

Turn and talk

- An early experience with growing, harvesting, or eating farm- or garden-fresh produce.
- Who did you share the experience with?
- What do you remember about the sensory nature of the experience?



Kids in the Garden:

Garden to Classroom



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Our Mission

*To protect the nature of
Massachusetts for people
and for wildlife.*

A vision shared in 1896 by our founders.





Our Impact

We are Massachusetts' largest nature conservation nonprofit and a nationally recognized environmental education leader. We are proud to:

- Share our mission and passion with our 160,000+ members and supporters
- Welcome more than a half million visitors a year to our wildlife sanctuaries
- Provide environmental education to more than a quarter-million children, teens, and adults, annually
- Permanently protect more than 42,000 acres of land across the Commonwealth
- Advocate for sound environmental policy on Beacon Hill and beyond
- Conduct ongoing conservation research to preserve our natural heritage

Our Community

110

SANCTUARIES
across the state

42,000

ACRES PROTECTED
largest private landowner
in the Commonwealth

160,000

MEMBERS
from Cape Cod to the
Berkshires, and beyond

600,000

VISITORS
connect to nature at our
properties each year

6,400

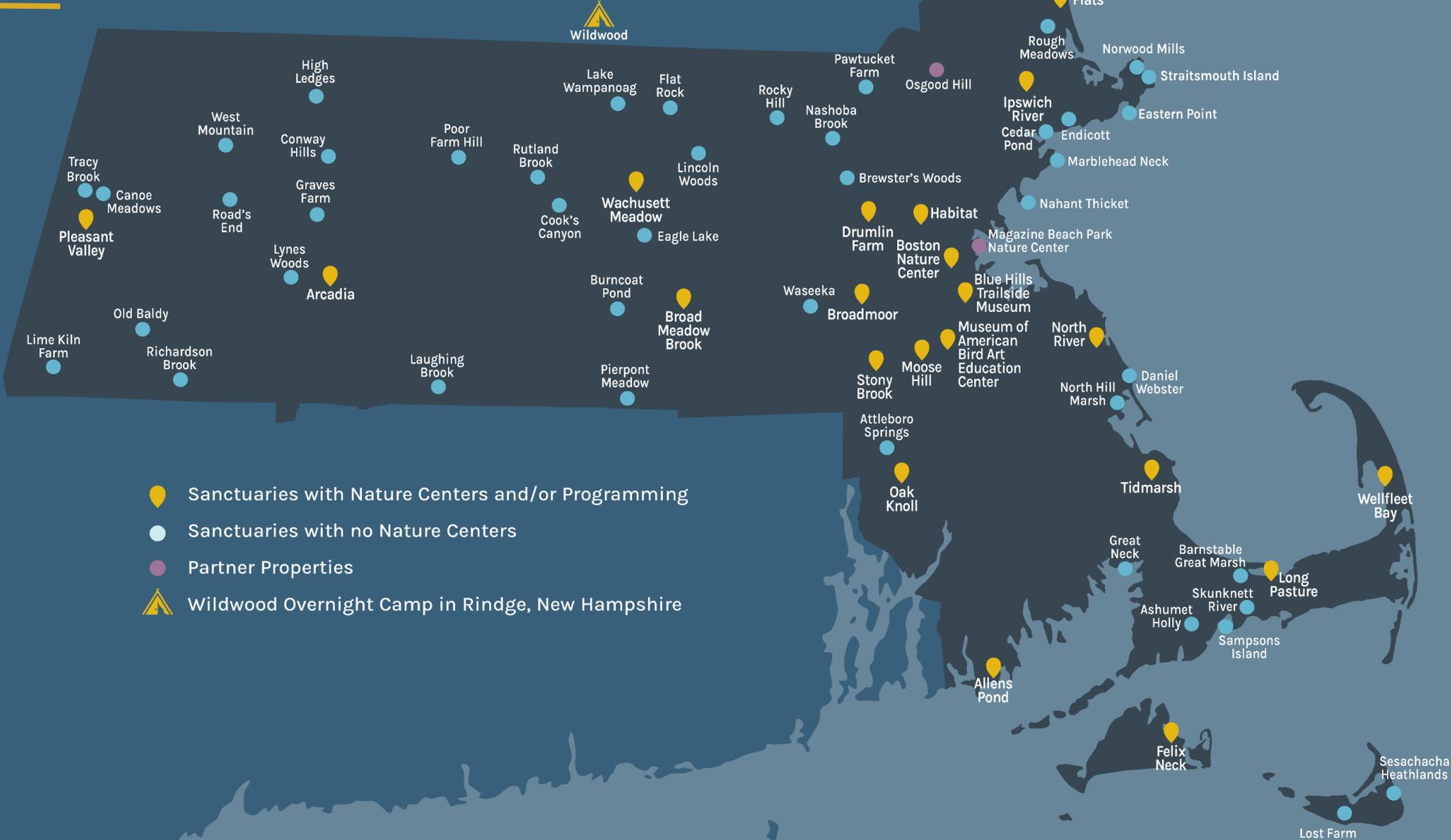
VOLUNTEERS
help us to achieve our
mission annually

