



Cook what you love, love what you eat

GREEN NEW MEAL

Grades 7 - 9
Week 6



Stop! Have you watched our training video yet? This workshop series covers subject matter that requires basic knowledge of anti-oppression and anti-racist concepts. Facilitation of these workshops must be undertaken with thoughtful consideration of the content. Before you start, make sure you've watched our training video and read through the lesson plan in its entirety.

Learning objective:

Participants will learn about the environmental and social impacts of our food system. This workshop will explore the journey that food takes from field to table, looking at how we can 'eat for the planet' in ways that are both sustainable for nature and ethical for people!



Workshop length:
2 hours



Recipe: Quick pickles



Curriculum links: Health and Physical Education; Language; Geography; the Arts; Science and Technology



Topics covered

- Field to table process
- What is a footprint?
 - Environmental and social factors in food choices.
- The role of migrant workers in our food system.
- Reducing our footprints.



Workshop materials

- Chart paper
- Sticky notes
- "Journey of a Tomato" clues
- "Foodprints" handout
- Footprint outlines
- Sharpies or other markers
- Glue, scissors, paint, etc. (if decorating footprints)



Cooking materials

Tools

- Cutting boards
- Knives
- Large stockpot
- Wooden spoon
- Measuring cups

Ingredients

- Mason jars
- Refer to **supporting documents** for recipe details

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Key Reminders



Group & Land Acknowledgement

FoodShare acknowledges that the sacred land in which we operate is situated upon the traditional territories of the Wendat, Haudenosaunee (Ho-den-oh-sho-nee), the Anishinabeg (Ah-nish-in-nah-beg), and the Mississaugas of the Credit. This territory is covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Anishinabeg and Haudenosaunee allied nations to peaceably share and care for the lands around the Great Lakes. FoodShare recognizes the many Nations of Indigenous People, who presently live on this land, those who have spent time here and the ancestors who have hunted and gathered on this land known as Turtle Island.



Equity, Diversity & Social Justice

Notes:

Brainstorm ways in which you can avoid marginalization due to participants' race, ethnicity, sex, age, physical or mental ability, culture, ancestry, language, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic background or due to stereotypes. How can you make space for all learners?

Key Terms

Foodprint – The result of all of the steps it takes to get food from the field to the table. It is the collective social and environmental impact of our food as it moves through the food system – this includes the ways it impacts the environment, animals, and people.

Greenhouse gas – Greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and methane trap the sun's heat, sustaining life on Earth. Increases in greenhouse gas emissions caused by human activity today contribute to climate change, as natural processes are not able to remove enough carbon as is being released.

Climate change – Refers to changes in the Earth's long-term weather patterns, often as a result of human activity. Global warming and average rainfall or snowfall are examples of measures of climate change.

Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) – Immigration program established by the federal government that allows Canadian farm owners to fly in temporary workers from partner countries (mostly Indo-Caribbean nations) to work on farms. Most workers return year after year to work on the same farms.

Migrant farm worker – Workers who come to Canada on temporary visas through SAWP to work on farms.

Decent work – [Decent work](#) “involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.”

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“Journey of a tomato” scavenger hunt (20 minutes)

Begin the session with a bit of movement – this one will take a bit of set-up, but is worth it! Before the workshop, print out the “journey of a tomato” scavenger hunt clues (found in supporting documents).

1. Pick locations in your classroom or another space (outside might be nice, too!) where you’ll post each set of clues – you’ll need 10 different locations total.
2. At each location, post the fill-in-the-blank main clue and the three multiple choice answer cards. Post them in sequential order, with the final set of clues at the end location.
3. On the back of the correct answer card, you can either a) write the location of the next clue; or, b) write a riddle leading to the next clue’s location. *For example*, you could write **“window,”** or **“Do you see rain, clouds, sunshine, or maybe snow? Discover the next clue close to the _____.”**
 - If you choose to include riddles, you can find many online resources for classroom scavenger hunt clues [online](#), or you can get creative and come up with your own!

