



# School Food Education Project



PARTNERS IN FOOD & AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

## Classroom Journal

May 2018



What Growing Chefs! program offers a one-of-a-kind experience for grade 1 - grade 3 students to interact directly with farmers?

### FRESH FOOD FRENZY!

Did you know that as a School Project Sponsor, your support also helps deliver Fresh Food Frenzy each spring and fall to hundred of kids? Each week in the school year that the farmer's market is open at Covent Garden Market, Growing Chefs! is there to host Fresh Food Frenzy!

This year, students from: White Oaks PS, Wilberforce P.S., Arthur Ford P.S. (APPLE program), Tecumseh P.S., Eagle Heights P.S., St. Theresa Catholic School, London Christian Academy, Glen Cairn P.S., St. Thomas Community Christian School, Orchard Park P.S. and Stoneybrook P.S. will have conducted a scavenger hunt through the farmers' market at Covent Garden Market, talked directly to growers, asked questions, learned about new-to-them fruits and vegetables and prepared a delicious three course lunch, right in the Market Kitchen!



Our first sponsor for FFF was **Digital Echidna!** They continue to generously support our programming as our Lead Media Sponsor!

FFF volunteers are some of the longest tenured volunteers with GCO! We so appreciate their dedication!

FFF started in 2009 - now thousands of kids have participated!



# FIELD NOTES

## FROM THE FRESH FOOD FRENZY LEAD EDUCATOR BLUE POTATOES, BEAR CLAWS AND BUSY MORNINGS

Every Thursday morning around 9:30AM, I hear giggling children.

I will have just finished setting up for the Fresh Food Frenzy (FFF) program in Covent Garden Market and I can already feel the grade three students' excitement building as they gather around their teacher, waiting for the fun to begin. We start with a tour of the farmer's market, shopping lists in hand, searching for our ingredients to prepare a 3-course meal.

Once the shopping is done, we begin a scavenger hunt looking for fruits and vegetables of every colour and asking local farmers about food and farming. The students easily spot red peppers, green asparagus and yellow squash. But a blue vegetable? "There's no such thing as a blue vegetable" a skeptical young boy tells me. I lead him to a farmer's stand at the market where there are Peruvian blue potatoes for sale. The children look at the potatoes in silence because they have never seen such a colourful potato. The skeptical young boy corrects me and says that the potatoes are more purple than blue, and I nod. I'm happy that the kids have been introduced to a new vegetable even if the colour is not completely accurate.

We head to the market kitchen and the students have a lesson on how to safely chop fruits and vegetables. Chef Marisa shows everyone the "Bear Claw" method. She teaches the students to turn their fingers of one hand into the shape of a claw and hold their safe chopper in the other hand. All the kids raise their own bear claws high to show her. After instruction, my group is ready to chop apples! Only a few reminders about the Bear Claw are needed before they quickly master the method. We happily eat our snack of apple slices and dip and then move on to the next task of preparing pumpkin oatmeal cookies. Seeing the kids' concentration when they are measuring ingredients makes me smile. They are very accurate! (Baking is a science, after all!) When the cookies are in the oven, we clean up, set our table and wait for food to be served.

FFF truly is a frenzy of a program. In 3 hours we buy our ingredients in the market, do a scavenger hunt, prepare (and eat!) a 3-course meal and snack, clean-up and still have time to decorate chef hats! In the short time students participate in FFF, I've seen children who were hesitant to try new foods grow to loving the meal they've prepared. I remember when one student named Cayden didn't want to eat the soup we prepared. I asked him to give it a taste and think about



what he would do differently next time he prepared the soup. Later on, Cayden pulled me aside and told me he wouldn't add black pepper and that would make it "really good". Like him, many students were scared about new food at first. But when they take a chance, they often realize that trying new foods is not so scary!

I can relate. When I was hired as a youth food education assistant I was scared of what my job entailed. I had experience with children but not in a full-time capacity where I would be responsible for kids in various settings. I thought "What if I do or say something wrong?", "Can I lead a group of kids?", "How can I hold their attention?". The job was new and different. I was hesitant about change.

It's been a year since I started with Growing Chefs! and I've never loved a job so much. I've overcome my fears by having fun with the kids. The children have taught me so much! Once, when I was feeling behind in my university career compared to my peers I was given a lesson from a young boy at FFF. A student had cut in front of the queue to the handwashing station, and a young girl started crying because her spot was taken. Then the young boy turned to her and said "It's okay. Don't cry. We're all going to get there eventually". Important life lessons mixed into the busy mornings at FFF!

FFF is one of my favourite programs at Growing Chefs! The environment is a great place for kids to learn and discover new foods. I love the buzz in the market; it has been a great place for me to grow. People are shopping, children are learning, food is cooking. I can't wait for next Thursday.

- Sharlaine Murga  
Youth Education Assistant





# PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD

Take a peek at  
some memories  
of our fall 2017  
Fresh Food Frenzy  
sessions!

Each class has an  
entirely seasonal  
menu, based on  
the ingredients  
that are available  
at the Market  
each week!

We are  
already 100%  
booked for  
FFF fall 2018!



## A FRESH FOOD FRENZY

# OFFICIAL RECIPE!



### Sour Cream Rhubarb Cupcakes (yields 30 cupcakes)

#### Ingredients:

2  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups all purpose flour  
1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups granulated sugar  
1 tbsp baking powder  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt  
1 cup softened butter  
4 medium eggs  
1 cup sour cream  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
half pound of rhubarb, finely chopped  
(about 2 cups)

#### Instructions:

Preheat oven to 350 F.

Prepare cupcake pans with liners. Mix flour, sugar, baking powder and salt in a large bowl. Add butter, eggs, sour cream and vanilla and beat until smooth. Stir in chopped rhubarb. Divide batter amongst the cupcake liners and bake for 20-23 minutes for normal size cupcake, 18 minutes for medium and 15 minutes for mini. Check doneness with a toothpick before removing from the oven. Let cool.

### Ginger Cream Cheese Frosting

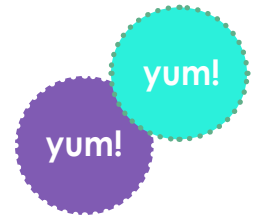
#### Ingredients:

1  $\frac{1}{4}$  cups softened butter  
2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups powdered sugar  
1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups cream cheese  
1 tsp dried ground ginger

#### Instructions:

Beat butter until pale. Add powdered sugar and beat until smooth and pale, about 1 minute. Add cream cheese and ginger and beat until smooth.

Enjoy!





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