19

ALL PERSONS TRAILS
across our sites

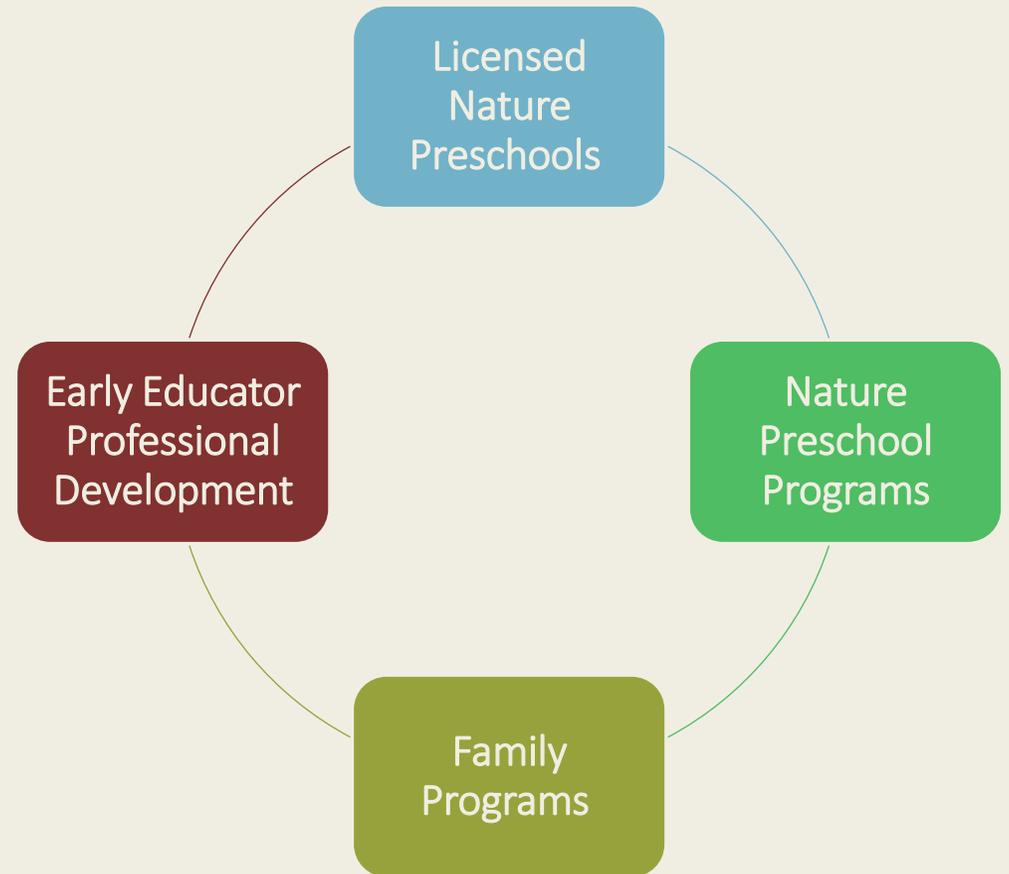


Our Wildlife Sanctuaries



Early Childhood at Mass Audubon

- Access the benefits of nature (cognitive, affective, physical, socio-emotional)
- Build a strong connection to nature
- Learn about nature and natural systems
- Learn how nature sustains them
- Build the skills to protect nature for themselves, other species, and nature itself

