According to The Federal Trade Commission, the fast food industry spends more than $5 million every day marketing unhealthy foods to children. A research brief by the Robert Woods Johnson Foundation found that nearly all (98 percent) of food advertisements viewed by children are for products that are high in fat, sugar or sodium. So, getting kids to eat more fruits and vegetables and make healthier choices can be a challenge.

Simply adding more fruits and vegetables to the school lunch menu without prior exposure often fails to get kids to try the new offerings. The saying, “If you build it, they will come,” doesn’t usually work when trying to change kids behavior. But if they build it, that’s another story.

Studies show that kids that actively engage in cooking are more likely to try new foods. Instead of being told what to eat, kids are in charge and take ownership and pride in creating the dishes themselves.

**Chef in the Classroom: A Recipe for Success**

**Chef in the Classroom** is a fun, hands-on program designed to get kids excited about eating fresh fruits and vegetables. The class can be as simple as making a salad with greens and raw veggies purchased from a local farmers’ market or grown in a school garden. Or it can be more involved, like making a butternut squash soup with kale chips on the side. The most important thing to remember is it must be fun and hands-on. It is not intended as a cooking demo. The students work together as a team, guided by the chef instructor.

With each of these lessons, students will learn how to make a special dish featuring a locally grown fruit or vegetable. There are a variety of recipes to choose from for every month of the school year.

To learn more about how to get started at your school or after-school program, contact:
Sandy McKelvey: sandy@hvfs.org

**Now, let’s start cooking!**
Beet, Apple Salad with Goat Cheese Lesson Plan

(For 20 students)

Objectives:

Students will learn:

- The importance of eating food that is locally grown.
- What sustainable agriculture is.
- Fun Facts about beets and their health benefits.
- Proper kitchen safety and personal hygiene rules.
- Measurement and conversions.
- How to read a recipe (older kids – 3rd-5th graders)

Pre-Lesson Activities (optional)

Before the scheduled chef visit, prep the students on the featured vegetable using the Beets Fun Facts flyer. Read one of the books on the attached list and ask the students to draw what a beet looks like growing in a garden. If there is a school garden, take the students out to plant or harvest and eat beets.

Breakdown of the class:

Set-up (10 minutes)

- Two long tables put together.

Chef and assistants arrive and set up food prep stations with cutting mats, child-safe knives, bowls, and other tools needed for the recipe. Chef sets up demo area with chef's knife, and all the ingredients for the recipe.

(This is a good time for kids to wash their hands.)
Introduction (5 minutes)

Chef introduces the recipe: Beet, Apple Salad with Goat Cheese

Key points to address:

- Where are the ingredients from? – If anything came from the school garden, highlight that. If not, talk about the local farm that grew the beets and apples. Ask kids if they know where goat cheese comes from.
- Ask kids if they have eaten beets before. How was it prepared? Do they like it?

Go over the Beet Fun Facts:

- Where do beets come from?
- What are the health benefits?
- Why is it important to eat local, seasonal produce?
  - Health
  - Community
  - Environment
- What does sustainable farming mean?

Cooking Rules, Kitchen Safety and Hygiene (5 minutes)

Go over the “Five Easy Cooking Rules.” Review personal hygiene rules when cooking and go over kitchen safety. Remember to work as a team. Never criticize and remind students not to “yuck someone’s yum.”

Review of recipe and tasks to be done (5 minutes)

Introduce the recipe and ingredients. Demonstrate the proper way to hold a knife and talk about safe cutting skills. Demonstrate how to slice the beets and apples. Prep the apples by coring them and cutting them in half to make it easier for the kids to slice. Cut the beets in half.

Explain that just like in a real commercial kitchen, everyone will have a task to do; they will be working as a team with the head chef supervising them. Assign tasks to each student and have them go to their station around the two tables.
Stations:

8 kids  Slicing the beets
4 kids  Slicing the apples
2 kids  Chopping the fresh tarragon

Vinaigrette
1 kid  Measuring the maple syrup
1 kid  Measuring the mustard
1 kid  Measuring the vinegar
1 kid  Measuring the olive oil
1 kid  Adding salt and pepper
1 kid  Crumbling the goat cheese

Preparation (20 minutes)

Chef and assistants are hands-on helping the kids with their tasks. When everyone is finished with their tasks, they can take turns whisking the dressing and help clean work surfaces and tools. If the school has a compost pile, ask for volunteers to put all veggie scraps into a bucket.

