

**GUIDE TO SERVING GARDEN PRODUCE IN ANN ARBOR PUBLIC SCHOOL CAFETERIAS**  
**AAPS FARM-TO-SCHOOL COLLABORATIVE**

Ann Arbor Public Schools have many gardens on school grounds. There are several ways to get the produce into student's mouths, including classroom tastings, after school events, cafeteria sampling, & more. Take following guidelines are provided to help hold a successful garden-to-cafeteria taste test:

- 1) Ask permission from the school principal for what you want to serve in the cafeteria
- 2) Speak with the kitchen manager at the school about the logistics of the tasting. He/She may wish to get permission from Heather Holland, Chartwell's district food service director.
- 3) Ask the principal to make a morning announcement to the school via the loudspeakers
- 4) Harvest & prepare the garden produce following safe food handling practices (see below)
- 5) Set up a separate table for the taste test in the cafeteria just prior to lunchtime
- 6) Place produce in small individual cups, on small plates, or on napkins
- 7) Make a sign announcing that produce from the school garden is available for tasting
- 8) Have lunch staff help students approach the table one group at a time to minimize congestion & wait time. Food must be served to students by a responsible adult who will be present at all times.

**SAFE FOOD HANDLING PRACTICES:**

- Harvesting should be done by healthy students & adults who have washed their hands
- Remove excess soil and place produce in clean containers dedicated for harvesting
- Once produce is brought into the school kitchen it can be labeled & stored unwashed in the school's refrigerator for up to 2 days or washed for immediate use (41° F or below)
- Wash/rinse all produce thoroughly in the kitchen sink & use a clean food scrub brush to remove stubborn dirt if necessary. Only raw produce should be served. Produce should be triple washed
- Tomatoes, sliced leafy greens, or melons are considered potentially hazardous. They should be served immediately and not stored
- Prepare produce for tasting on clean and sanitized surfaces

**EXTRA TIPS:**

- Buying trays and serving utensils such as big spoons, tongs, knife set are great for food tastings. Store them in a big bin labeled for your school garden. That way you know what it has been used for and nothing has cross contaminated it.

Chartwell's School Garden Guide

<https://whidbeyschoolgardens.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/chartwells-school-garden-guide.pdf>