



MASSACHUSETTS  
FARM TO SCHOOL

# Project-Based Learning in the School Garden, Classroom, and Cafeteria

Hailey Small, Backyard Growers Garden Educator  
Merri Foote, East Gloucester Elementary Kitchen Manager

# MASS. FARM TO SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Mass. Farm to School strengthens local farms and fisheries and promotes healthy communities by increasing local food purchasing and education at schools.

Get involved through our:

- Professional learning opportunities
- Networking
- Policy/Advocacy
- Communications



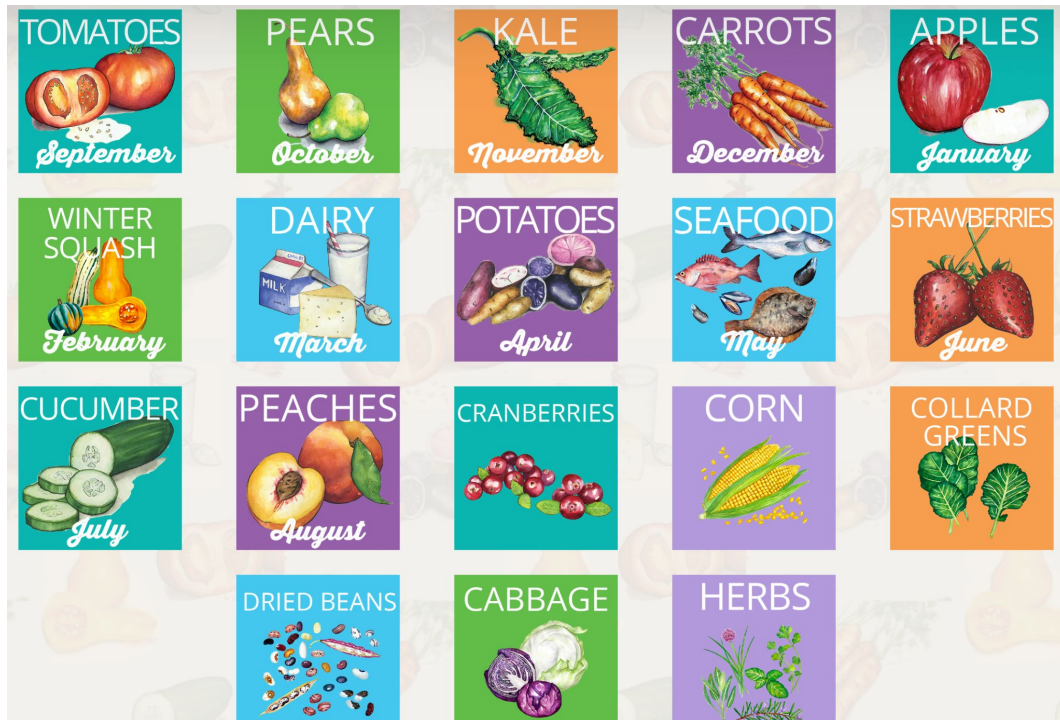


# Harvest of the Month Program: Cafeteria and the Classroom

MFTS currently has two different programs available:

[Harvest of the Month](#) to encourage healthy food choices by increasing students' exposure to seasonal foods while also supporting local farmers and building excitement about school meals.

[Harvest of the Month for Educators](#) (Elementary and Secondary levels) Designed specifically for the Elementary and/or Secondary classrooms, Educators who sign up receive a monthly eblast that explores the HOTM crops, includes downloadable curriculum, current events, book suggestion and opportunities for professional growth.



# About Our Program - Backyard Growers & Gloucester Schools

## Backyard Growers - Hailey

- Gloucester grassroots nonprofit dedicated to helping people fight for food justice through growing their own food
- Operate 6 community gardens and 9 school gardens in the city, have served over 9,000 residents since 2010
- Annually grow between 200-600 pounds of produce at school gardens for kitchen use

## Gloucester Public Schools - Merri

- Consists of 1 preschool, 5 elementary schools, 1 middle school, and 1 high school
- Serves 2,833 students and employs 261 teachers; half of our students qualify for free or reduced lunch
- All students in pre-K to 8th grade engage with school garden curriculum
- Have partnered with Backyard Growers since 2012





## “Everybody eats”

- There is a vegetable-producing garden at all 5 elementary schools in Gloucester
- Each school holds a Fall Harvest Day and a Spring Salad Days to plant, harvest, and clean/process their vegetables to then be eaten in the cafeteria the next day. Every class participates in each step!
  - Fall: Squash, potatoes, carrots, beans, pumpkins, beets
  - Spring: lettuce, kale, spinach, greens
- Grow 400-900 pounds of produce annually - every person in the schools gets the opportunity to eat what is grown in the garden!



