonstrations and hands-on recipe preparations.

Four Months Prior to Culinary Training Sessions:

Identifying the Sites

Schools served as the sites for the training sessions which were conducted during the summer when the lunch room and kitchen facilities were available. Schools were selected over sites that might have more extensive and elaborate culinary facilities to model the fact that the recipes and techniques being presented could be prepared using the facilities and equipment that are available in most school settings. Consideration of the layout of the kitchen area is important in identifying sites with enough space to allow for attendees to observe demonstrations, as well as spaces for small-group food preparation activities. Training sites were identified to be geographically dispersed throughout the state to keep attendees' travel expenses to a minimum. The schools that hosted the sessions were asked to provide the following items which were needed for the sessions:

- *Gloves*
- *Plastic wrap*
- *Aluminum foil*
- *Paper towels*
- *Soap*
- *Sanitizer*
- *Plastic utensils*
- *Napkins*
- *Styrofoam ramekins or soup bowls*
- *Paper plates*
- *Chilled water*

Costs for use of the facilities ranged from \$0 to \$1,600 and were based on each school district's rental policy. School food service programs were compensated for providing the materials listed above.

Each school also identified a kitchen manager who was available for the entire session. The kitchen manager assisted with set-up and provided an orientation to the facilities, equipment, and supplies available for both the chef and the participants. If funds are available, consider-

ation should be given to offering compensation for the kitchen managers' time as they play a critical role in the success of the sessions.

NOTE: Some schools required completion and signing of Facility Use Agreement forms in order to use their facilities. In these cases, these forms were reviewed and approved by Penn State University's Office for Risk Management and signed by an individual with authority to do so on behalf of the university. This process could take as long as four weeks and needs to be considered in the planning timeline.

TIP: The availability of the school facilities varied across districts. Some schools preferred to host the sessions early in the summer, shortly after the end of the school year, and before they had conducted clean-up and closed the kitchens for the year. For other schools, in particular those with summer feeding programs that used the lunch room, facilities were open throughout the summer and the timing of the sessions was more flexible, although sometimes involved working around the summer feeding schedule.

Three to Four Months Prior to Culinary Training Sessions:

Advertising the Sessions and Conducting Registration

In order to make schools aware of the sessions prior to the end of the school year, advertising and registration began well in advance of the sessions. After all sites and dates were identified, an on-line registration site was developed. The site provided information about the sessions, criteria for attendance, and links to register for each site. The ideal number of attendees was 25 so registration was capped at 30 per site to account for last minute cancellations and "no-shows." A waiting list was also established. A flier advertising the session was developed (see example in Appendix A) and was distributed via a state department of education electronic bulletin board and a statewide listserv reaching all schools.

One Week Prior to Culinary Training Sessions:

Communicating with Registrants

A week prior to each session registrants were sent reminder e-mail messages which included the date and time of the session, the address, arrival and parking instructions, and instructions to wear appropriate food preparation attire (e.g. closed-toe shoes, hair restraints, etc.) Each participant was also instructed to bring the following items, labeled with their name to ensure they left with the items they brought:

- Chef-type knife (sharp and in good condition) with either a 8" or 10" blade, transported in a safe manner
- A 15" x 20" poly-type cutting board (white or green)
- Vegetable peeler
- Apron



For assistance in choosing a knife for the session, the following characteristics were shared with registrants:

1. Large enough to be used with a wide variety of different sized fruits and vegetables
2. Sharp
3. Straight, not bent
4. In good condition, with no loose parts or odd bows or dents
5. Not serrated
6. Inexpensive

Because of the flow of the instruction, a late lunch was planned for the first day of the session. Registrants were made aware of this and were told they could bring snacks if needed.