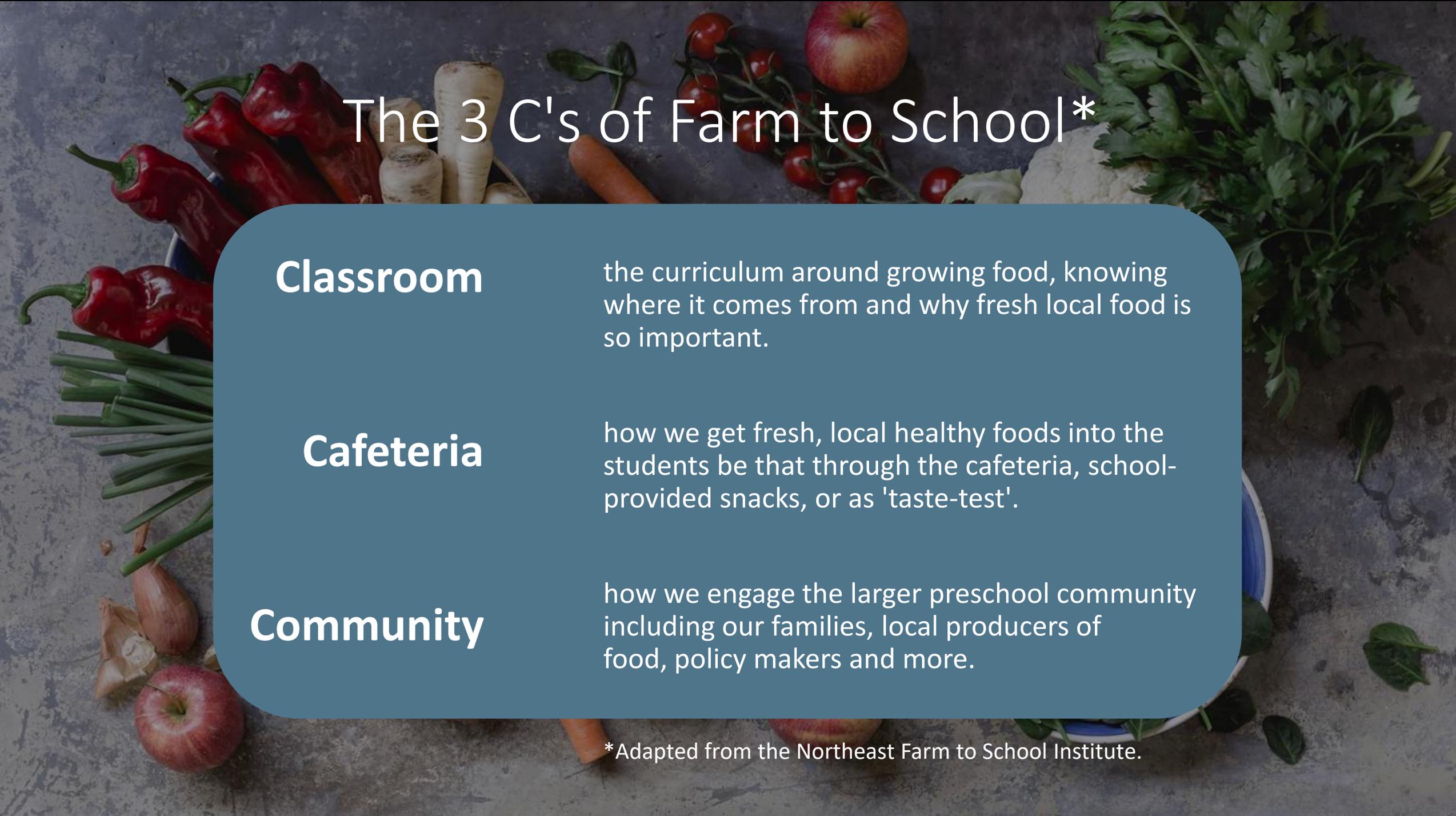


Why Farm to Early Childhood?*

- enhance the quality of early childhood education programs
- meet multiple learning and programmatic standards
- engage families and communities in early childhood programs
- support comprehensive child development,
- promote healthy eating and wellness behaviors
- advance racial and social equality
- help develop the next generation of responsible food consumers contributing to sustainable, equitable and just local food systems.



