



School Food Education Project



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GROWING  CHEFS!

PARTNERS IN FOOD & AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Growing Chefs! Ontario

Classroom Journal

2021-2022 Issue 4

Our doors are open!

At Growing Chefs! we often talk about impact in terms of the # of children and families we reach, but we all know there is so much more to measuring impact than just numbers on a page. It's about quantity AND quality.

As COVID-19 restrictions eased this spring, we were so delighted to be able to open our doors wide and welcome students into our new space at The Grove. As we begin working in-person with schools again, we are taking the opportunity to carefully consider the best and most impactful way we can rebuild our educational programming.

We've learned a lot over the past two years about how to maximize the impact of our programming: we've looked at virtual vs in-person, one-time programs vs series, culinary only vs food systems programs. And we are so excited to both share what we've learned, as well as implement those findings moving forward as we create a new program delivery model for the future.

School field trip highlights from this past Spring:

Since January, we have worked with several school groups including the Cornerstone Alternative Education Centre, School Within a College and the First Nations, Metis, Inuit (FNMI) Program at Beal Secondary School to pilot our first field trips in nearly two years. We worked with each of these groups on 4-6 occasions, because we have found that repetition provides the essential practice needed for children and youth to master new skills and increase their confidence in the kitchen (and garden!).

Keep reading



Our doors are open!

With the FNMI program from Beal, we worked with indigenous knowledge keepers (Chef Dwayne Hill and Thomas Martel) to explore indigenous recipes, plants, and culture both in the virtual classroom, learning kitchen, and in our gardens and greenhouse. With School Within a College, we explored a different culture with each week's menu, and linked what we made to what they were learning about in their Food and Culture course. Cornerstone students cooked with us several times, and visited our greenhouse and the food forest nearby to learn more about the entire food system.

We are so grateful to be back, working with schools and students, in person, in our amazing new facility. We have missed this, more than anything else over the past two and a half years. Thank you for helping to provide us with the opportunity to do what we do: deliver high-impact programs and cultivate collaborative relationships that will last for years to come. Thanks for coming with us on this journey!



By the Numbers

Programming

July 2021 - July 2022



135 in-person programs



105 live virtual programs



2,352 in-person participants



3,559 live virtual participants

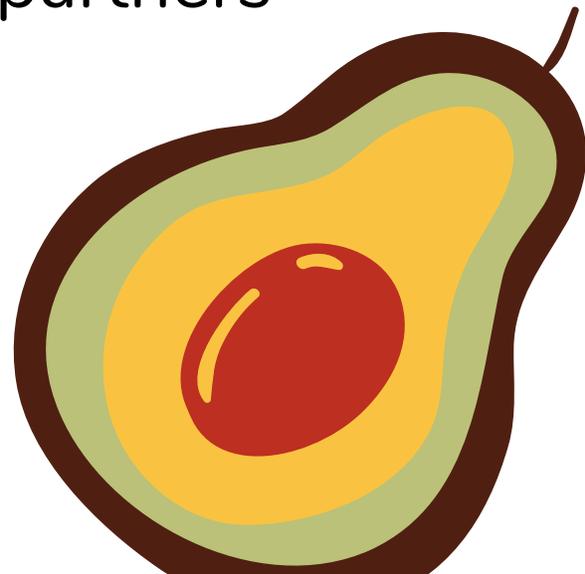


11,118 online resource views and
downloads



66 schools/community partners

**HOLY GUACAMOLE
THAT'S A LOT!**





**Cornerstone
students exploring
our greenhouse!**

"TVDSB Innovation has thoroughly enjoyed learning with Growing Chefs. We've appreciated your customized approach to make each learning experience personalized for the students participating. Our Indigenous students were engaged and excited to learn and make cultural dishes. Our English Language Learners were inspired by your outdoor garden to practice naming plants in English. Our French program also greatly enjoyed visiting your space. We value your approach to education and look forward to continuing to grow our collaborative opportunities."

Laura Briscoe (TVDSB Innovation)

Students from the First Nations, Metis, Inuit Program at Beal learned traditional recipes from Chef Dwayne, and participated in planting a three sisters garden in one of their field trips to the Grove.



The Three Sisters
(corn, beans and squash)

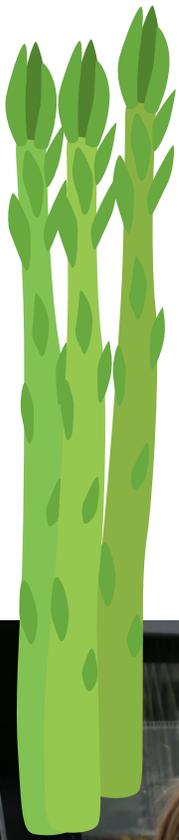


Guest Chef Dwayne Hill



Oven bread with wild
rice and venison





"My son had an amazing time tonight and informed me that even though he doesn't normally like any of those foods (chicken, asparagus and cheese) he LOVED them all. He had a blast and is excited to join the program again next month. He was so excited to tell us about everything he did and said he will eat asparagus from now on if I let him make it 'that way'."