Within One Week of Culinary Training Sessions:

Compiling Materials for the Sessions

Participants received the following items:

- Culinary Training Session Agenda
- Copy of the Maryland State Department of Education's "Cook Smart: Healthy Meals, Healthy Children" manual as reference
- USDA's "Recipes for Healthy Kids: Cookbook for Schools"
- Evaluation Form
- Name Tag
- Index card (for recipe names)
- Recipe Assignments (See page 14)
- Copies of all recipes used in the Team Production sessions
- Professional Development certificate
- Handout describing how to do recipe adjustment calculations

The following items were sent via email to participants following the sessions:

- Professional Development certificate
- PrimeroEdge Recipe Codes (codes to locate the recipes used in the sessions in the menu planning software program that is free to schools in Pennsylvania)

Signage was also developed and strategically placed throughout the school campus to direct participants to the appropriate parking areas, entry doors, and lunch rooms.



Delivering the Culinary Training Sessions

Session Set-up

The culinary sessions used both the lunch room and kitchen facilities in the schools. In the lunch room, round tables were set up to seat 4–6 participants per table. A long table and trash can were set up in the front of the room for an introductory demonstration. Additional long tables were set up in the lunch room to create a buffet-style set up for the food items that were prepared for lunch on both days of the session. Other demonstrations took place in the kitchen areas with participants gathered around the demonstration area. Areas were identified in the kitchen and designated as the small-group food preparation areas.

The chef provided all of the food items to be used in the sessions. He arrived approximately two hours before the start of each session to unload the items. He worked with the kitchen manager to store the items, set up the demonstration areas, wash the produce, and do any necessary pre-production.



Pennsylvania Culinary Training Session – Day One



A sample agenda can be found in Appendix B. Components of the first day of the session are described below with approximate time allocations.

Introduction/Overview (15 minutes)

Location: Lunch room

Chef introduces himself and describes his background and credentials, including experience working with schools. He explains the benefits of culinary skills in helping schools meet meal pattern and nutrition standard requirements while also serving foods that are current and appealing to children and parents. He explains that small changes can lead to vast improvements of current recipes and stresses the importance of having a solid understanding of the fundamentals of cooking even in environments with limited space and equipment. He provides an overview of the two-day session.

Knife Skills Basics (45 minutes)

Location: Lunch room

Objectives:

Participants will:

1. Describe the importance of choosing the correct knife for the job.
2. Discuss the importance of knife sharpness and ways to sharpen knives.
3. Describe how to anchor the cutting board.
4. Demonstrate how to hold a knife correctly.
5. Demonstrate how to hold the food to be cut correctly (claw technique).
6. Demonstrate how to set up an efficient workspace.
7. Demonstrate a proper stance when using a knife.
8. Demonstrate basic knife skills.
9. Define ***mise en place***.
10. Identify strategies to keep food costs to a minimum.

Overview

Session begins with the chef describing knife basics, proper work place set up, and the importance of sharp knives. He demonstrates setting up a workspace to chop vegetables, the proper way to hold the knife and the product being cut, proper hand-knife movement, the development of a workflow, and the importance of designating places for trim and finished product as well as an uncluttered cutting board. He demonstrates all of the commonly-used knife cuts while cutting a variety of fruit and vegetables and discusses the importance of uniformity of cut size and shape to ensure even cooking. The chef stresses that food costs are a consideration when

using fresh ingredients but these costs can be kept to a minimum by ensuring that usable product is not discarded while processing the products. For example, when peeling an onion, only remove the skin and not layers of usable product. When trimming vegetables, trim as close as possible to the end of the usable portion. Using tools that are in proper working condition is also important as dull vegetable peelers and knives waste time and labor dollars.

The concept of ***mise en place*** is first introduced (and is reintroduced repeatedly over the 2-day session). The chef explains that ***mise en place*** means more than just having all of the ingredients needed to being a preparation at hand. It also involves having the required tools and equipment lined up to ensure a smooth process and successful execution. Participants are advised to consider partial or full advanced preparation opportunities. This involves taking initial preparation steps the day prior to service to make the service day run more smoothly.

Participants are instructed to set up a workstation and take one onion, one carrot, and one celery stalk from bins in the front of the room. It is also suggested that they sharpen their knives if needed, using a knife sharpener supplied by the chef. Participants proceed to cut the vegetables placing the finished products into pans designated for each of the three vegetables. (These vegetables will be used later in the food production phases.)