*taken from Shelburne Farms/Vermont FEED



The 3 C's of Farm to School*

Classroom

the curriculum around growing food, knowing where it comes from and why fresh local food is so important.

Cafeteria

how we get fresh, local healthy foods into the students be that through the cafeteria, school-provided snacks, or as 'taste-test'.

Community

how we engage the larger preschool community including our families, local producers of food, policy makers and more.

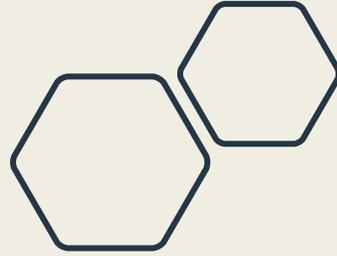
*Adapted from the Northeast Farm to School Institute.



Idea share

- Please spend a few moments thinking up at least one farm to school activity you've already done with your classroom or one you'd want to do.
- write one per sticky note.
- The stick to them to the wall in the category you feel they best represent.
- You may find it hard to decide where an activity belongs but try to pick what you think is the 'best fit'.

The 3 C's: revisited



- From our discussion, which of the 3 C's seems easiest to do?
- What activities feel the most challenging?
- Where do you feel you need more ideas/support?

Jot Down Some Ideas

Think of a farm activity you have done, or would like to do with the following considerations:

How will this activity be culturally responsive?

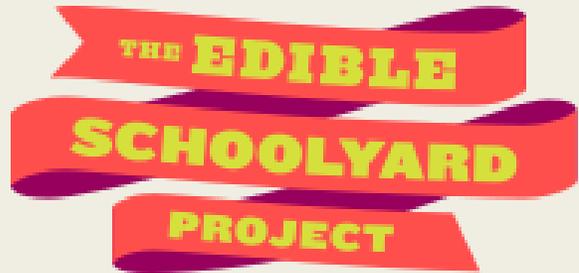
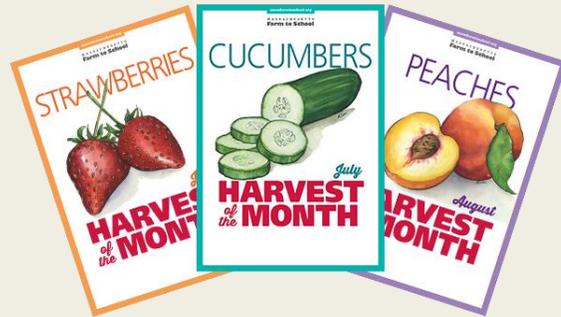
How will you support children with diverse physical abilities in this activity?

How will you support children with diverse cognitive/developmental abilities?

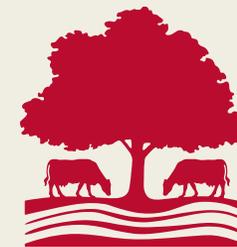
Classroom

- Any activities around planning, planting, caring for, visiting and harvesting from a garden.
- Can be books, art, hands-on, or even math or literacy based.
- Ideally at least some would occur outside, but you can do farm to school curriculum indoors, including growing plants inside.
- Where our food comes from, seasonality, parts of plants, what living things need to grow, healthy eating and more!

Mass Farm to School Harvest of the month



NATIONAL FARM to SCHOOL NETWORK



Shelburne Farms





Gardening with kids: getting started

- Think about your space. What is feasible?
- What are the needs of your program?
- What funding/donations might be available?
- What is your growing/school year calendar?



Welcoming input-the planning stage!

- Class or school wide garden planning
- Involve input from families or local growers
- Snack/lunch survey-our favorite foods
- What foods are important to our families/community?
- Health considerations
- Ideal 1-2 months before your earliest planting date.