Serving and tasting (10 minutes)

Students go back to their seats and the chef dresses the salad, adding any needed seasoning like salt and pepper, then plates the salads with the crumbled goat cheese on top. Assistants pass them out.

Ask for volunteer helpers to hand out forks and help serve. As students taste their culinary creation, ask them to summarize how it was prepared. What were the ingredients? What did they do first?
Wrap up and Clean up (5 minutes)

What was the kids’ response? Ask for a thumbs up, down, or sideways to get a sense of how they liked it. Those that didn’t like it, ask why? – Too bland, too salty, not sweet enough, too strong. Ask what they would do differently? – Add this, take out that.

Prompt students to come up with a fancy name for their dish. Let them know that they will be taking the recipes home and encourage them to share the recipes with their families. Remind them that this dish will be served in a school-wide taste test. (If this is part of your program.)

Encourage kids to ask the chef questions about learning to become a chef, what it’s like working in restaurants, favorite dishes to cook, etc.

Always remember your goal:

Get kids excited about eating fresh fruits and vegetables and trying new, wholesome foods. And most important of all, make sure they have fun making healthy choices!

Supporting Documents

Supplies List
Five Easy Cooking Rules
Book Titles related to Beets
Harvest Chart
Recipe
Beet Fun Facts
Supplies List

Tools and Equipment:

- 2 long tables
- 20 cutting mats
- 1 large bowl
- 3 medium bowls
- 2 small bowls
- 14 child-safe knives
- 1 liquid cup measure
- Set of measuring spoons
- 1 whisk
- Salad tongs
- Paper towels
- 2 plates and forks

Ingredients:

- Beets
- Apples
- Fresh tarragon
- Goat cheese
- Maple syrup
- Dijon mustard
- Balsamic vinegar
- Olive oil
- Salt and pepper
Five Easy Cooking Rules

1. Start each class with:
   • Washed hands
   • Long hair tied back and behind shoulders
   • Long sleeves pulled up

2. Practice safety in the kitchen
   • Follow chef’s rules for safe knife handling
   • When at the stove always practice safety

3. Help teammates; never criticize

4. Every student must try the dishes prepared (unless there is a food allergy)
   • It is okay if you don’t like a dish, but no use of “gross” or “yuck” allowed. Don’t “yuck someone’s yum.”
   • If you don’t like the dish, use other words to explain why: too spicy, too sweet, not enough salt, unusual texture, aroma, etc.

5. When the chef is speaking, this is the only voice to be heard
   • No calling out
   • Raise hand before talking
   • Do not talk while another person is speaking

Bring a positive attitude and willingness to participate.

And most of all, have fun cooking!
Books about Beets

To build excitement about eating beets and cooking with the Chef, choose one or more of these book titles to read to your students. This can occur during library special or in the classroom before the chef’s visit.

**The Carrot & Other Root Vegetables** by Millicent Selsam (Morrow, 1971)
Describes the growth, fertilization, and harvesting of various root vegetables: carrots, radishes, turnips, beets, and sweet potatoes. (Grades 3+)

**Edgar, Allan and Poe and the Tell-Tale Beets** by Natalie Rompella (Lobster Press, 2009)
It all began with the beets. The revoltingly red beets that drove Edgar, Allan, and Poe to do the horrendously horrible thing that they did. Their mother has one unbreakable rule: "No dessert until you finish your dinner." But how can Edgar, Allan, and Poe possibly clear their plates when there are Brussels sprouts to be swallowed, liver to be chewed, and worst of all, beets to be bitten? (Ages 4-7)

**Farming and Food (Ancient Egypt)** by Jane Shuter (Heinemann Library, 1999)
An introduction to farming in ancient Egypt, including the cycles of the farming year, irrigation and flooding of the Nile, land ownership, and typical foods. (Grades 3+)

**Oliver’s Vegetables** by Vivian French (Orchard Books, 1995)
Do you like chips? Oliver does, in fact, he won’t eat anything else - until he plays a game with his grandpa. Whatever vegetable Oliver finds in the garden, he must eat. On Monday, he pulls up carrots, on Tuesday, it is spinach ... This is an excellent book for parents with slightly fussy children and it introduces the days of the week. (Ages 3-7)
Your guide to harvest times and availability for the incredible diversity of New York State produce.

