

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Dried beans that will be used this month!

LOCAL FOODS: BETTER FOR US, THE EARTH, AND OUR COMMUNITY

For some, supporting Farm to School might just be about getting an extra incentive from the state; but the impact goes much deeper than getting a few extra cents per meal if the district purchases a certain amount of NYS foods.

Better for Us

When we buy foods locally, particularly produce, the foods that are served are actually more nutritious. Here's why:

- Produce has the maximum nutrients at its peak ripeness. When you are buying locally, produce can be picked and quickly sold. Produce from the store is typically picked days before it's ripe because it has to travel thousands of miles to get to your town.
- Once a fruit or vegetable is picked, certain nutrients can start to deteriorate. When foods are grown and sold locally, maximum nutrients can be delivered into our school meals.

The Earth

There are lots of hidden costs associated with non-local foods. Once picked, some produce items might start to rot and need to be thrown away. Once packed on a diesel truck, a package of apples from Washington might travel 2000 miles to be served, generating lots of CO₂ emissions. In this time more packages might have spoiled and again need to be thrown away. Once in the store, if the lot isn't sold quickly, the rest might be thrown away to make way for new stock. Throughout this whole process food is thrown away and a huge amount of energy, via gasoline, has to be used. For local food, some produce items can be a short 2 minute drive up to Meadow's Farm to grab a few bushels of apples; saving time, money, waste, and pollution!

Our Community

Occasionally, local foods might seem more expensive depending on the season or type of food. What is not often seen is the lasting impact of the dollar spent locally. A 2017 Oregon State study found that for every dollar spent locally, \$0.76 (\$0.48 when purchased directly from a farmer) stays within the community. As opposed to food purchased at chain grocery stores/non-local food where only \$0.28 remains in the local community. Supporting local really does go a long way!

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Mrs. Mary ready to serve kids some delicious and locally grown butter lettuce!



Irish/Gaelic Stew served last month during Foreign Language Week

WHAT'S FOR LUNCH?

Around this time of year, we are starting to see leaves and flower buds appear everywhere, but most farmers and gardeners still have a while to go before their first harvest. Historically, people would be using root vegetables, dried foods, animal products, and canned goods to get through this time period. One of the many things used is dried beans.

Here in New York the two main varieties grown are the pinto and kidney. Both are high in protein and fiber to complete a healthy and filling meal. Look for both beans throughout the month that will be homecooked, soaked, and prepared right here in our kitchens!

Stuffed Pita Sandwich

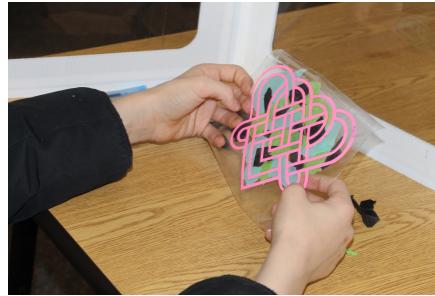
April 13th and 29th

An idea brought to us by Ms. Megan, we will stuff some fresh pita pockets with homemade chicken salad! Delicious, fresh, and will get us ready for the warmer times ahead.



LOOKING AHEAD

We know that farmers like to plan ahead so they know how much to grow or raise in the coming season. If you are, or know, a farmer who would like to work with the Forestville Cafeteria in the 2021-2022 school year please reach out to Nick Weith at nweith@forestville.com.



Students made Celtic knots, "stained" glass art, and tried soups from around the world that were served with a chunky salsa, called *pico de gallo* made almost entirely of NYS grown foods during Foreign Language Month!

CHEW ON THIS



Homemade Refried Beans

Add this homemade version to your taco or fajita night!

Ingredients

- 1 lb dried pinto beans, rinsed and cleaned
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1/2 onion, chopped
- 6 c water
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 T oil or animal fat
- seasonings (cumin, pepper, paprika, garlic)

Instructions:

1. Place dried beans in pot and cover with 2 inches of water. Soak overnight in refrigerator.
2. Strain beans and place in soup pot with garlic, onion, water, and salt. Bring to a boil.
3. Cover and let simmer for 30 minutes, remove lid, stir, and continue to cook for 30 - 60 minutes until beans are soft.
4. In large skillet or pan, heat oil. Carefully ladle the beans and some broth into pan. Allow beans to "fry" and mash with fork, masher, or spoon. Add additional seasonings or flavorings to taste. Once mashed to perfection enjoy with your meal!