Natasha M (Monthly Kid's Cooking Class)



"Growing Chefs! is the BEST field trip every year for my students. The staff are fantastic (knowledgeable, personable and caring), the skills and knowledge students learn are relevant and interesting, and the food is delicious!"

Jenn G (Cornerstone Field Trip)



Field Notes from Chef Nick!

Hi, I'm Chef Nick!

Myself, and the rest of the Chef team, are absolutely thrilled to get back to in-person programming! Working face to face with the students is always a blast; it allows for so much more back and forth dialogue, as well as the most fun part of the job, seeing the thrill on their faces when they plate up an amazing dish!

All of the students from our recent field trips have been full of enthusiasm and ready to learn, and with many of them at an age where they will be moving out and living on their own soon, the impact of the skills we taught felt much more immediately applicable in their day to day lives. The students were also very adventurous with trying new foods, such as our salsa roja (recipe on the next page!), which as Chefs, we always love to see.

By far the most rewarding part of my job is working with students that may have disadvantages in their home life. Having access to healthy and delicious food is something I think everyone should have, and I feel it is such a privilege to be able to provide an experience for some students they may not have otherwise been able to have.

Chef Nick





Salsa Roja

This sweet red salsa is great on its own, with nacho chips or the perfect side for pupusas!

Difficulty: Beginner

Yield: 1.5 cups

Ingredients:

1 28 ounce can tomatoes, diced or crushed
1/2 head of cilantro
1 small onion, diced
1 clove of garlic, minced
2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
1 teaspoon sugar
2 teaspoons dried oregano
salt to taste

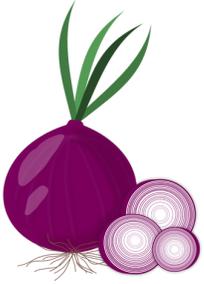
Equipment:

Cutting board
Pairing knife or chef's knife
Measuring cups
Measuring spoons
Bowls various sizes for ingredients
Blender
Medium pot
Wooden spoon
Tasting spoons
Dish towel



Salsa Roja

Get Organized!



Gather your mise en place; get together all of the equipment needed for the recipe and gather your ingredients.



Get Prepped!

In a blender or food processor, purée tomatoes, onion, garlic, apple cider vinegar, sugar, oregano and salt.



Get Cooking!



Pour tomato mixture into a large pot, and heat to medium heat. Cook for about 20 minutes until mixture has thickened. Partially cover the pot with a lid to avoid it sputtering and burning you.

Let cool, and serve alongside pupusas. Salsa roja will keep well in a covered container in the fridge for up to two weeks.

Enjoy!



"We are so thankful for your generous contributions today! Our participants and staff all had a blast, feeding our minds and our bellies with lots of goodies. You know, if every Londoner had the experience we all had today, we would be a different city with a lot more diverse ideas for our kitchens, gardens and our neighbourhoods (including our neighbourhood shops!)."

Great job again and thanks for all that you do."

Gabor S (Grove Tour)



"I have been to Growing Chefs! a few times and I love the cooking and craft activities so much! I told my parents that I want to be a Chef or artist when I grow up!"

Ella W (Growing Chefs! participant)



Sponsor Spotlight



The Ontario Student Nutrition Program (Southwest Region) has been a strong supporter and partner of Growing Chefs! Ontario over the past two years. We currently partner with them on our Community Food Box Project, but their reach extends much larger. OSNP administers funding and provides program support to over 480 schools across Southwestern Ontario to develop and implement healthy breakfast, snack and at times, lunch programs. Their programs serve thousands of children across the province to ensure that they attend school well nourished and ready to learn.

What they do:

- Deliver fresh & affordable food to programs in 350+ schools through their bulk purchasing program.
- Invest in evidence-based research on health and academic outcomes associated with programs.
- Provide ongoing support for programs and assist with the startup of new programs.
- Coordinate with school boards, public health units and other communities.
- Support local farmers, producers and distributors.

OSNP-SW by the numbers:

- 113,641 students served
- 18,436,294 breakfast or snacks served
- 5,714 volunteers
- 315,421 volunteer hours
- 8 OSNP communities
- 471 OSNP programs, spanning
- 10 counties across SouthWestern Ontario

Find out more about this amazing program and how they work, [here](#).

The 2021-2022 School Food Education Project
is presented by our Title Sponsor:



With the generosity of the following Community and Corporate
Sponsors:



We are fortunate to have the generous support of Grants,
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BENEFACTION

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We are fortunate to have the generous in-kind support of:



**Thank you for your investment in food education and
the future health of our community.**



Growing Chefs! Ontario is a registered charity in London, Ontario and has been incorporated since 2008

Changing the way children, youth, families and the community learn about and develop healthy relationships with food

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