Divide participants into groups. Introduce the activity as a scavenger hunt tracing the ‘journey of a tomato’ from field to table. Invite them to reflect on each clue as they move through the activity.

Prompts:

- As you move from clue to clue, think about the food system as a whole – what is the purpose of the food system? What are the different inputs and outputs of the food system?
- What are the **environmental** and **social** impacts of each process in the food system (i.e.: what are the impacts of each step in the tomato’s journey)?

Once all of the groups have completed the hunt, gather everyone together for a group discussion. See *following section for talking points*.



What’s in a “foodprint?” (20 minutes):

You can use a large sheet of chart paper to facilitate the conversation popcorn-style in a large group, or hand out sticky notes for participants to write ideas on individually first, followed by a group conversation.

Prompt: Think about the environmental and social impacts of each step in the tomato’s journey. The process that the tomato goes through leaves a lasting impression on our world; we like to call this a “foodprint.”

Ask: So, if we think about the tomato’s journey as a jumping-off point, what factors need to be considered when we are talking about foodprints?

- Share participants’ ideas and responses on chart paper.

Key factors to highlight

Environmental

- The types of foods we eat (e.g. seasonal vs out of season, fruit and veg vs. meat).
- The way food is grown (e.g. use of pesticides, herbicides, fungicides).

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- The way food is processed (e.g. machines, fuel, ingredients added).
- How food is transported (e.g. mode, distance, load size).
- The way food is stored (e.g. refrigeration, freezing, warehouse, electricity).
- How the food is packaged (e.g. saran wrap, polystyrene, canning).
- How and where the food is sold (e.g. supermarket energy usage vs. farmer's market stall).
- How the food is cooked (e.g. oven, stovetop, water, BBQ, microwave, raw).
- How the scraps are disposed of (e.g. composting, garbage, green bins, recycling).

To deepen the conversation, share the “Foodprints: *Running the Numbers*” handout (found in supporting documents). Walk through the numbers with participants. **Ask:** Do any of these numbers surprise you? Do you think our food system has an impact on climate change?

Talking point: Oftentimes, people will advocate for what they consider to be the most environmentally-friendly option – like importing less foods and purchasing foods grown locally. These are certainly important considerations to make. However, we also need to think about the **social impacts** of our food choices. *For example, what if those local foods are grown by a worker with unsafe working conditions?* Building a better food system means prioritizing both the environmental and social well-being of everyone involved.

Now, move into a discussion around the social factors to consider when we talk about foodprints.

Social

- Who is involved in the production of the food (e.g.: small-scale family-run farm vs. large-scale operation that brings in migrant workers).
- The work conditions that farmers and farm workers are subject to while producing the food (e.g.: coverage under labour laws, human rights, safe workplaces, etc.).
- How much farmers and farm workers are paid for the food (e.g.: how much grocery stores pay farmers for produce; living wage for migrant farm workers).

Ask: Did you know that a lot of the produce we eat that's grown here in Ontario is picked and processed by migrant workers?

- Our agricultural industry relies on the “Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP)” – the Canadian government brings in temporary farm workers from other countries to work in Canada during the farming season.
- **Without these workers, we wouldn't be able to eat a lot of the delicious produce we have here in Ontario!**
- There's a lot of problems with the “SAWP” here in Canada – these problems are rooted in the systemic racism and colonialism that we talked about in previous sessions (see Week 4 and Week 5 for detailed discussion).
 - Migrant workers who come to Canada through this program are mostly Black and Brown – from Indo-Caribbean countries.
 - They live and work on the farms, and often do not have access to **decent work conditions**. This means they don't get paid a [living wage](#) and work very long hours with no breaks.

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- They are granted ‘temporary status’ when they arrive, which means they are not permanent residents here in Canada. Not having permanent status makes it harder for migrant workers to access social services like healthcare, and it also stops them from refusing unsafe work.
- Migrant justice advocacy groups are pushing for “**status now**” for migrant workers – our agricultural industry is a permanent fixture, so why are the people who keep it running considered temporary?