# About Our Program - School Food Service

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## “No one goes away hungry”

- Serving healthy meals that kids enjoy and will eat
  - Staff also participate in lunch program
- Kids take pride in that some of the food they eat in the cafeteria is their harvest from the garden
  - Expanding their knowledge of food
  - Trying new things
- Supplying produce can have challenges
  - Using canned/frozen produce
  - DOD funding groceries
  - Prep time & kitchen capacity
  - “Kids eat with their eyes”





- Takes place every 1-2 months, depending on school/kitchen capacity
- Coordinated by garden educator (BYG) and kitchen managers, food services director, school garden parent volunteers, and principals (GPS)
- Focus on local produce, either from the school garden directly or local farms on Cape Ann
- “Taste Test” cafeteria event for each Harvest of the Month feature
- Follow a mix of Mass Farm to School recommendations, school garden crops, and local food sources’ supply
  - Often use recipes! Very helpful for making 1000+ servings

## Scratch Ketchup & Rutabaga Fries

### INGREDIENTS

*Makes 4 servings*

**Ketchup**  
 28 oz peeled whole tomatoes  
 4 garlic cloves, minced  
 1 medium yellow onion, diced  
 3 tbsp tomato paste  
 1/3 cup brown sugar  
 1/3 cup apple cider vinegar  
 2 tbsp olive oil

**Rutabaga Fries**  
 1 tbsp worcestershire sauce  
 1/4 tsp ground allspice  
 Salt & pepper to taste  
 2 medium rutabagas  
 2 tsp olive oil  
 2 tbsp chopped rosemary



### DIRECTIONS

**Ketchup**  
 In a pot over medium heat, cook your garlic and onions in olive oil until fragrant.

Add tomatoes, tomato paste, sugar, and vinegar. Bring to a boil, then lower to a simmer. Use a spoon or whisk to smash up your tomatoes.

Add spices and cook on low for 45-60 minutes, until thickened.

Blend with an immersion blender and strain through a mesh sieve for a smooth texture.

**Rutabaga Fries**  
 Preheat your oven to 400 F.  
 Peel your rutabagas and cut into spears. Toss with olive oil, rosemary, and salt. Spread evenly on a baking sheet and bake for 30 minutes until crispy!

## Rainbow Harvest Home Fries

### INGREDIENTS

*Makes 4 servings*

3-4 potatoes\*, any colors  
 1/2 of a butternut squash\*  
 2-3 beets\*, any color  
 3-4 carrots\*, any color  
 1/2 white or yellow onion  
 3 TB olive oil  
 1 tsp each of salt, pepper, thyme, and garlic powder

\*GARDEN HARVEST OF THE MONTH  
 SEPT. 2022



### DIRECTIONS

1. Dice all vegetables into bite-sized pieces.
2. Toss onions and spices into a skillet with olive oil. Stir frequently until browned.
3. Toss together potatoes, squash, beets, carrots, and oil in a roasting pan.
4. Add the spices and onion to the roasting pan and mix again.
5. Roast at 400 F for 15-20 minutes, until golden brown.
6. Serve warm with any toppings or sauces you like!

## Maple Roasted Carrots

### INGREDIENTS

*Makes 4 servings*

8 medium-sized carrots\*  
 1/3 cup maple syrup  
 6 tbsp olive oil  
 1 tbsp red pepper flakes  
 1 tbsp smoked paprika  
 1 tbsp garlic powder  
 Fresh thyme\*  
 Salt to taste

\*GARDEN HARVEST OF THE MONTH  
 DEC. 2022  
 THANK YOU TO THIS MONTH'S LOCAL FOOD PROVIDERS!  
 WEST PARISH SCHOOL GARDEN & CEDAR ROCK GARDENS



### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat your oven to 400° F. Line a sheet pan with aluminum foil.
2. Scrub, peel, and cut your carrots into halves.
3. Spread your carrots evenly onto the foil. Top with maple syrup, olive oil, and all dried seasonings. Toss together to evenly cover carrots.
4. Spread fresh thyme across carrots. Roast in oven for 45-60 minutes or until tender.
5. Enjoy as a delicious side for a holiday meal!

