



# Partner with the School Nutrition Program to Support Classroom Nutrition Education



Ask how your School Nutrition Program can support classroom nutrition education.

## Kitchen Tours

Partner with the cafeteria to provide students the opportunity to see where and how their food is prepared. Kitchen staff can help teach about basic culinary skills, recipes, measurements, menu development, and the equipment used to make their meals. School Nutrition Director or other kitchen staff can discuss the importance of their work and answer questions.

## Letter or Color of the Week

Ask if the cafeteria can feature foods that begin with the letter or color of the week. For example, apples, apricots, asparagus, and arugula for letter A or apples, strawberries, and bell peppers for red. The monthly menu can include the letter or color for the week.

## Maine Harvest of the Month

Maine's Harvest of the Month (HOM) promotes fresh, local food in school cafeterias. HOM teaches students where food comes from – including local farms, gardens and greenhouses. Some Maine schools have found creative ways to celebrate, including decorating lunch rooms to showcase local food and inviting area farmers into the classroom to speak with students. [Maine Agriculture in the Classroom](#) has a variety of lessons and curriculum resources that can be used in the classroom.

## Nutrition Facts Label Reading

Introduce basic nutrition concepts such as food groups, portion sizes, and understanding food labels and packaging. Ask for a variety of empty containers of packaged items from the cafeteria to use with students to learn how to read a label, analyze different nutrient contents, compare products, and more.

## Taste Tests

Ask the cafeteria for a variety of fruits and vegetables, common and rare, that tie into class lessons or themes to learn more about where they are grown. Encourage students to try them too! Check out the [Conduct Taste Test](#) resource.

## What's that Fruit or Vegetable?

Ask if school nutrition staff can assist with a mystery produce item. Allow students to reach into a paper bag to feel the mystery fruit or vegetable inside. Allow all students to record a guess, after everyone has guessed, do a taste test, and learn more about what it is, where and how it grows, and the health benefits of the fruit or vegetable.