One “step” at a time (10 minutes)

To speed up this activity, you can print and cut out the footprint outlines (found in supporting documents) beforehand. If you have more time, you could allow participants to decorate and cut them out themselves.

Hand out the footprint outlines to participants. Invite them to consider the ways their households could minimize the negative impacts of their food choices. **Ask:** What ‘step’ could you take to reduce your footprint at home? Have them write one or more of those ‘steps’ on their footprint outline. If you have time, you might invite them to colour and decorate their outline.

Examples: eating more plant-based meals; composting at home; going to a local farmer’s market; choosing organic when you can; buying whole instead of pre-cut veggies to reduce plastic waste; etc.

Once everyone has finished, have participants share their ‘step’ with the group, and stick their step onto a large sheet of chart paper or a poster board.

- **Talking point:** It’s great when we try to take these small steps at home when we can – the planet loves it! But we don’t always have control over our footprints!
- Systems changes need to happen too – big agricultural corporations and governments need to take on responsibility for making our food system more ethical and sustainable.



Let’s cook! (1 hour)

Refer to supporting documents for “Quick pickles” ingredient list and recipe.

Once in the kitchen, review any safety rules that apply to that space:

- Hairnets/gloves;
- Handwashing;
- Knife handling;
- Cross-contamination;
- And, how to use stovetops, ovens, and other appliances.

Divide the class into small teams. Hand out the recipe and show each team their prep station. Ask participants to organize who will complete each prep duty and help by demonstrating. Duties could include: reading the recipe, measuring, washing, cutting, mixing, etc.

Tip: Hand out a sign-up sheet for cleaning duties now to expedite the clean-up at the end.

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Why did we pick this recipe for today? **Talking points for quick pickles include:**

What's "in a pickle?"

- Pickling is an ancient way of preserving food, and it's one that can be found across the globe.
 - Think kosher pickles from New York, chutneys from India, kimchi from Korea, miso pickles from Japan, salted duck eggs from China, pickled herring from Scandinavia, corned beef from Ireland, salsas from Mexico, and so on.
 - **Ask:** Do you have any cultural pickles you grew up eating?
- Pickling is different from other methods of preservation because it alters the natural taste and texture of the food we're working with in really interesting ways.
- There are three ways to pickle: quick (refrigerator) pickles; canned pickles (using a hot-water canning process); and lacto-fermented pickles (which uses good bacteria to ferment the veggies). We're using the quick pickle method!

Pick pickles for the planet.

- Food scraps contribute more volume to landfill than anything else! Wasting less food is one of the most effective ways that you can reduce your foodprint.
- Pickling is perfect for this – whenever you're doing a fridge clean-out, you can use whatever fruits or vegetables you have left to pickle.
- It's a great way to avoid wasting this produce (veggies might not have been eaten or gotten thrown away), and it works to actually extend their shelf-life, which saves money!
- Preserving at home with methods like pickling also brings us closer to our food. By engaging in these practices, we're building up our food knowledge and literacy through these practices which reduces our reliance on the corporate food chain.



Conclusion and consolidation:

Today's recipe was a bit different – there's no meal to serve at the end, since participants will be taking their pickles home with them. If you have time, you could include a tasting session here of different pickled foods for participants to test out – some fun options to include might be dill pickles, sauerkraut, kimchi, mango chutney.

To prompt conversation while you eat, you could ask:

- Which pickled food here is your favourite? Did any of the flavours surprise you?
- What are some other vegetables or fruits you would like to try pickling?
- What was your favourite part of being in the kitchen today?



Take-home messages:

- End the session with a quick group debrief. You can either do this as a large group (popcorn style) or in smaller teams (with reporting back).

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- Ask participants to list the three most important or interesting things they learned during the session, and then invite them to share this with the group.
- Review responses as a large group, adding in any key take-home messages from below that might have been left out:
 - It takes many steps for our food to get from the field onto our kitchen tables – the social and environmental impact that those steps have are called a “foodprint.”
 - There are many factors to consider when making food choices, including the amount of water it takes to produce the food, greenhouse gas emissions, distance travelled, packaging, and waste.
 - Changes need to happen both at a systems and individual level to create a more sustainable food system that supports our environment.
 - Migrant farm workers put food on the table for us here in Canada – they need justice!
- **Option:** have participants complete the [Kahoot quiz](#) now, or provide them with the link to complete after the session.