Planting a Garden

- Learn your area's planting calendar
- Consider starting seeds indoors in areas with shorter seasons.
- Preparing spaces for planting (beds, planters, flowerpots or more)
- Seedlings, planting seeds/bulbs.
- What will this look like with your students?
- How do we adapt for diverse physical abilities?

Planning a Dream Garden



A fun activity to do in late winter with the children.



Can be individual, small group or as a class.



Seed catalogues can be used for collages or can be drawn or crafted in 3D.



What would your dream school garden (or home garden) look like?



Take 10 minutes to create your own dream garden. It can be a drawing, sketch, or just use words.



Garden share

Cafeteria

Cooking and baking activities with children, creating snack and taste tests.

Working with cafeteria and nutrition staff to find local or fresh foods to add into the school meals.

The children can be responsible for raising, harvesting and prepping food.

There are lots of community opportunities

Partnering with local farms for ingredients. Engage families in sharing recipes.

Cultural and health related issues around food.

Planning for success

- Tools and safety orientation
- Prep work
- How to introduce the activity to kids
- Where do the ingredients come from
- Teacher involvement vs. Kids involvement
- Dietary restrictions taken into account.



Cooking with kids

- Extra hands for clean-up as you go.
- Small groups, training on using tools, strong supervision.
- Recipes that allow the children to participate meaningfully
- Highlight fresh produce/farm ingredients
- Culturally responsive ingredients and recipes
- Discuss while cooking the why, what and where.



Diverse Cooking

- Think about the physical and cognitive needs of the group.
- How can you adapt the recipe to meet various abilities or dietary needs
- Ways to highlight different cultures through choice of recipes/ingredients
- Bring the home into the school by sharing and trying recipes
- Send school home with samples/tastes to share.



A classroom scenario

You want to do a classroom cooking project, where every child bring an ingredient to make stone soup. At school, the children will cut and make the soup. Discuss how you'd plan for these considerations:

- Uri keeps kosher and can't eat any non-kosher meat products.
- Jake had fine and gross motor delays.
- Hiram just immigrated from Columbia. His family doesn't speak much English and isn't familiar with some of the ingredients on the list.
- Kimi has Autism, which leads to anxiety around trying new foods.
- Irene's family is on food stamps.
- Jasmin has Celiac's disease and can't eat gluten products.