Today more than ever, New York consumers are demanding close-to-home freshness in everything they buy. And very few places even come close to New York State for the variety and quality of its farm-fresh produce.

As the Program dedicated to advancing New York agriculture, we take a lot of Pride in New York State fruits and vegetables – and the Pride of New York members who produce them.

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Vegetables continued on other side

The above periods are approximate. Harvest periods may begin a week to ten days earlier during a warmer-than-usual year. A cool spring will delay crop maturity. Call farms for exact dates of harvest.

Pride for all seasons.

1-800-554-4501 www.prideofny.com
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**Harvest period**  **Availability period**

The above periods are approximate. Harvest periods may begin a week to ten days earlier during a warmer-than-usual year. A cool spring will delay crop maturity. Call farms for exact dates of harvest.
Roasted Beets and Apple Salad with Maple Balsamic Vinaigrette

2 medium golden beets
2 medium red beets
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 Tsp. salt
1 large Granny Smith or Mutsu apple
4 oz goat cheese
3 T Fresh tarragon or chives

Pre-heat oven to 400° F.
If using fresh beets with greens attached, cut stems off just above the root and discard. Rinse beets under cool water to remove any dirt and pat dry. Toss evenly in olive oil and season with Salt. Wrap in aluminum foil and bake until tender, 30-40 minutes depending on size. Allow to cool.

Core and slice apple into thin slices and set aside. Slice beets in thin half moons.
In a large bowl combine roasted beets and apples and toss with maple balsamic vinaigrette. Top with crumbled goat cheese and fresh chopped tarragon or chives.

**Maple Balsamic Dressing**
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 large garlic clove, minced
2 tablespoons maple syrup
1 tablespoon lemon juice
3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

In a small bowl, combine mustard, garlic, maple syrup, lemon juice, vinegar and basil. Add olive oil slowly, using a whisk to emulsify. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Enjoy!
Beets!

How did the beet get its name?

The Romans called the beet plant “beta” because when the seed pods swell they look like the Greek letter “beta.”

Move to the Beet

• Beets are a root vegetable. Both the root and the leaves are eaten. Dig up a beet and it might be red, yellow, orange, white, pink or striped. They are a biennial plant which means they live for two growing seasons, producing seeds in the second year. They grow best in gardens where the temperature is on the cool side, and they like bright sun.

• Beets are juiced, boiled, roasted, pickled, and eaten raw. Beet greens can be sautéed or eaten raw in salads.

• Beets are naturally high in sugar, but low in calories, cholesterol-free, and a good source of folate, a vitamin that helps our body make red blood cells. They are also a good source of vitamins C and A and the mineral potassium.

• The leaves or beet greens are especially good for you and are a great way to get more beta-carotene, calcium and iron.

Beet This!

Since the 16th century, beet juice has been used as a natural red dye. The red color comes from a pigment called betalain. In the old days, women even used it as a hair dye and rouge for their cheeks.

Sugar beets (a close relative of the common beet) are used to make sugar. Sugar beets are the second most important source of sugar (after sugarcane) in the world.

And the Beet Goes On...

Beets have been around since ancient times. They were an important plant for both the ancient Greeks and Romans. Beets of this period were white or black rather than red. At first, the Greeks used just the leaves of the plant, both medicinally and as a culinary herb. The Romans used the leaves as a culinary herb and as a medicine, and they also used the beetroot as medicine. By the 3rd century AD, the Romans had begun using the beetroot as food rather than just medicine.

Napoleon was so fond of beets that he often drank a glass of warm beet soup as a “pick-me-up” at noon.

Borscht is an Eastern European soup made from beets that has been an important winter staple in countries like Russia and Poland since the 14th century.

Beets are available in New York State from June through February.

Pick up some local, fresh beets next time you visit the farmers’ market!

Beet Jokes

What did the carrot say to the tomato?
My heart beets for you.

Knock Knock
Who’s there?
Beets!
Beets who?
Beets me, I forgot the joke!