## Pear, Kale, and Cabbage Slaw

### INGREDIENTS

*Makes 4-6 servings*

4-5 large kale\* leaves, any variety, stems removed  
 1 head Napa cabbage\*, any color  
 2 pears\* (Asian or Seckel)  
 1/4 cup orange juice  
 2 tbsp lime juice  
 1 tbsp maple syrup  
 1 tsp salt

\*LOCAL HARVEST OF THE MONTH  
 NOVEMBER 2022  
 THANK YOU TO THIS MONTH'S LOCAL FOOD PROVIDERS!  
 IRON OX FARM, RUSSELL ORCHARDS, O'MALEY SCHOOL GARDEN



### DIRECTIONS

- In a bowl, combine orange juice, lime juice, maple syrup, and salt. Whisk the mixture together.
- Cut kale and cabbage into thin ribbons, and cut the pears into thin slices.
- Toss the vegetable mixture with the citrus dressing.
- Enjoy as a side or make it a meal by adding a protein source!



## Buying

- **Buying bulk or wholesale from a farm can be very different from our everyday purchasing!**
  - Online orders, phone orders, texts, etc.
- **Check with food service director on what local vendors they may already order from**

## Growing

- **Growing a small crop in your garden & supplementing with more from a farm**
  - Carrots, beets, squash, pumpkins, greens, etc.
- **Go all out and grow enough for your school!**
  - "Gardening for the apocalypse" fast & easy

## Choosing your vegetables...

As you procure and grow your harvest vegetables, think of the following to help guide your choices for the taste test!

1. Is there a way I can easily make this a little more exciting? (ie. rainbow carrots instead of regular)
2. What is the kitchen's capacity for my prep work on the day of the taste test?
3. What is my students' expected familiarity with this vegetable?
4. Would I be excited to eat this taste test?



# Communicating with Kitchen & School Staff

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- Very important to know the kitchen makeup, both physical and personal
  - Refrigeration, ovens and warmers, prep tools
  - Staff capacity, current menus
  - Length of lunch & # of students
- Understanding market prices and ordering in bulk for kitchens
  - Important if pricing garden produce OR ordering through food service budget!
- Respecting the kitchen space and navigating timing
- Communicating with administration on scheduling & allergens
  - Nurse, principal, secretary, etc.





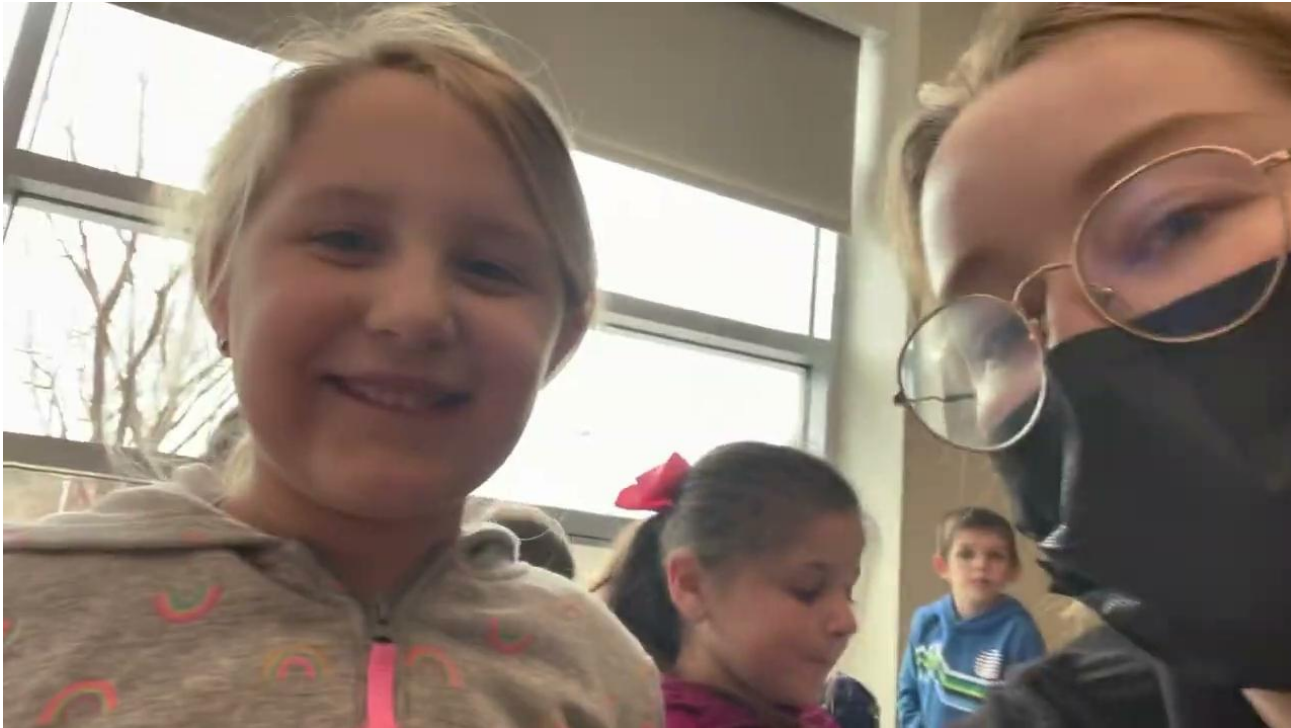
- Information from taste tests (how many liked it, tried it, etc.) can influence lunch menus
  - Start offering more vegetables in a less processed way
  - Introduce easy-to-prepare options
    - Asparagus, brussel sprouts, potatoes etc.
    - Can help when supply chain is challenging
- Able to recreate on a manageable scale
- Respects students' voice and choice
- Introduce new recipes to kids AND adults