Following clean-up of the workstations, the chef demonstrates the proper way to cut melons using a watermelon and cantaloupe. (Fruit is placed into a pan and served later with lunch.)

Key concepts:

- Various knives are available and have varied uses, but a basic, inexpensive Chef's knife can be used for many different purposes.
- A sharp knife is key for safety reasons and to yield a high quality product.
- Basic knife sharpeners are inexpensive. A knife-sharpening service is also an option. Steels are meant to keep knives sharp but will not bring a dull knife back to sharpness.
- The work area should be set up safely and to ensure an efficient process.
- Anchor the cutting board by placing a damp paper towel under it.
- When peeling and cutting vegetables and fruit be sure not to remove or cut off too much usable product in order to keep costs down.
- Carry knives by your side with blade pointed down.
- ***Mise en place*** means having all ingredients, tools, and equipment in place prior to beginning food preparation in order to ensure a smooth process.



For more information:
“Cook Smart: Healthy Meals, Healthy Children” manual,
pages 5–10.

Kitchen and Equipment Overview (15 minutes)

Location: Kitchen

The group transitions from the lunch room into the kitchen. The chef and kitchen manager provide an orientation to explain where various equipment, utensils, and ingredients can be found. The chef explains the importance of choosing the correct pots and pans for various cooking techniques as pan gauge, material properties, size, and shapes can impact the success of the cooking process.

Vegetable Cookery (30 minutes)

Location: Kitchen

Objectives:

Participants will:

1. Describe various cooking techniques for vegetables (e.g. stir frying, steaming, sautéing, roasting, sweating, blanching).
2. Describe the importance of batch cooking to maintain vegetable quality.
3. Describe techniques for seasoning vegetables to enhance taste while maintaining nutritional quality.
4. Explain that using proper techniques to cook vegetables will result in high quality products that maintain flavor and proper texture and need little, if any, additions to enhance the flavor.
5. Describe mirepoix.
6. Describe the uses of various types of pots and pans.

Overview:

Chef demonstrates the various cooking techniques for vegetables and explains the hallmarks and uses of each. He also explains that if vegetables are cooked properly only small amounts of seasoning and little or no added fat is needed to make the vegetables acceptable to students. He discusses the desired end results for each type of cooking technique, the best equipment to use for each, and the steps that need to be taken to ensure success. He discusses the ability to achieve similar results utilizing an oven instead of a stovetop.

Key Concepts:

- Frozen vegetable are already partially cooked. Avoid overcooking.
- When steaming vegetables avoid overloading the pan or doing anything to prevent proper air flow.
- When roasting vegetables, heat the pan first. Remove water from the vegetables and toss them lightly with oil and seasoning. Roast until vegetables begin to brown. Roasting involves high temperatures.
- Blanching involves boiling vegetables for a short period of time followed by a thorough and quick cooling in ice water to stop the cooking process. Blanching

softens vegetables and enhances their color. It is often used for firm vegetables that will be stir-fried with softer vegetables. High-heat cooking methods such as stir-frying involve short cooking times that may not be enough to soften firm vegetables if they have not been blanched.

- *Sweating vegetables involves cooking at a low temperature for a long time to concentrate flavors. No color is developed.*
- *Sauteeing involves medium high to high heat with color developed in the final product.*
- *Mirepoix is diced onion (50%), carrots (25%), and celery (25%) that is a flavor base for soups, stock, sauces, and other foods.*
- *Stir-frying involves cooking at a high temperature for a short period of time. Ginger (25%), garlic (25%), and scallions (50%) serve as the flavor base in Asian stir-fries.*
- *Pots and pans that are wide and shallow promote evaporation. Those that are narrow and tall maintain water/moisture.*



For more information:
“Cook Smart: Healthy Meals, Healthy Children” manual,
pages 12–17.