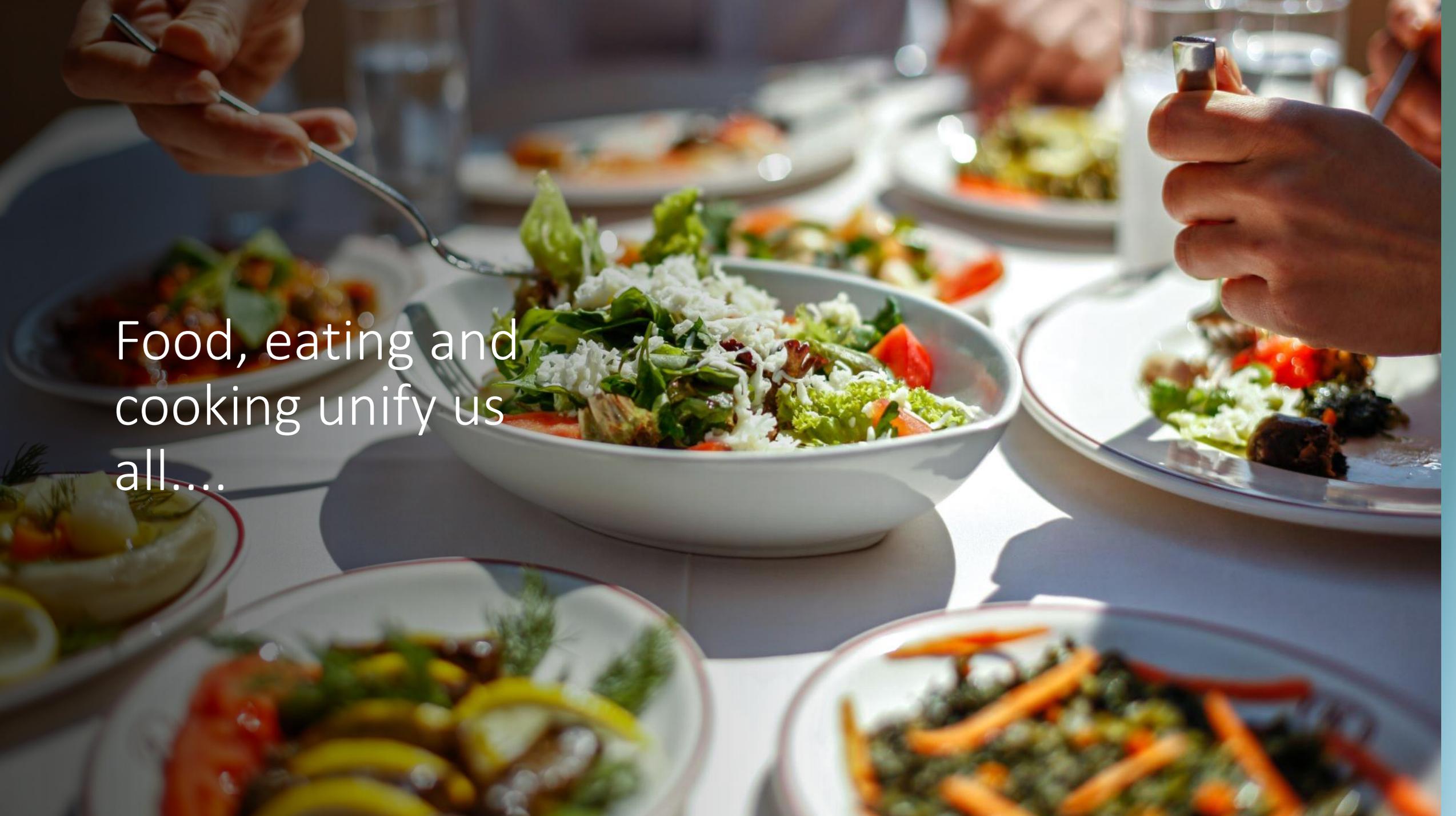
Community

- Can connect with community in a variety of ways!
- Working with families to both learn about their cultural food traditions and to share ways to help bring healthy, culturally relevant foods into the school.
- Connecting with local farmers and producers of fruits, vegetables, eggs, dairy and more.
- Looking into local resources for support including donating foods/materials, local agriculture schools, grocery stores, beekeepers and more.