- **Very helpful for those coordinating and prepping harvests to be Servsafe certified!!**
  - Or at least one person involved - can be a kitchen staff member
- **Keep timelines in mind for ordering & prep work**
  - Does your harvest need refrigeration? Does it need to be baked and stay warm?
  - What is the kitchens' capacity for heating/cooling?
- **Source from places you trust!**

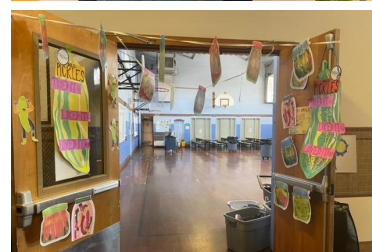


Never pushing to try or shaming for not trying/liking!  
Encourage through positive messaging, models from peers & adults, and a safe and empowering space  
Focus on the flavors and community of food, rather than nutrition and health





# Make it a celebration!



# What is the value of the taste test program?

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- **Students can follow the entire process of food**
  - From the seed -> to a plant -> to harvest, washing, cooking and eating!
- **Given access to new opportunities and trying new things with no risk**
  - Parents don't have to pay, don't have to buy lunch for it
  - All about choice - no one is pressured to try it or to like it, but it is fun to try something new
- **Builds a positive school food environment! Kids take pride in their food & eating**



# What does our school say about the taste test program?

"To have the students watch the food go from planting to harvesting to tasting - especially for students who don't have the ability to have gardens in their yards - It's not processed food. It can be overwhelming how many processed foods they get throughout their day. This can be great way to get a healthier, organic and delicious option."

*-Amy Pasquarello, former EGS Principal & GPS Asst. Superintendent*

"Now you cooked this [rutabaga], but didn't cook the celeriac last time? Man, I didn't know all of this about roots until you came along!"

*-Barrett Rounds, EGS Gym Teacher*

"I really feel like I'm learning something new"

*-Susan Sanfilippo, kitchen staff*

"The first time I loved it, I was so excited!!"

*-Isabel, EGS 1st grader*

"I feel like every time you come in, you have a vegetable I have literally never heard of before!"

*-Mr. Mike, EGS Custodian*

"You can always count on a taste test to get a "loved it" from me"

*-Dax, EGS 3rd grader*



# Stay in touch!



## Mass Farm to School

[www.massfarmtoschool.org](http://www.massfarmtoschool.org)

## Backyard Growers

[www.backyardgrowers.org](http://www.backyardgrowers.org)

Hailey Small

[hsmall@backyardgrowers.org](mailto:hsmall@backyardgrowers.org)

Merri Foote

[mfoote@gloucesterschools.com](mailto:mfoote@gloucesterschools.com)

**“This makes me want to have more vegetables over there [cafeteria line]!”**

**-Trista, EGS student**