Bean, Legume, and Grain Cookery (30 minutes)

Location: Kitchen

Objectives:

Participants will:

1. *Explain the need for sorting and soaking dried beans prior to cooking.*
2. *Describe soaking methods for beans.*
3. *Describe the difference in nutritional quality between dried and canned beans.*
4. *Describe ingredients that will prevent beans from softening.*
5. *Recognize the wide variety of beans and legumes available.*
6. *Describe the cooking processes for couscous, quinoa, and bulgur.*
7. *Describe ways they could serve couscous, quinoa, and bulgur in their schools.*

Overview:

Chef displays and describes a variety of bean/legume products and discusses how they can be used. He describes the need to soak dried beans and the methods for doing so. He also displays and describes a variety of whole grain products. In particular, he demonstrates the simple preparation of couscous and quinoa. Participants have the opportunity to sample each.

Key Concepts:

- *Before using dried beans, pour them into a pan and look for/remove small rocks or other foreign materials.*
- *Dried beans must be soaked before cooking. This can be done overnight, using enough water to cover the beans, or using a quick soak method by bringing them to a simmer, covering, and soaking for an hour.*
- *Soaking beans removes elements that can cause gas and intestinal discomfort.*
- *Canned beans are much higher in sodium than dried beans.*
- *Acid and salt prevent beans from softening. If they are to be included in recipes with beans, they should be added toward the end of the cooking process to allow beans to soften.*
- *Preparation of couscous, quinoa, and bulgur is very simple and they can be served in a variety of ways that students will enjoy.*



For more information:

“Cook Smart: Healthy Meals, Healthy Children” manual, pages 22–29.



Tuscan Smoked Turkey and Bean Soup

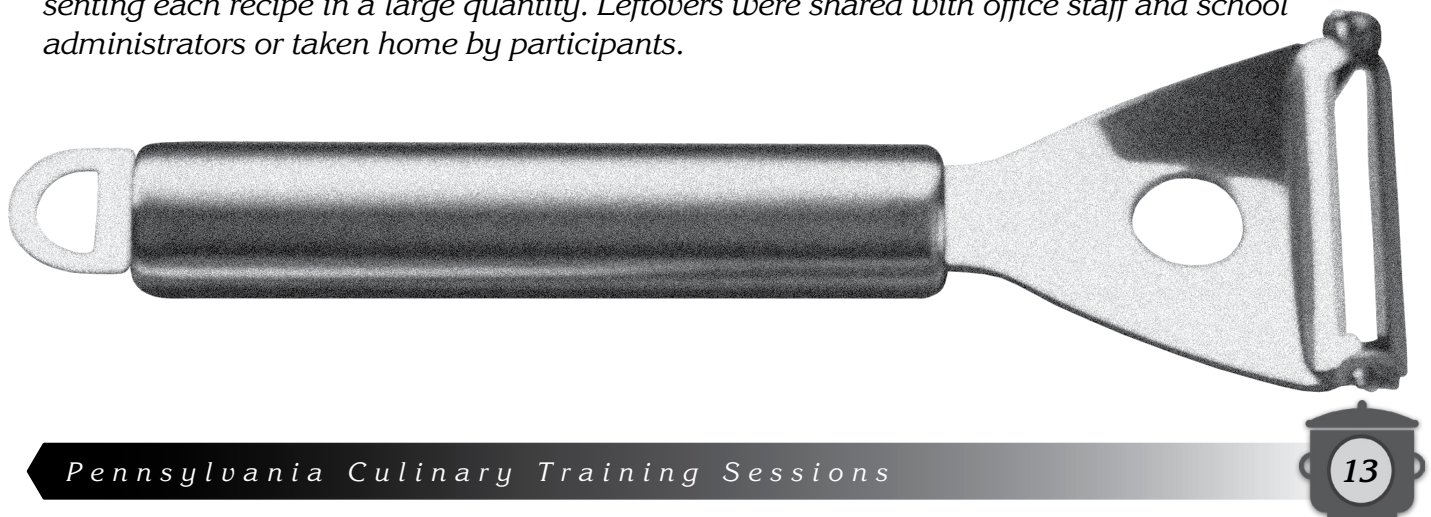
Team Assignment/Planning #1 (20 minutes)