Community events

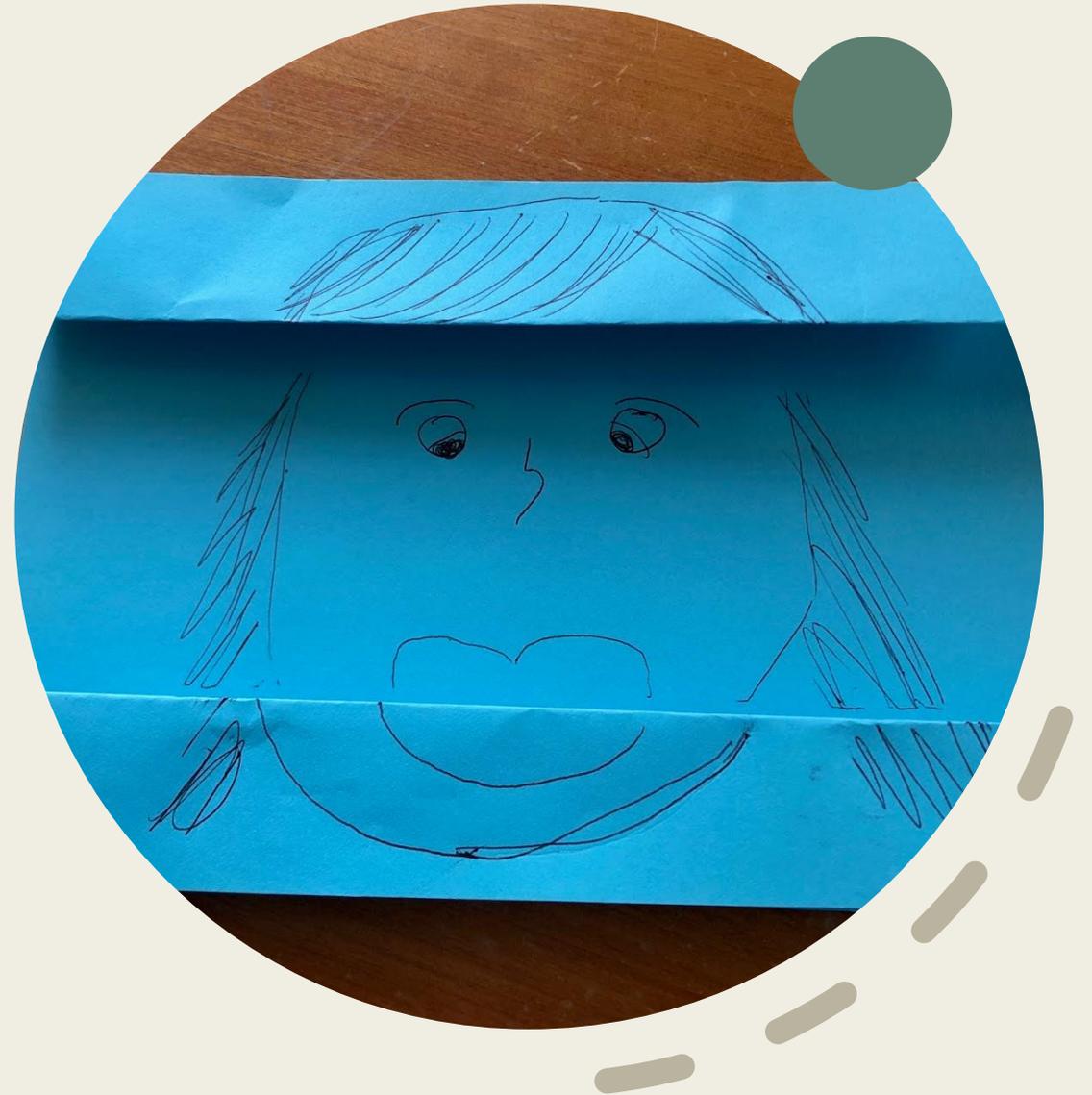
- With your neighbor, share a community event you do at your program.
- How does food fit into that event?
- What's one new idea you could use to enhance diversity/inclusion through food at the event?