Clean up! Using the sign-up sheet handed out at the beginning of cooking, have everyone help out with the basic cleaning duties (clearing tables and plates, loading the dishwasher, putting foodstuff away).



FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES (OPTIONAL)

Thank a Migrant Worker

If participants are craving another creative activity, this one is perfect! Invite participants to write ‘thank you’ notes to migrant workers – the purpose of this is to prompt participants to recognize the invisible labour that goes into putting food on our tables.

You could provide participants with cards, postcards, blank sheets of paper, or [colouring pages](#) they can write their message on and decorate.

Once participants have finished decorating their ‘thank you’ messages, you have the option of ending the activity here, or taking it one step further. You could either a) take photos of the messages and share them on social media using hashtags like #statusforall #statusnow #thankamigrantworker; b) reach out to a migrant rights organization in your area to see if they might be interested in delivering the messages to local workers (i.e.: [Justicia for Migrant Workers](#); [No One Is Illegal](#); [Migrant Workers Alliance for Change](#); [Migrant Rights Network](#)).

Land Acknowledgement Exploration

The purpose of this activity is to prompt participants to critically think through our relationships with food, land, and nature within the framework of the “Dish With One Spoon.” First, have participants read the [land acknowledgement](#) aloud in a group. Ask them if they know what the “Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant” is. Write participants’ ideas down on chart paper.

Share [this video](#) with the group about the story behind this part of Toronto’s land acknowledgement.

After watching the video together, ask participants to reflect on the takeaway learnings from the video.

- Never take more than your share of what you need.
- Make sure there’s enough food to go around for everybody, including future generations.
- Don’t cause bloodshed when you take from the earth.

In smaller groups, invite participants to talk about these three teachings. Prompt them to come up with ideas about how these teachings might influence the way we interact or engage with our food system.

Ask: What changes could we make to the food system that would allow us to live in line with these teachings? What changes could you make on a personal level? What needs to be done on a broader scale?

Encourage participants to discuss different parts of the food system (i.e.: growing, production, access, etc.). Some ideas to get you going:

- We should be more connected to our food. Our food system distances us from the land and the food we eat – learning more about where our food comes from can help us rebuild that connection.
- Our food system produces so much food, and still so many people don’t have enough to eat – how can we build a new system where everyone has what they need?
- Food growing needs to be more in tune with the seasons and land! More traditional knowledge in

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agriculture, less big corporate growers!

Regroup, invite groups to share what they discussed.

Other FoodShare Lesson Plans

If you'd like to further explore the connections between our food system, the environment, and sustainability with participants, check out any of the following workshop outlines available on FoodShare's [educator resources page](#).

- Cooking Off the Grid
- Waste in Our Food System
- FoodPrints
- Energy Detectives
- Cattle and Land Use

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RESOURCES

Resource:**[Migrant Dreams Documentary](#)**

If participants are interested in learning more about the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program here in Canada, you can screen this TVO documentary about migrant farm workers here in Ontario.

Resource:**[FoodPrints](#)**

Online resource designed to help with making food choices that do less harm to the environment, animals and people.

Resource:**[Love Food Hate Waste Video](#)**

Short educational video laying out the statistics on food waste in Canada.

Resource:**[There's Something in the Water Documentary](#) (available on Netflix)**

Documentary exploring the injustices and injuries caused by environmental racism in Nova Scotia, and taking a look at the Indigenous and African Nova Scotian women fighting to protect their communities, their land, and their futures.

Resource**[Food Sovereignty and Climate Justice Infographic](#)**

La Via Campesina infographic on the impact of the industrial food system on the planet, and imagining new possibilities for building a just, sustainable system.

Resource**[From Our Nānas For Our Nenis](#)**

Web series, highlighting the work on the ground in Guam to push for food sovereignty and climate justice.

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