Location: Lunch room

The group is divided into teams of 3–5 members to make six teams. Each group is assigned 2 recipes to prepare. See sample Team Recipe Assignments below. The following sources were used to identify recipes:

- **Chef Designed School Breakfast.** (Idaho Department of Education).
- **Nebraska Farm to School Harvest of the Month Recipe Guide.**
<https://www.paharvestofthemoth.org/documents/recipes/nebraska-fts-recipe-guide.pdf#page=59>
- **New School Cuisine: Nutritious and Seasonal Recipes for School Cooks by School Cooks** (Vermont Agency of Education, Vermont FEED).
<https://utfeed.org/resources/new-school-cuisine-nutritious-and-seasonal-recipes-school-cooks-school-cooks>
- **Now We're Cooking! A Collection of Simple Scratch Recipes Served in Minnesota Schools.** Great Trays Partnership.
https://www.paharvestofthemoth.org/documents/recipes/Now_We_re_Cooking_A_Collection_of_Simple_Scratch_Recipes_Served_in_Minnesota_Schools.pdf
- **Recipes for Healthy Kids: Cookbook for Schools** (USDA, Team Nutrition).
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/recipes-healthy-kids-cookbook-schools>
- **The Lunch Box: Tools for school food change.**
<https://www.thelunchbox.org/recipes-menus/recipes/?s=eyJwYWdljoxLCJzZW-FyY2giOm51bGwslmNhdGVnb3J5JljudWxsLCJzb3J0ljoibmFtZSIsImZvcmlhd-CI6ImNhcmQifQ%3D%3D>
- **USDA Standardized Recipes Project.** ICN Child Nutrition Recipe Box.
<https://theicn.org/cnr/>



SOMETHING TO CONSIDER: The recipes used in these sessions were quantity recipes designed to yield 25–50 servings. Twelve recipes were prepared for each lunch. Obviously, 25 servings of twelve different recipes is much more food than is needed to feed 25 session participants. Consider if you want participants to decrease the number of servings or the portions. We chose to have participants make 25–50 servings to have the experience of preparing and presenting each recipe in a large quantity. Leftovers were shared with office staff and school administrators or taken home by participants.



Team Assignments



Day One

1 Bok Choy Wrappers 
Sesame Noodles with Chicken
and Vegetables 

2 Tuscan Smoked Turkey and
Bean Soup 
Strawberry Spinach Salad 


3 Peppy Quinoa 
Carrot Quinoa Muffins 

4 Ratatouille 
Sloppy Lentil Joes 

5 Purple Power Bean Wrap 
Roasted Root Vegetable Hash 

6 Chicken Alfredo with a Twist 
Cherry Tomato & Corn Salad 

 Recipes are from USDA's "Recipes for Healthy Kids: Cookbook for Schools."

 Recipes are from Vermont's "New School Cuisine."

The chef discusses the recipes with each group, describing any unique aspects, where to find the ingredients, and what, if any, substitutions are necessary. Teams are told to review the recipes and plan for their production. They are asked to consider the following:

How long will the recipe take to prepare?

What steps can or should be safely done in advance, while not adversely affecting quality?

What steps should not be done until the last minute?

Can the dish be batch cooked?

They divide responsibilities and come up with a production plan.



Strawberry Spinach Salad

Team Production #1 (2 ½ hours)

Location: Kitchen

In teams, participants prepare their assigned recipes drawing on many of the lessons and techniques learned earlier in the day. The chef circulates among the groups answering questions and offering suggestions. Participants are asked to consider how they can attractively present their finished products considering the serving vessel, arrangement, and garnishing techniques. Emphasis is placed on considering the timing of food preparation and serving so that hot foods are served hot, cold food is served cold, and crisp foods stay crisp. The chef provides guidance in these areas. Each group is given two index cards and is asked to come up with names for their products that they think will appeal to students. The finished products and the index cards displaying the product names are brought out to the lunch room and placed on tables in the front of the room to create a buffet line.