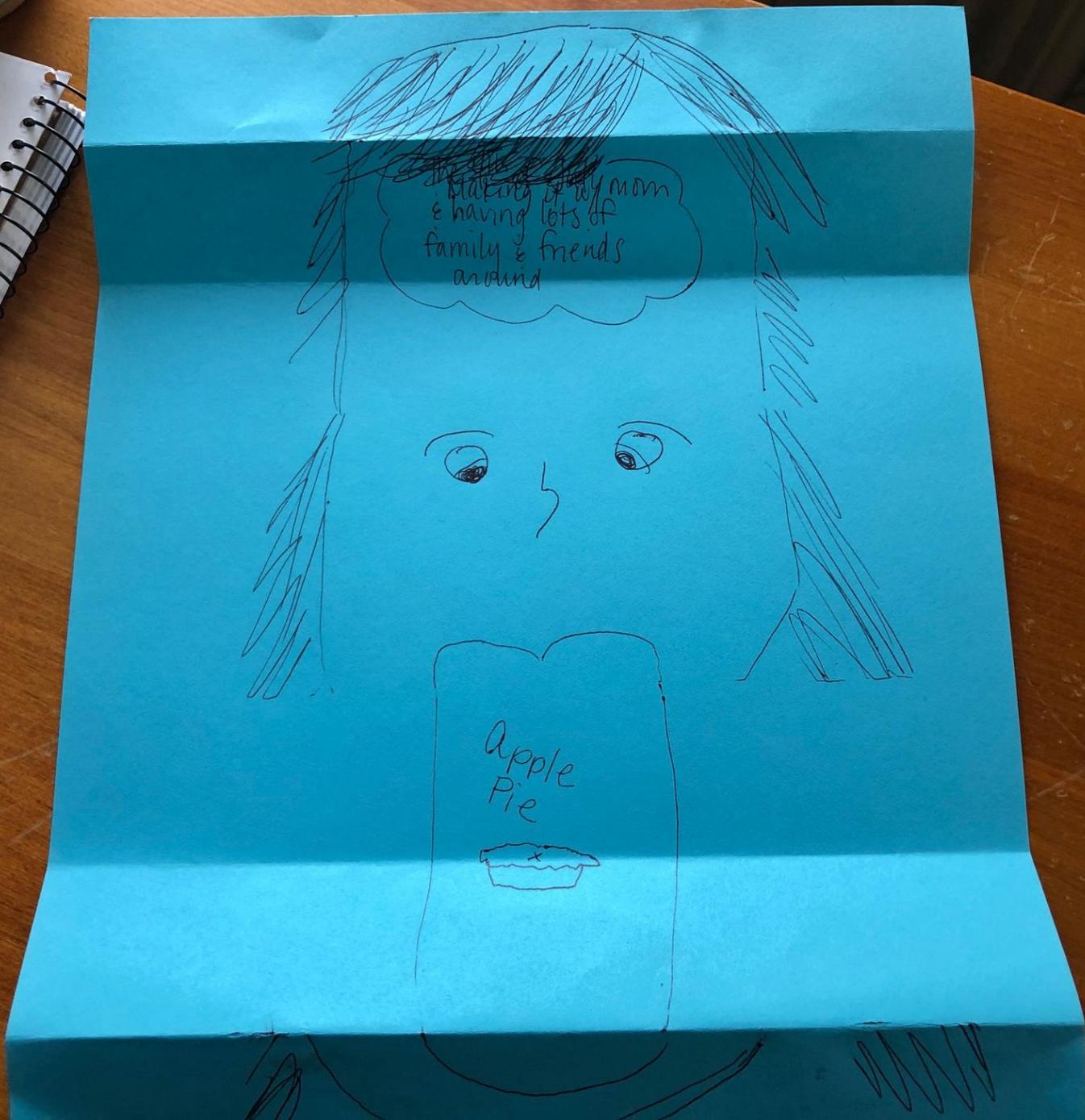
A photograph of a dining table with several white plates and bowls filled with food. In the center, a white bowl contains a salad with white rice, green leafy vegetables, and red tomatoes. To the left, a hand holds a silver fork over a plate of food. To the right, another hand holds a silver fork over a plate. The table is set with white plates, bowls, and glasses. The lighting is bright, creating shadows on the table. The text "Food, eating and cooking unify us all...." is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Food, eating and
cooking unify us
all....

Food memory activity

- Holding your paper so the long edges are at the top and bottom (landscape orientation), fold each side in so that they meet in the middle.
- Keeping them folded, take the inner edge of each fold, and fold each one back so that it meets the outer edge of the fold.
- Now, turn the paper so your folds are at the top and bottom of the page (portrait orientation) and draw your face so that it overlaps the folds.





In partners

- Pull open your “mouth” fold & **write or draw a food that has a strong memory for you.**
- Pull open your “head” fold & **write a word or sentence about that food memory.**
- **Share your memory with your partner**



Beyond the Garden-more farm topics

- Maple sugaring
- Orchards/vineyards
- Honey and bee keeping
- Wool craft and felting
- Other Fiber arts
(angora, Cashmere, alpaca,
hemp and more)
- Grains and baking
- Meat, dairy and eggs
- Fishing
- Drying, canning and other forms
of preserving

More Resources for Farm to ECE

- Seed and seedling donations from local greenhouses
- Discount or donated lumber for garden beds
- Agriculture students, local beekeepers, local agriculture schools, 4-H, Eagle scout projects, grocery stores, etc...
- Local farms, farmers markets or grocery stores might donate unsold products.
- Farm to school programs with online resources: Shelburne Farm, Island Grown Schools, Growing Minds, Mass Farm to School