Lunch/Review #1 (45 minutes)

The recipes that were prepared are served as lunch. Participants are encouraged to try a little bit of each item. Following lunch, each group states the recipes that they prepared and what, if any, challenges they encountered and how they were overcome. They share their opinions of the recipes and how they think their students would respond to them. This is followed by a group discussion of each recipe that includes a general discussion of the acceptability of each recipe and questions for the teams that prepared them.

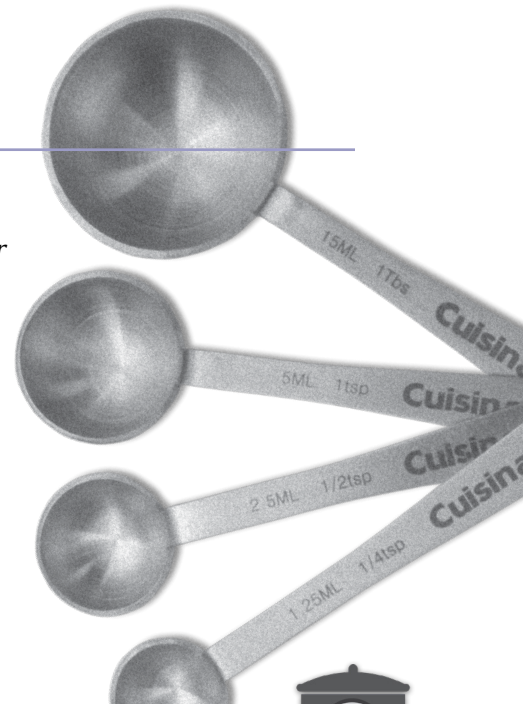
TIP: *If possible, invite a few students to join the group for lunch, sample the items, and share their opinions.*

TIP: *If there are leftovers, save some items for Day 2. Reheat, as needed and discuss which items were acceptable as leftovers from the previous day and which did not maintain their quality.*

Team Assignment/Planning #2 (15 minutes)

Location: Lunch room

The same teams that were assembled for Team Production #1 gather for their second assignments. Team Assignment/Planning #2 occurs on Day 1, but was for recipes that are to be finished on Day 2. This planning period allows the teams more time to plan and prepare and is meant to contrast to Team Assignment/Planning #1 which is a more rushed situation. The difference in the planning time allowed between the two assignments is meant to highlight the importance of adequate time to plan and prepare. It also allows them to identify preparation steps that could be done the day before to make the production day less hectic. Sample team assignments for the Day 2 recipes are on the following page.



TEAM ASSIGNMENTS

Day Two

1 Stir-Fry Fajita Chicken,
Squash, and Corn
Wheat Berry Salad


2 Fiesta Mexican Lasagna
Pumpkin Squares

3 Tasty Tots
Chicken Tikka Masala

4 Smokin' Powerhouse Chili
Whole-grain Cornbread

5 Roasted Fish Crispy
Slaw Wrap
Swiss Chard Frittata

6 Rainbow Rice
Vermont Maple Apple French
Toast Bake

 Recipes are from USDA's "Recipes for Healthy Kids: Cookbook for Schools."
 Recipes are from Vermont's "New School Cuisine."



Peachy Berry Parfait

Pennsylvania Culinary Training Session — Day Two

Introduction/Overview/Wrap-Up Day One (30 minutes)

Location: Kitchen

Day 2 begins with an introduction and overview of the lessons and activities for the day. Also, some processes that were started on Day 1 and are now complete are showcased. For example, beans that were soaked overnight are drained, rinsed, and incorporated into a dish that will be served at lunch. Any remaining questions from Day 1 are addressed.

Salads, Dressings, and Seasonings (30 minutes)

Location: Kitchen

Objectives:

Participants will:

1. Name a variety of greens that could be used in salads.
2. Describe how to wash fruits and vegetables to prepare for use in salads.
3. State the components of salad dressing.
4. Describe the amount of dressing needed on salads.

Overview:

The chef presented and discussed a variety of types of leafy greens that could be used in salads and demonstrated cleaning and cutting one variety for a salad. He discussed the three components of salad dressing and how, after knowing the three basic components, a variety of different types of dressings could be prepared. He demonstrated making a dressing and dressing a salad.

Key Concepts:

- Think beyond typically-used greens to expose students to a variety.
- Lettuce should not be soaked in water to clean it. Wash under running water in a colander. Salad spinners are useful to remove the water.
- Salad dressings consist of three key components — acid, oil, and emulsifier. The emulsifier holds the acid and oil together. Knowing those three basic components, you can make a variety of dressings. For example, a balsamic dressing might consist of balsamic vinegar (acid), olive oil (oil), and Dijon mustard (emulsifier).
- Salads only need to be lightly dressed. Dressing should not remain in the bottom of the salad bowl after the salad is eaten.



For more information:

“Cook Smart: Healthy Meals, Healthy Children” manual,
pages 34–38.

Team Production #2 (3 hours)

Location: Kitchen

Same as Team Production #1.

Lunch/Review #2 (45 minutes)

Same as Day 1.

Batch Cooking, Stir-Fry Process, and Action Station Concepts (30 minutes)

Location: Kitchen

Objectives:

Participants will:

1. State the importance of batch cooking to maintain food quality.
2. Identify the steps involved in stir-frying.
3. Describe “action stations” that could be used in a school setting.

Overview:

The chef uses broccoli as an example of the importance of batch cooking explaining that holding vegetables for an extended amount of time after cooking causes a loss of quality. If all of the broccoli for a lunch period is prepared in advance, those who have lunch at 11:30 might have a high-quality, bright-green, crisp product, but those who do not have lunch until 12:15 may experience a mushy, dull-colored vegetable. The chef demonstrates blanching broccoli and describes the proper cooking time and desired consistency. He also explains that cooking will continue when vegetables are placed on the steam table so this must be considered to avoid overcooking.

The chef demonstrates the stir-frying process explaining that the cooking times for various vegetables in the stir-fry differ, so some may require pre-cooking while others may be added at the last minute. He explains that the standard trio of vegetables used in stir-fries and many Chinese food dishes is ginger, garlic, and scallions. The chef explains that, when stir-frying, the pan should not be overcrowded and the food should be cooked at a high temperature for a short period of time keeping the food in motion. To keep costs down, he recommends using an inexpensive neutral oil to begin the stir-fry process and finish with a small drizzle of the more expensive sesame oil.

The chef discusses the concept of using “action stations” on the lunch line as a way to have freshly-prepared items for the students and allow them to see some of the cooking process.

Key Concepts:

1. Batch cooking ensures that students are receiving high-quality foods throughout the lunch time frame.

2. Stir-frying involves consideration of the cooking times of the various vegetables to ensure they are cooked evenly.
3. Stir-frying involves cooking food quickly at a high temperature in a pan that is not overcrowded.
4. Action stations are a strategy for presenting freshly-prepared items to students.

Staff Training (30 minutes)

Location: Kitchen

There is a discussion about taking the lessons learned and sharing them with other staff in their schools. Ideas for doing so are shared. Volunteers are asked to present a knife skills demonstration as if they were training co-workers. The volunteers demonstrate all of the knife skills concepts they were taught on Day 1 as they cut melons.

Review and “Best Practices” Sharing (45 minutes)

Location: Lunch room

Objectives:

Participants will:

1. State what they have learned and will share through the culinary training session.
2. Describe strategies to conduct successful taste-tests
3. Share successful practices they have used in their schools to improve school meal quality and/or promote school meals.

This session begins with the chef asking participants to reiterate the key concepts and lessons they learned in this training session. He prompts them by reminding them of the content areas (e.g. knife skills, vegetable cookery, etc.) and by posing questions. He reviews concepts that were not mentioned. Participants are asked what lessons, concepts, recipes, and/or techniques they expect to take back to their schools and apply immediately.

The participants are asked to share their experience with providing taste-testing opportunities for students. The chef does the same providing examples of taste-testing experiences in which he has been involved. Participants are also asked to share experiences with other ways they have successfully improved school meal quality or promoted school meals. Discussions involve recipes that have been introduced, involvement of student peers in promotions, connecting with other departments within the school to enhance promotional events, farm to school activities, and outreach to community members and organizations to involve them in special events.

The day concludes with words of encouragement from the chef and an invitation to contact him with further questions.



Appendix A

Pennsylvania Culinary Training Session Flier

Culinary Training Sessions for School Food Service Personnel

The Pennsylvania Department of Education, through Penn State (Project PA) will once again be offering hands-on Culinary Training Sessions for School Food Service Personnel led by Chef Bill Scepanky, Smart Partners LLC. These sessions are designed to help you plan, prepare, and present attractive meals that students will enjoy.

Session Information

These are hands-on sessions led by a certified chef. Participants will be preparing recipes that will be served for lunch. Topics to be covered will include knife skills, vegetable cookery, salads and dressings, dried beans/legumes and grains, seasonings and flavorings, food presentation, and more.

Mini-Grants

Attending one of these training sessions will make your school eligible to apply for a \$2,500 mini-grant to extend the culinary training lessons in your school. Additional information about this opportunity will be provided at the session.

Registration

Registration is free. Space at these sessions is limited. Registration is first-come, first-served. Registration will close when the session fills.

Registration is limited to no more than **two individuals per school**.

Apply Online

More information and a link to the registration form can be found on the Project PA website — www.projectpa.org.

For questions about registration, send e-mail to elainem@psu.edu.

| Dates: | Locations: |
|---|--|
| June 14 th /15 th | Mechanicsburg Middle School Mechanicsburg, PA 17055 |
| August 2 nd /3 rd | Gateway High School Monroeville, PA 15146 |
| August 9 th /10 th | North Penn HS Lansdale, PA 19446 |
| August 17 th /18 th | Loyalsock Township High School Williamsport, PA 17701 |

Each session will be 2 days:
Day 1: 8:30am – 4:30pm
Day 2: 8:00am – 3:30pm

“It’s fun and you’re learning techniques on how to prepare and cook. And not only can you do it at your school, but at your home.”

“Every district in the world needs this class.”

“This is one of the best classes you’re going to have for free ... amazing class.”

“The past year and a half has been physically and emotionally draining, being on the front lines against COVID. This training refreshed me.”



This session will provide 15.5 hours of continuing education credit.

This session is funded through a 2019 USDA Team Nutrition Training Grant. The USDA is an equal opportunity provider.

Appendix B

Pennsylvania Culinary Training Session – Sample Agenda

| Day 1 | |
|---------------|--|
| 9:00 – 9:15 | Introduction/Overview |
| 9:15 – 10:00 | Knife Skills Basics |
| 10:00 – 10:15 | Kitchen and Equipment Overview |
| 10:15 – 10:45 | Vegetable Cookery |
| 10:45 – 11:15 | Bean, Legume, and Grain Cookery |
| 11:15 – 11:35 | Team Assignment/Planning #1 |
| 11:35 – 2:05 | Team Production #1 |
| 2:05 – 2:50 | Lunch/Review #1 |
| 2:50 – 3:05 | Team Assignment/Planning #2 |
| 3:05 – 4:30 | Clean-up stations, Prep/Organize for Day 2 |
| Day 2 | |
| 8:00 – 8:30 | Introduction/Overview/Wrap-Up Day One |
| 8:30 – 9:00 | Salads, Dressings, and Seasonings |
| 9:00 – 12:00 | Team Production #2 |
| 12:00 – 12:45 | Lunch/Review #2 |
| 12:45 – 1:30 | Clean-up stations |
| 1:30 – 2:00 | Batch Cooking, Stir-Fry Process, and Action Station Concepts |
| 2:00 – 2:45 | Final Clean up |
| 2:45 – 3:30 | Review and “Best Practices” Sharing |



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To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. email:

program.intake@usda.gov

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